

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**  
**As a Committee of the Whole**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.**  
**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**WOBURN CITY HALL**

Members present: Chair pro tem Joseph Demers, Councilor Robert Ferullo, Councilor Richard Gately, Councilor Jeffrey Dillon, Councilor Lou DiMambro, Councilor Charles Viola, and President Michael Concannon.

Absent: Chair Darlene Mercer-Bruen, and Councilor Joanne Campbell

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Chair pro tem Demers said Chair Mercer-Bruen is under the weather and Councilor Campbell is not here, and he will serve as the Chair pro tem. Motion made by Councilor Dillon and seconded by Councilor Viola to take a 15-minute recess so members of the City Council and the School Committee can attend the Pride flag raising ceremony on Woburn Common; approved, 7-0. Chair pro tem Demers recessed the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

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Motion made by Councilor Viola and seconded by Councilor Ferullo to return to the regular order of business; approved, 7-0. Chair pro tem Demers resumed the meeting at 5:53 p.m.

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**Discussion of the FY '23 Budget** – President Concannon said he has family members who work for the city of Woburn. He said he has sought guidance from the state Ethics Commission which indicated he can participate in discussion and deliberations on the budget in general as long as he makes a disclosure, but he cannot vote on departmental budgets with line items that directly involve his family members. Councilor Ferullo said he would also like to make the same disclosure, because he has two family members who work for the city. **Dept. of Public Works/Cemetery** – Representing the Dept. of Public Works and the Cemetery Dept. were Supt. John Duran, via Microsoft Teams, Deputy Supt. Leonard Burnham, and Water Treatment Plant Manager Anthony Blazejowski. Supt. Duran said the DPW budget is basically the same as it has been in previous years. He said there is an expected \$45,000 increase in gasoline prices. He said that number is based on projected use. He said the best way to address any issues with the DPW budget is to open the forum to questions. President Concannon said he spoke to Cemetery Commission Chair John Sawyer, and Chair Sawyer represented the Cemetery Dept. budget is also level funded. Supt. Duran said the Cemetery Dept. budget includes a \$55,000 outlay for landscaping services based on the contract the city has with a private entity. Councilor Gately said page 34 of the budget shows there are jobs available at the DPW. Supt. Duran said he has interviewed 20-25 people over the last six months. He said he is having a difficult time getting qualified people. He said he wants to get some younger people on board. He said he is still having trouble filling positions. He said he is doing his best to fill those positions as soon as possible. He said the jobs have been advertised on the Mass. Municipal Association website. He

