

**TOWN OF LAKEVILLE
Joint Meeting of Select Board
And Finance Committee Minutes
February 8, 2022 – 6:30 PM
REMOTE LOCATION**

On February 8, 2022, the Select Board held a meeting at 6:30 PM remotely from various locations. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM by Chair Fabian. Members present were Chair Fabian, Member LaCamera and Member Carboni. Also present was Ari Sky, Town Administrator, Tracie Craig-McGee, Executive Assistant to the Select Board and Town Administrator and Christina Cotsoridis, Assistant to the Town Administrator. LakeCAM was recording the meeting for broadcast.

Also present for the budget discussions were members of the Finance Committee: Darren Beals, Chairman; Larry Kostant, Adam Lynch; and Katherine Desrosiers. The Finance Committee opened their meeting at 6:31 PM.

In accordance with provisions allowed by Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, the February 8, 2022 public meeting of the Lakeville Select Board and Finance Committee will be held remotely. **However, to view this meeting in progress, please go to [facebook.com/lakecam](https://www.facebook.com/lakecam) (you do not need a Facebook account to view the meeting). This meeting will be recorded and available to be viewed at a later date at <http://www.lakecam.tv/>.**

FY23 Budget Review:

Chair Fabian said this is the second night of budget meetings for FY23. There were a few questions from last night from the Finance Committee; did you receive your answers? Mr. Beals said the answers were received. Chair Fabian summarized the answers to the questions.

Board of Assessors

John Olivieri, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Assessors, was present for the discussion. Mr. Olivieri said salary increases are contractual. GIS is up 19.2% and map upgrades are up 50% due to upgrades. We removed line items for printing and motor vehicle supplies as we have not used them for quite a while. Mr. Lynch said salaries are up 2%, but from FY20 to FY23, they are up 13%. What are the increases? Mr. Olivieri said they are contractual obligations; they are not merit based. Mr. Lynch noted that under the Specialist position, it went up 2% in the last two (2) years, but from FY20 to FY21, it went up 5%. Member LaCamera said there are other layers that need to be added to GIS. Is your Department responsible to do that? Mr. Olivieri said we facilitate it, but it is an effort from all Departments regarding what they want to put into it. We did not have a consensus of what exactly is needed. We can add more to the budget; he doesn't know what the number would be to completely build it out as much as we need. He will take responsibility to facilitate this with Departments to find out exactly what they want, getting numbers and approval to put it in place. Chair Fabian agreed with Mr. Olivieri that it does fall on the Assessors to keep tabs on GIS, even though they don't use it daily. Mr. Sky said there was a changeover in software a few years ago, which has caused some bumps. Member LaCamera said last year we appropriated \$30,000 to upgrade the Vision Software. Mr. Olivieri said they just received the contract, and the Board will discuss it and make a recommendation.

Veterans Department

Wil Corey, Veterans' Agent, was present for the discussion. Mr. Corey said his budget has a 3.2% increase. Mr. Sky said the Cherry Sheet numbers came out a bit lower than expected. Mr. Beals said in 2020 and 2021 figures for veterans' s benefits were quite low. Mr. Corey said veterans come and go; this is a need-based program. Some people need more benefits than others. Death benefits have been moved from a maximum of \$2,000 to \$4,000. He has no idea how many death benefits will go out. When veterans own their own properties, they aren't eligible to receive those benefits. He tries his best to guess on the figures.

Animal Control

David Frates, Animal Control Officer, was present for the discussion. Mr. Sky said the only significant increase in the budget is for call back stipends. We can't find a time when they were last increased. We will come back to the Board with an increase proposal. Mr. Frates said he wanted to go up on the stipends \$25 per shift for the part time Animal Control Officers. Chair Fabian said there has not been an increase since 2006.

