



Finance Committee  
TOWN OF HALIFAX  
499 Plymouth Street  
Halifax, MA 02338

## Meeting Minutes

**Monday August 21, 2023**

**Committee Members Present (Remotely):** Todd Dargie, Cheryll Zarrella Burke, Frank Johnston & Jim Walters

**Committee members absent:** Michael Bennett,

**Audience:** Cody Haddad, Sandy Nolan & Katie Esposito

**Todd Dargie called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm**

*This meeting is being conducted remotely and being recorded by Area 58.*

**ACCEPTANCE OF MEETING MINUTES:** Minutes from Monday July 17, 2023 have been circulated to the committee for a vote.

**Todd entertained a motion to recommend the meeting minutes from Monday July 17, 2023**

**Motion:** Cheryll Zarrella Burke

**Second:** Jim Walters

**Roll Call:** Todd Dargie, Cheryll Zarrella Burke, Frank Johnston & Jim Walters

**FINANCE COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND VOTE FOR WILLIAM J SMITH'S APPOINTMENT:** Todd begins with an open discussion from the committee members regarding the appointment of William J Smith to join the committee. Todd believes he would be a great fit for the finance committee with his years of experience as a police chief. Frank agrees and believes Mr. Smith interviewed well. He also believes his experience with municipal budgets will be beneficial to the committee. Jim states Mr. Smith would be a good candidate due to his experience. The only question Jim had regarding Mr. Smith joining the committee was being on the reviewing end of budgets instead of requesting. Cheryl also agreed with both the statements made by Jim and Frank. Overall, the committee agreed that Mr. Smith would be a beneficial asset to the committee.

**Todd entertained a motion to recommend the appointment of William J. Smith to join the Halifax Finance Committee**

**Motion:** Cheryll Zarrella Burke

**Second:** Frank Johnston

**Roll Call:** Todd Dargie, Cheryll Zarrella Burke, Frank Johnston & Jim Walters

The next step would be the recommendation of the appointment committee. Which will be discussed on another agenda item.

**TALENT BANK FORMS OF FINANCE COMMITTEE OPEN POSITION:** The new vacant position was posted on August 1, 2023. As of today August 21<sup>st</sup>, the committee chair has yet to receive any candidates. Todd encourages anyone interested in joining the committee to complete a talent bank form.

**REAPPOINTMENT OF TODD DARGIE AS THE CHAIR OF COMMITTEE:** Todd explained to the committee he is up for reappointment. The committee will need to make a vote to elect Todd to remain the chair of the committee. He turns the conversation over to Cheryl as the vice chair as he would need to abstain from the vote. Frank asked if they would make a quorum if Todd abstained his vote. Cody replied stating quorum would be based upon all committee seats therefore they would not. However, Sandy stated that in previous years the committee had made a vote that quorum would be filled based upon active members only. Cody was unsure and was going to confirm with council but instructs the committee to continue with the vote. If they need to have a revote at the next meeting they can re add items to the agenda for the following meeting.

**Cheryl makes a motion to recommend the reappointment of Todd Dargie as the Chair of the Halifax Finance Committee**

Motion: Cheryl Zarrella Burke

Second: Frank Johnston

Roll Call: Cheryl Zarrella Burke, Frank Johnston & Jim Walters

**FINANCE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE:** Todd is unable to represent the committee as he is up for reappointment. Todd's recommendation is for Cheryl to represent the committee as the vice chair.

**Todd entertained a motion to recommend the appointment of Cheryl as the Finance Committee representative on the Appointment Committee.**

Motion: Frank Johnston

Second: Jim Walters

Roll Call: Todd Dargie, Frank Johnston & Jim Walters.

**OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT:** (OML 2023 – 119). Patrick Higgins stating the committee chair did not announce which members were participating remotely during the May 23, 2023 committee meeting. The Attorney General's office did respond with the following statement. "Video of the Committee's May 23 meeting clearly shows that at the start of the meeting, which was held entirely remotely with each Committee member appearing separately on screen by video, the Chair announced the name of each Committee member participating remotely. Nothing more was required."

The committee did receive an additional complaint from Mr. Higgins on July 25th. This involved the July 17, 2023 committee meeting on the candidate review on the agenda. Todd explains Mr. Higgins is correct in his complaint that we would need to disclose the candidates' full name, which we failed to do. Todd has taken steps to ensure that this will not happen again in the future. First the agenda has been updated to reflect full names going

forward. Second there is a new timeline for proper distribution of the agenda to committee members. On Monday night after the committee meetings the finance committee secretary will distribute a draft of the agenda to all members, the town administrator as well as the town accountant. This will allow everyone to have until the end of the day on Tuesday to review and revise the agenda before being posted. Then the finance committee secretary will be send to the Town Clerk's office at the end of the day on Wednesday.

The last step would be to have the committee members participate in an open meeting law training course. Once completed, a member will need to inform Todd and he will relay information to Cody.

**Todd entertained a motion to recommend Cody respond to the opening meeting law complaint from July 17, 2023.**

Motion: Cheryll Zarrella Burke

Second: Jim Walters

Roll Call: Todd Dargie, Cheryll Zarrella Burke, Frank Johnston & Jim Walters

**CORRESPONDENCE & AS MAY ARISE:** None

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

**NEXT MEETING:** Sandy recommends the committee now return to two meetings a month due to capital budgets. The meetings are confirmed for Monday September 11th, at 6:00 PM followed by September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM which will take place remotely on Zoom.

**Todd Dargie entertained a motion to adjourn at 6:43 PM**

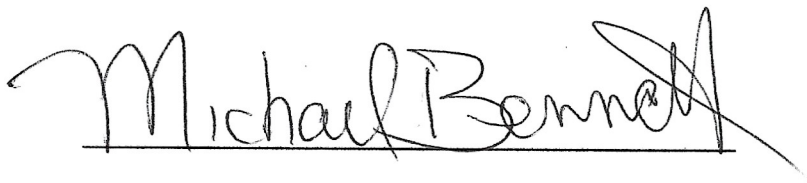
Motion: Cheryll Zarrella Burke

Second: Frank Johnston

Roll Call: Todd Dargie, Frank Johnston, Jim Walters & Cheryll Zarrella Burke

**EXHIBITS:** Opening Meeting Law Complaint OML 2023 – 119, Opening Meeting Law Complaint July 17, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Michael" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Bennett" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Bennett, Clerk