said he is having difficulty finding people. Councilor Dillon thanked Supt. Duran and his team for what they do. He said last weekend there was a water main break in the district the represents and the DPW repaired the issue quickly and professionally. He said water service was returned as quickly as possible. Supt. Duran said his staff is qualified, and residents are not getting cheated on the DPW end. He asked if there are any questions about the Cemetery Dept. budget. Chair pro tem Demers said there appear to be no questions at this time. **City Clerk –** Representing the City Clerk's office was City Clerk Lindsay Higgins. Clerk Higgins said there is an increase in the professional development and training line item. She said the office recently instituted higher fees for City Council filings and vital records. She said applicants now pay a separate \$300 fee for advertising. She said the office has been down a staff member since February, but a new person starts on Monday. She said there are new voting machines in the capital budget. She said the primary election will be on Sept. 6, and the general election will be on Nov. 8. She said they are still waiting to learn the dates of any early voting periods. She said the office just completed re-precincting based on the 2020 U.S. Census. She said there was an uptick in phone calls about the changes to the precincts. Councilor Dillon said the clerk's office does such a great job and the council is very fortunate to have them. Clerk Higgins said the staff worked hard during the 2020 election. Councilor Gately said Clerk Higgins does a great job and her staff is very reliable. He said the staff always fulfills every request from the council in a timely manner. He asked when the vacancy in the office will be filled. Clerk Higgins said the new staff member starts on Monday. **Parks -** Representing the Parks Dept. was Supt. James DeLong. Supt. DeLong asked if any members of the council have questions about his budget. Councilor Gately asked by how many employees the Parks Dept. is short-staffed. Supt. DeLong said he is lacking two full-time employees. He said they barely have enough personnel to get out of the door. Councilor Gately asked when those positions will be filled. Supt. DeLong said he has no idea. He said he has had discussions with the mayor. He said they have maintaining school grounds for the past 16 years. He said the ordinance calls for seven full-time personnel in the Parks Dept. He said he lost the seventh guy, and prior to that he lost the sixth guy. He said those positions haven't been funded. He said the Parks Dept. is responsible for maintaining more than 88 acres of land. He said he like to think his crew does a pretty good job. He said his work force is very dedicated, but the current staffing level is unsustainable. Councilor Gately asked what the condition of the department's equipment is. Supt. DeLong said there are three trucks that were rejected by the state Dept. of Transportation. He said the cutting equipment is in pretty good shape. He said they are really hurting for vehicles. He said there is no transportation for part-time help. Councilor Gately asked what can be done to improve the situation. Supt. DeLong said he is not sure. He said he warned four years ago that the Parks Dept. is dying on the vine. He said he is basically existing on a budget from 2003. He said his budget has been level funded for the past three administrations. He said he calls that unsustainable. He said level funding doesn't work. He said he does not have money for parts and materials. Councilor Gately said he is aware of the budgetary issues, but the council can only cut the budget, it cannot add to it. He said Supt. DeLong's team does a great job. Supt. DeLong said 20 years of level funding isn't going to get things done. He said the Parks Dept. is responsible to 88 acres every week, and that land is worth \$60 million. He said people come to Woburn from out-of-town and give nothing but rave reviews about the condition of the parks. He said without proper funding, that is going to go away. He said the condition of the parks makes him proud, but they need manpower and trucks. Councilor Dillon thanked Supt. DeLong for the amazing job he does with the parks. He said he is out on weekends and sees Parks Dept. employees working. He said he is hoping Mr. DeLong

gets some summer help. Mr. DeLong said last year he advertised for summer help and he got one applicant who was only able to work 19 hours a week. He said this year he hasn't gotten one application for part-time help. He said they are not applying. President Concannon said the condition of the parks and ballfields in the city is spectacular. He said he wishes there was more the council could do. He said last year outside landscapers were brought in to maintain Woodbrook Cemetery. He said he is hearing that was successful and asked if this was something Supt. DeLong would consider. Supt. DeLong said he does not need any outside help. He said maintaining the parks is more than cutting grass. He said what his department does is so much more than landscaping. He said they have to cut a ballfield and prepare it so it is playable. He said a landscaper will cut grass at between 2-3 inches, and the Parks Dept. cuts it to an inch. He said they have to cut the fields two or three times a week. Councilor DiMambro said he has looked at the Parks Dept.'s equipment. He said he has experience in contracting and landscaping. He said his hat is off to Supt. DeLong and his guys who keep that equipment working. He said it seems like some of the equipment is held together with bonding wire. He said he wishes there was more funding. He said the fields always look great. Councilor Viola thanked Supt. DeLong and said the fields look tremendous. He asked what Supt. DeLong's overtime budget is. Supt. DeLong said there is not much money for overtime. He said they work every Saturday. He said the overtime budget is the same as it was in 2003. He said level funding is for the birds. He said it does not work. Councilor Gately said he and Supt. DeLong did a lot of work together when Councilor Gately worked for the DPW. He said Supt. DeLong didn't have enough help then and he's been since given even more responsibility. He said Supt. DeLong has been doing it with mirrors for year, but one of these days without additional staff, the mirror is going to crack. Supt. DeLong said the parks were neglected in the '70s, and he and Councilor Gately installed irrigation systems that helped bring the parks back. He said unless the city starts funding the Parks Dept. differently, all of that is going to go away. Councilor Ferullo thanked Supt. DeLong for all he and his crew do. **Information Systems** – Representing the Information Systems Dept. was Director David Mastronardi. Director Mastronardi said his budgetary increases are in financial management. Councilor Ferullo asked about an increase in the phone support line item. Director Mastronardi said there is a need for phone support. He said he has started integrating new systems with different departments. Councilor Ferullo said the line item is increasing by \$75,000. Director Mastronardi said Open Government was added through the CARES act. He said there is a transition from paper to digital files. **Inspectional Services** – Representing the Inspectional Services Dept. was Building Commissioner Thomas Quinn. Commissioner Quinn said his departmental budget is level funded except for salaries. He said the only two lines items that concern him are for overtime and temporary help. He said he is hoping those line items will not be cut. Councilor Dillon thanked Commissioner Quinn and his staff for keeping an eye on things. He said when the council was deliberating about the Vale project, the members were able to reach out to Commissioner Quinn and he was always there. He said the Inspectional Services Dept. does a great job. Commissioner Quinn said everyone knows their role. He said they were down two staff members and they were able to get the job done. He said they are back to being fully staffed now. He thanked Councilor Dillon for his comments. Councilor Gately said the Inspectional Services Dept. does a great job. He said it is nice to call someone on the phone who is willing to help you. He said it is great that the department is fully staffed now. He said the department does a tremendous job. Commissioner Quinn said staffing is hard to come by. He said Inspectional Services is a dying breed. He said he is one of the older ones now. He said it is nice to see younger people apply. Councilor DiMambro thanked Commissioner Quinn and his