Council on Aging

Kelly Conway, Council on Aging Director, was present for the discussion. Ms. Howley said her budget is up about \$700 from last year. The Service Incentive Grant is from Elder Affairs, which is a three (3) year contract. We have received the grant for about six (6) years. We won't know until the State budget is completed if we receive the grant to fund the outreach position. That is why it is in there to be funded by the Town. Traditionally \$5,000 was left in there in that line item just in case it wasn't funded. Mr. Lynch said the full-time clerk was removed and an Administrative Assistant was added. He asked about the salary increase of 5% between FY22 and FY23. Ms. Howley said there were two (2) full time clerks that were together in one (1) line item. When the Administrative Assistant position opened up, they were separated. The 5% salary increase included a step.

Ms. Howley noted since we have reopened this summer, things have been increasing. Numbers are down in participation, but seniors appreciate being able to come in. We hope to upscale in the spring as hopefully Covid numbers will go down. We were able to stay open while others were not. The blood drive was fully booked with walk-ins. It was the most successful blood drive we ever have had.

Treasurer/Tax Collector

Erika Correia, Treasurer/Tax Collector, was present for the discussion. Ms. Correia said there are two (2) main items that have gone down. The financial services that was the previous interim Treasurer/Collector and a decrease in hourly wages for the clerk. Due to a retirement a new clerk was hired at a lower rate. She has revised the cash handling policy, which will be distributed to Department Heads. She sent in the WPAT Septic Loan to Mass Clean Water Trust at 0% interest. We have been tackling tax title issues and have set up five (5) payment plans. She is working on cross training the office staff and setting up a manual for the office. Mr. Lynch asked if the increase in salary is an offset of the financial services expense going away. Ms. Correia said yes.

Library

Jayme Viveiros, Library Director, and Ruth Gross and Patrick Marshall from the Library Board of Directors, were present for the discussion. Ms. Gross called the Library Board of Directors to order at 7:52 PM. Ms. Viveiros said an overview of the Department has been provided in the budget book. We are returning to a sense of normalcy at the Library. We are fully operational and participating in in-person programming. We are continuing with the hybrid module for programming. As far as the budget, there is not much movement. Salary lines are increased for the contractual and COLA increases. Expenses are level funded or decreased. This budget does meet the municipal appropriation that allows Lakeville to participate in the State program for reciprocal programming. We need to meet the municipal approbation to stay certified. A certain percentage must be spent on materials, around 16% of our budget.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Gross and seconded by Mr. Marshall, it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Library Board of Directors at 8:01 PM.
Roll call vote: Mr. Marshall – aye and Ms. Gross – aye.

Parks Department

Joseph Coscia, Chairman of the Park Commission, was present for the discussion. Mr. Coscia said there were a few ups and downs. We have not seen what we anticipated to see from the Loon Pond Lodge for revenues. We did make some adjustments from Clear Pond Park, but that is up in the air. Mr. Beals said the expense budget is straightforward and reasonable. On the revenue side, could you speak to this from last year. Mr. Coscia said last year the vote was Lakeville residents only for Clear Pond. It was only open five (5) days a week due to staffing and it was a shorter season. We did not see the uptick anticipated with Lakeville residents only. It was down about 50% in passes and gates fees were down 75%. We have not voted on whether to open non-residents yet. We hope to change this being open for 10 weeks, but staffing may be an issue. Gate fees are the big money makers, but the people coming all had season passes. Mr. Kostant asked if they went to residents only due to Covid. Mr. Coscia said there were concerns about issues with overcrowding and Lakeville residents weren't able to get in. Mr. Kostant asked was there any overcrowding at the park this year. Mr. Coscia said no it was the opposite; not many people were there at all. We need to decide if we want to go residents only this year. Mr. Kostant said as a resident, it makes sense residents only, but as a business enterprise, you want to bring in as many consumers as you can. Do you feel outsiders should be let in. Mr. Coscia said he would like to see it open up to anyone. We left \$20,000 or more on the table not getting the gate fees when it was open to anyone, but we didn't see that. We won't be able to make money based on the numbers this year. Mr. Lynch asked about field revenue. Mr. Coscia said we lost a baseball league due to less participation. If we can open up the new fields, maybe we can bring in extra sports.

