



**Town of Harvard**  
**Finance Committee**  
Minutes for February 9, 2022

**The Finance Committee Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c.30A. S.20.**

**Present:** Jennifer Finch(chair), Mike Derse, Charles Oliver, Eric Ward, Don Ludwig, Ethan Pride, Carolyn Luescher

**Town:** Tim Bragan (Town Administrator)

**Selectboard:** Stu Sklar, Rich Maiore, Kara McGuire Minar

**Parks and Recreation:** Bob O'Shea, Kevin Mitrano

**Harvard Public Schools:** Linda Dwight, Eleni Burns, Jenn Toth, Robin Benoit, Scott Hoffman, Robin Benoit, Ingrid Nilsson, Josh Myler, Chris Boyle, Melissa Miland, Chris Boyle, Sharlene Cronin

**Harvard School Committee:** Shannon Molloy, Sharlene Cronin, Suzie Allen, Abby Besse, SusanMary Redinger,

**Others:** Patrick Harrigan, Joan Eliyesil, Marty

**Public Commentary:** None

**Motions taken:** None

1. Bob O'Shea shared updates on Parks and Recreation budget.
  - a. Small increase for beach director so they can hire someone.
  - b. Stepping back from the field maintenance (week whacking of brush) of ball fields.
  - c. DPW needs to take responsibility for field maintenance.
  - d. Bob provided an amended budget.
2. Review of the Town of Harvard's School Budget via a presentation given by Ingrid Nilsson.
  - a. An 4.41% Omnibus increase from FY22.
  - b. Recommended using \$4,261,820 from non-general funds
  - c. Shared that there was a loss of 3 academic years for our students due to Covid.
  - d. Increases are due to COLA (cost of living adjustment) for staff
  - e. Increase in staff for tutors and additional kindergarten teachers
  - f. Will be using ESSER/ARP grants (ESSER – elementary and secondary school emergency relief fund)
  - g. Heavily dependent on Devens contributions
3. Review of long-term commitment to our students via presentation given by Sharlene Cronin
  - a. Staff is at the top of the pay step
  - b. Social emotional toll from Covid is still unknown
  - c. The Bromfield School is an aging building
4. Questions
  - a. Additional academic support has not been effectively measured.
  - b. Needs of students for additional social support increased by 2%
  - c. STARR (Short Term Assessment and Rapid Reintegration) program – increased due to hospitalization of kids, has driven up the student population needing support.
  - d. 10<sup>th</sup> grade students are more like middle school students due to less time in the school.
  - e. Increased need for adjustment in school counselling. Outside support has become more difficult to find.
  - f. Some students advanced academically during the time out of the school.
  - g. Increase in staff by 8 (some covered by ESSER grants) concern about long term cost of increased staff.
    - i. Instructional director
    - ii. Health teacher for the middle school
    - iii. Kindergarten teacher
    - iv. 3 HES learning assistants
    - v. TBS science teacher
    - vi. TBS English teacher
  - h. The Bromfield School will undergo a further building assessment to understand the needs of the building.
  - i. Water bill will increase for the schools.

**Upcoming meetings:** Feb 16, 2022 - 7pm - Zoom link will be available on the agenda when posted.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolynn Luescher