team. He said there is so much stuff that goes on in Woburn, especially on the commercial side. He thanked Commissioner Quinn and his team for helping him out with questions about issues in Ward 6. Councilor Ferullo thanked Commissioner Quinn for his responsiveness. Councilor Viola said he would like to echo the praise expressed by other members of the council. He said Commissioner Quinn and his team do a great job, especially responding to email and phone calls. Commissioner Quinn said that is all part of the public service his department provides.

**Auditor** – Representing the Auditors Dept. was Charles Doherty, City Auditor. Auditor Doherty said his department is level funded except for salary increases as part of the contract settlement with SEIU, to which three members of the department belong. He said the Deputy Auditor recently left the city for another community. He said he is looking to fill the position but so far there has not been a robust response to advertising. He said he wants to wait until he can hire a qualified person. He said the department had another good year. He said the 2021 audit was very positive. He said they are starting to see local receipts come back. He said he anticipates busy times ahead for the city. Councilor Dillon thanked Auditor Doherty and his staff for their efforts. He said he comes to City Hall for committee meetings on Mondays and very often Auditor Doherty is still in his office at 6:30 p.m. He said Auditor Doherty is a hard worker and he appreciates that. Councilor Gately said the Auditors Dept. does a tremendous job. He said he hopes a qualified Deputy Auditor is hired. Auditor Doherty said he is also available to answer any questions about the budget in general. **Engineering** – Representing the Engineering Dept. was City Engineer John Corey. Engineer Corey said the Engineering Dept. is one of the smaller departments but it tends to do a lot. He said the proposed departmental budget meets the needs of him and his staff. President Concannon said there are three positions in the Engineering Dept. that are labeled TBD in the budget and he asked if those will be filled. Engineer Corey said those positions have not been filled and he does not foresee them being filled either in the short or long term. Councilor Dillon said he appreciates the support the Engineering Dept. provides to the City Council. He said he calls Engineer Corey as often as he calls Commissioner Quinn. He said the Engineering staff is always very helpful. He said he appreciates Engineer Corey's guidance. Councilor Gately asked about the status of the Tier 2 classification line item in the budget. Engineer Corey said there is on-going testing at Leland Park. He said the city is still required to test. Councilor Gately asked about engineering activities at Horn Pond. Engineer Corey said there is a \$1 million outlay to design and construct a herring fish ladder at the pond. He said that will be starting in July. He said there is a \$2 million outlay to undertake a flooding control project in the Shaker Glen area. He thanked U.S. Rep. Katherine Clark for her efforts in that realm. He said they are undertaking an environmental design plan at the Hurd School. He said they are working with the Recreation Dept. to build a spray park and refurbish the bathrooms on Green Street. He said the New Boston Street bridge project may finally come to fruition after 19 years. Councilor DiMambro thanked Engineer Corey and his staff for their help with projects in North Woburn. He said he looks forward to continuing to work with the Engineering Dept. Councilor Viola thanked Engineer Corey and his staff for being there. He said he is looking forward to working with the Engineering Dept. to address floodplain issues in the Four Corners area. **Fire Dept.** – Representing the Fire Dept. was Fire Chief Donald Kenton. Chief Kenton said there is a 6 percent increase in his budget largely due to the hiring of new firefighters to man Rescue 2 on a 24-hour/7-day basis. He said the department is excited about having a second full-time ambulance. He said the fire maintenance budget is essentially the same. He said he expects the new Fire Dept. headquarters to open in about six months. Councilor Gately asked if there are nine or eight openings that will be filled. Chief Kenton replied there will be 11 positions filled;