Member Carboni asked about the loss in revenue at Loon Pond Lodge; how off are we. Mr. Coscia said about 20-30%. Mr. Sky said the Lodge has been doing pretty well between rental and food services. It is over \$52,000, plus another \$7,000 for bar rental. It may not be doing quite as well as hoped, but it is up there. Hall rental is a bit short, but the operation manager has said bookings have taken off. Mr. Coscia said we did put that up \$10,000 based on FY22 numbers. Member LaCamera said when Boston Tavern started Covid 19 was at its peak. Based on the numbers so far, we should make our numbers. The budget being proposed is \$214,000 for expenses and \$214,000 for revenue. Based on those numbers, are you able to fill the lifeguards and director positions. Mr. Coscia said

yes, we will be posting them soon for a 10-week season. We may have to go down to five (5) days a week based on lifeguard availability. Member LaCamera said it was estimated to take in \$8,000 for Lakeville residents only. Mr. Coscia said there was talk of adding two (2) Towns for additional revenue. Member LaCamera said we are going to speak of making significant improvements to Clear Pond. His position is the pond should be just for Lakeville residents only. If the Town is able to fund the \$8,000 to cover the cost of the passes and gate fees, why wouldn't we keep it Lakeville residents only. Mr. Coscia said if you look at the amount of people there, some days were only 30-40 people there. You have to staff the lifeguards and they are standing around. Member LaCamera asked with the \$8,000 can they fully staff. Mr. Coscia said yes.

Member LaCamera said last year was an anomaly. From his perspective, if you gave Lakeville residents the opportunity to allow them to go at no charge with identification and they were allowed to bring in guests, for \$8,000 it would be our own park and no one else would be able to use it. Why would we not do that. Mr. Coscia said a lot of people from other towns enjoy going there. People from Lakeville are not using the park like before. Member LaCamera said residents didn't want to go there due to overcrowding and other problems. This is a Town property and if you go to other Towns with beaches, it is for Town residents only. We are going to spend a significant amount of money to benefit other people. Chair Fabian said you are saying that instead of charging for any passes, the Town would supplement that \$8,000 for any Lakeville resident to go for free. Member LaCamera said yes. We are running something for our community; not running it to make money. Mr. Coscia said we were making money when it was open to anyone. We have a beautiful park; a lot of people from other Towns have great memories of using it. If we can make it so it is not overcrowded; why not share it.

Chair Fabian said she understands where Member LaCamera is coming from, but the actual Park Commission has a difference of opinion on the Park being resident only. Mr. Coscia said he doesn't have a proposal from the Select Board saying that admission will be free. We are working on the way we have been doing it so there is no loss to the Town. Chair Fabian said if she brought a non-resident guest, does the guest pay a fee. Member LaCamera said we didn't do it that way in the past. Chair Fabian said when she used to bring her kids there, guests still paid a fee. The Park Commission needs to discuss this and make a decision. Mr. Coscia said if we have a recommendation on what the Select Board is willing to do we can make a decision, but that has not been brought up. He needs to know about this before we meet. Things have changed; he doesn't see the people in Lakeville leaving their pools and going to the pond.

A motion was made by Member LaCamera and seconded by Member Carboni to recommend subsidizing the Park Enterprise Fund by \$8,000 to cover the cost of entrance fees for Lakeville residents if Clear Pond Park is Lakeville residents only and to ask the Town Administrator to identify the funds to cover this.

Discussion: Member Carboni asked where would we take the money from? Member LaCamera said we have \$32 million budget; we will find it. Chair Fabian said her concern is how do we keep track of this. We are planning on one sort of management, but if we open it up, she doesn't want people to not be able to get in. Even if we agree, it is up to the Park Commission to make the final decision. Member LaCamera amended his motion to include "to cover the cost of the entrance fees for Lakeville residents only for Clear Pond Park and to ask the Town Administrator to identify the funds to cover this". Chair Fabian said what if we are at maximum capacity every weekend and have to hire more lifeguards to handle attendance. Member LaCamera said what is the difference if they decide to open it up to outside residents as far as staffing. Chair Fabian said they would bring in more

money to hire additional staff. Last year lifeguards were a real problem. The only decision for the Select Board is whether to offer these funds; the rest of it is for the Park Commission to decide. Member Carboni said this gives the Park Commission an opportunity if they were to open it up to outside Lakeville residents to generate additional revenue. Chair Fabian said the point was for it to stay Lakeville residents only. Member LaCamera said this is only if it stays Lakeville residents only. This is not to allow outside people in to generate additional money. Chair Fabian said she wouldn't mind if a guest had to pay a day fee.

