

Board of Finance Special Meeting

6:00 pm

May 5, 2025

Meeting held Remotely

**Call to Order:** Chairman Michael Imber called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. Attendees were Vice Chairman Jeffrey Farr, Theresa Brasco, Christopher Bryant, Daniel Gershburg, Jeffrey Goldstein and Finance Director Rick Darling. Excused absence noted for Rone Baldwin.

**Discussion & Decision to set the mill rate for fiscal year 2025-2026 (on the condition that budgets are approved through referendum on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>):** Mr. Imber thanked all involved in preparation of the budget for the Town and the Board of Education. After several meetings the Board of Ed and Board of Selectman proposed a reduced and revised budget which was sent to the BOF who took further action in reductions with unanimous BOF support. The ATBM achieved a quorum with more than 350 residents attending which advanced the approved budget to a town wide vote on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. More than 500 voters participated and overwhelmingly approved the budget of \$76,869,913, representing a 3.05% increase over last year's budget. Against the approved grand list of 3.265 billion, the implied mill rate is 23.90 for next year, representing a 1.83% mill rate increase over last year. Mr. Imber asked for a motion to approve the 23.90 mill rate for fiscal year 2025-2026. Motion made by Mr. Bryant, seconded by Mr. Gershburg. Discussion was then held with Mr. Farr and Ms. Brasco with concerns that the ATBM process was not conducted in the manner consistent with past ATBM and may be in violation of the CSG statutes and town charter. Further discussion was held on meeting materials that Mr. Farr and Ms. Brasco did not believe included line item details. At the ATBM the moderator and Nicholas Bamonte were asked about these materials and the moderator outlined a different meeting procedure than required. Further discussion was held on charter interpretation and a new procedure eliminating the ability for qualified voters to reduce specific line item requests. Mr. Farr noted he was not prepared to vote on the proposed mill rate. Mr. Bryant discussed that Mr. Bamonte clearly stated the rules were the same as previous years. Ms. Brasco further questioned if the approved town budget which was approved by BOF by line item or is the designated budget summary by department and division as presented in the ATBM materials. She further discussed chapter 106 of CGS and responsibilities in the town charter noting that the materials only allowed reduction of total department budget not line items as required. Ms. Brasco noted she was not voting to set the mill rate based on non-complaint ATBM process. Further discussion was held with Mr. Darling clarifying that the ATBM call was made available 5 days prior to the meeting and information packet was posted prior to the meeting. Prior to the call Mr. Imber clarified that attorney and moderators agreed that disclosure was appropriate and adequate, therefore the meeting proceeded resulting in referendum. After entertaining all question and debate, Mr. Imber called for a vote.

4 yes (MI, CB, DG, JG), 2 NO (TB, JF). Motion passes 4-2.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Gershburg seconded by Mr. Bryant . Meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shawn Amato, Recording Secretary