three in addition to the eight new firefighters that will be manning Rescue 2. He said the department is about 5-6 months away from the new station and getting the second ambulance up-and-running. Councilor Gately asked about the status of the new fire station. Chief Kenton said they are starting to lay asphalt. Councilor Gately asked if the station will open in January or February. Chief Kenton said they are running into supply chain issues but that is about the time frame they are targeting. Councilor Gately thanked Chief Kenton and his staff for all they do. Councilor Dillon said public safety is the number one priority for his constituents. He said one of his constituents had an issue and was well taken care of by the Woburn Fire Dept. and the Woburn Police Dept. Councilor DiMambro asked if Rescue 2 will be operating 40 hours a week. Chief Kenton said Rescue 2 will operate 24/7/365. Councilor DiMambro thanked the Woburn Fire Dept. He said they do an unbelievable job. He said he lives in proximity to the Engine 2 station and he sees fire apparatus going up and down his street all the time. He said he appreciates all the Fire Dept. does. Councilor Viola said the Woburn Fire Dept. does a great job. He said he is looking forward to seeing Rescue 2 operating 24/7. Councilor Ferullo said he worked with Chief Kenton for decades. He said he is thrilled the Fire Dept. is getting a second ambulance. Chair pro tem Demers thanked Chief Kenton and the Fire Dept. for all they do.

**Police Dept.** – Representing the Woburn Police Dept. was Chief Robert Rufo. Chief Rufo said his departmental budget will increase 3.29 percent, primarily due to five new hires that he will send to the police academy in the fall. He said six spots will be opening due to attrition. Councilor Gately said Chief Rufo and his department do a great job. He said there are line items on page 20 of the budget for a part-time secretary and a criminal analyst that were not funded. Chief Rufo replied those line items have not been funded for four budget cycles. He said he would rather have officers on the street. He said hiring new officers has become difficult. Councilor Gately said there is a lot of new development going on in North Woburn and the city will have to consider an increase in population in that area. Chief Rufo said he drives to North Woburn every Friday to look at the new construction and development. In response to a question from Councilor Ferullo, Chief Rufo said the department is no longer able to augment the full-time police force with reserve officers. He said he cannot put officers on the street until they attend a 25-week program at the police academy. Councilor Ferullo asked what any impact will be if a recreational marijuana facility opens in Woburn. Chief Rufo said there will probably be no impact. He said there are a number of dispensaries in nearby communities, and most of them are recreational facilities. He said medical marijuana facilities do not provide any revenue from the state. He said there are 34 facilities within 15 miles of Woburn. He said local revenue from a recreational marijuana shop will be 3 percent. He said the total tax rate for a recreational marijuana shop is about 20 percent. He said he has spoken to some of his fellow police chiefs and there have been no problems with recreational marijuana shops. He said he was skeptical at first, but when you look at the facts, there won't be any impact. Councilor Ferullo said the Woburn Police Dept.'s reputation across the state is phenomenal. He said in his job he deals with Homeland Security and the feedback he gets about Chief Rufo and his team makes him feel very proud. Councilor DiMambro said with everything that is going on in the city, does Chief Rufo feel comfortable with the staffing level he has. Chief Rufo said it will be a struggle to maintain the current level of service with the current staff. He said guidelines call for between 2.2-2.8 staff for every 1,000 of population. He said that would put the staffing level at 88 and right now he has 70 people. He said the expected influx of residents will impact police, fire, and schools tremendously. He said he thinks there will be a significant increase in traffic once the New Boston Street bridge project is finished. He said traffic is the biggest complaint on a daily basis,