Member LaCamera asked what the Finance Committee thinks? Mr. Beals said he can see both sides; from a business standpoint it makes sense to open it up; from a community point it makes sense to have residents only and subsidize it for them. It depends on what the Park Commission would like to do. Mr. Lynch said for the next year or two (2) we could charge people to go and put money towards the renovations and when it is done, then we could do Lakeville residents only. Mr. Kostant said he sees both sides. He agrees as a taxpayer of Lakeville you want to keep it for residents only. He is not sure if it is reasonable, but we would be for subsidizing it. His grandson spends a lot of time with him in Lakeville, but he lives in Kingston. Would he be able to go? Member LaCamera said you could bring in guests from out of Town. Mr. Kostant said that is up to the Park Commission as long as we subsidize it. Ms. Desrosiers said it is important to look at the numbers when it was Lakeville only last year for staffing. If it is not being used and is staffed all day for 10 Lakeville residents is it a waste of our resources. We could have Lakeville residents for free and charge for outsiders. She is not opposed to it being free for Lakeville residents. If we staff for very few people, we should open it back up at some point. Mr. Coscia said if one (1) person is from Lakeville and they bring a car full of people, how do we monitor that. He can bring that back to the Park Commission about subsidizing Lakeville residents if it is Lakeville residents only. We need to know this soon before we move forward on this discussion. There may be other nuances that this might affect.

The vote on the previous motion was Member Carboni – aye; Member LaCamera – aye and Chair Fabian – aye.

Member LaCamera asked if there were any issues working with the Highway Department. Mr. Coscia said no. Member LaCamera asked about the trail project – will that start this year. Mr. Coscia said the Boy Scouts are doing that this spring. Member LaCamera asked about the Gamache Playground. Mr. Coscia said that will be worked on this spring. Member LaCamera asked if this was their five-year capital plan for this year. Mr. Coscia said yes. There will be more down the road, but this is what we came up with. Member LaCamera said he is surprised that it is the same things on there as last year. One of the problems he sees is that the \$28,000 that was funded for the repair of the tennis courts; he doesn't think that is enough. Mr. Coscia said he has been speaking to Lakeville Athletics regarding that. We are not resurfacing it; just crack filling and paint. Member LaCamera said have not seen a proposal yet. Mr. Coscia said we had quotes from last year, but they need to be updated. They were done with prevailing wages. Member LaCamera asked Mr. Coscia to provide the Town Administrator copies of the quotes so Mr. Moniz can see them. He is quite familiar with tennis courts. Member Carboni asked if Mr. Coscia will attend the Capital Plan discussion. Mr. Coscia said he will join the discussion.

Finance Committee Business

Mr. Beals said the Finance Committee needs to designate a member to attend the Old Colony budget meeting. He can attend if no one would like to. Mr. Sky noted that remote attendance is an option. Mr. Kostant said that he can attend the meeting.

New Business

There was no New Business discussed.

Old Business

There was no Old Business discussed.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Mr. Kostant and seconded by Ms. Desrosiers, it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:03 PM.

Roll call vote: Mr. Lynch – aye; Ms. Desrosiers – aye; Mr. Kostant – aye; and Mr. Beals – aye.

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Member LaCamera, it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Select Board's Meeting at 8:04 PM.

Roll call vote: Member Carboni - aye; Member LaCamera – aye and Chair Fabian – aye.

List of documents provided at the Select Board Meeting of February 8, 2022

1. Agenda page
2. FY23 Budget