and the new construction will exacerbate the city's traffic problem. He said there will also be impacts on the highways. He said State Police have jurisdiction over Rt. 93 and Rt. 128, but his department assists. Councilor DiMambro thanked Chief Rufo for everything he and his team do to provide the community with safety, security, and medical services. Councilor Dillon said there is nothing more important than hearing Woburn is a safe community. He said he watches how Woburn police officers interact with the public and he is impressed. He said that is what pulls a community together and heals a community. He said Chief Rufo is doing a great job. Councilor Viola thanked Chief Rufo and his staff for putting their lives on the line every day. He said he is glad to see the Woburn Police Dept. uses the Middlesex Sheriff's guidelines for a safety program. Chief Rufo said that has been a blessing and a godsend. He said the guidelines have certainly assisted the department tremendously. Councilor Viola asked if Woburn is using less matrons and monitors. Chief Rufo said he generally tries to use reserve officers. He said it is very difficult to monitor. He said it has been very difficult to hire them. Councilor Viola said it is the same way where he works. He asked about the line item for overtime for the Animal Control Officer. Chief Rufo said the full-time ACO works from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. and then part-time help is on call as needed. Chair pro tem Demers tanks Chief Rufo and his staff for their professionalism. **Woburn Public Schools** – Representing Woburn Public Schools were Supt. Matthew Crowley and School Committee Chair Dr. John Wells. Dr. Wells said the school system is starting to get back on track in the wake of the Covid era. He said students lost a lot during Covid. He said the city's demographics are changing and they are seeing an influx of high needs students. Supt. Crowley said this has been another challenging year for the School Dept. He said he has a document he would like to hand out to members of the committee. Motion made by Councilor Viola and seconded by Councilor Dillon to receive and place on file a document from Dr. Crowley entitled "WPS FY23 Woburn Public Schools Blueprint for our future;" approved, 7-0. Dr. Crowley said there are 10 schools in the Woburn Public School system. He said 21.6 percent of students come from home where the first language spoken is not English. He said the ratio of Multi-Lingual Learners is 9.4 percent. Last year, the MLL ratio was 8 percent. When he started as superintendent, the ratio was 4 percent. He said there are students in the system who do not speak any English at all. He said the linguistic challenges for teachers is exponential. He said 18 percent of the students in the system have disabilities. He said that ratio will be close to 22 percent next year. He said those students will require extra support. He said the ratio of high needs students is 52.5 percent. He said last year that ratio was 44 percent. He said part of that is due to the pandemic. He said the ratio of students from low-income households last year was 32 percent and this year is 40.3 percent. He said the city of Woburn is changing daily. He said there are 30 new students in the system from the Avalon Bay development. He said there was free summer school last year. He said the school year never really ended. He said the schools have been operating continuously for 2.5 years. He said he wants to thank the staff for making all of that possible. He said they have had to reinstitute some Covid protocols at the Hurld-Wyman Elementary School. He said they have what amounts to an all-day buffet with six lunch sessions. He said the state Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education offered testing during the holiday break. He said he drove to Marlboro on New Year's Day to collect tests. He said there were more than 400 reported cases of the Omicron variant. He said they were relentlessly short-staffed but they managed to keep the schools open. He said he can't thank the staff enough. He said it has been a challenging year. He said curriculum will be aligned at all schools. He said they will be unveiling a strategic plan within a month. He said they are offering innovation pathways not in competition with Northeast Voke but rather to take

advantage of grant funding opportunities with the state. He said long-time Linscott-Rumford Principal Ernie Wells is retiring. He said the school ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> in the state for MCAS scores. He said there have not been many other retirements. He said there have been no other retirements at the elementary level. He said the school system received a 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant for after school enrichment. He said students' needs do not end at 2 p.m. He said extended day programs are offered at the Malcolm White and Goodyear schools. Supt. Crowley said the Project Lead the Way program is also funded through a grant and includes a provision for teachers to be more interactive. He said there is a \$100,000 grant from the Cummings Foundation for a STEM initiative and a \$20,000 grant from WCEF for a reading program. Supt. Crowley said the FY '23 school budget includes a 3.75-percent increase. He said Asst. Supt. Robert Alconada met with Auditor Charles Doherty and Mayor Scott Galvin to come up with a budget. He said the School Dept. obtained an Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grant for Covid-related issues. He said second grade students have never had a normal school year. He said disruptions to school are difficult when you are learning to read. He said the increase in the budget accounts for an increase in Multi-Lingual Learner programs, curricular enhancements and professional development. He said there is a \$600,000 outlay for a feasibility study that will lead to a 5-year road map for capital improvements. Councilor Ferullo noted Supt. Crowley's comment that there are 30 new students from the Avalon Bay project and asked if the development is fully-occupied. Supt. Crowley said the Building Commissioner told him Avalon Bay is 75 percent occupied. He said the development added 21 elementary students and nine secondary students. He said the elementary students are attending the Goodyear School. Councilor Ferullo asked if there has been an impact on the schools due to the project at the other end of Commerce Way. Supt. Crowley said he does not know yet. Councilor Viola asked if the money from the ESSER grant was used on personnel. Asst. Supt. Alconada said a lot of the ESSER funding was used to expand personnel during the Covid period. He said they used interventionists at the elementary level. He said they used grant money to make curriculum purchases for reading and math. Councilor Viola said he has gotten a lot of calls about reducing the number of third grade classes from three to two at the Reeves Elementary School. Supt. Crowley said they are going to stay at three classes. He said school official received emails as well. He said it was determined it is better to have three classes. Councilor Dillon thanked school officials for providing meals so any student in the system does not have to go hungry. Supt. Crowley said there were free meals distributed by the School Dept., starting in March 2020. He said the School Dept. needs to make sure people are fed before they learn. Councilor Dillon asked if the rates for substitute teachers went up. Supt. Crowley said the rates did go up. Councilor Dillon said he hopes those positions can be filled. Supt. Crowley said the rates increased from \$95 to \$120. He said this was helpful during the Omicron surge. He said the increase in the rate attracted a lot of people. President Concannon said it looks like the School Dept. is committed to maintaining the same level of service. Councilor Gately said he has seen a lot of school budget in the 16-17 years he has been on the City Council. He said he used to have discussions every year with former Asst. Supt. Joseph Elia and he said they both enjoyed the debate. He said what he heard during the pandemic was the biggest fear was the schools would close. He said the School Dept. did a tremendous job keeping the schools open, and he appreciates that. Councilor DiMambro said there are new apartments being built in Ward 6 and his constituents are nervous about the impact will be on the Altavesta School. He said his other question is about technology, which he said changes every six months. He asked how the School Dept.'s budget reflect the ever-changing technology. Supt. Crowley said students are issued

Chromebooks, which have a life span of 3-4 years. He said every student in grades 6-12 has a Chromebook. He said it is important to not just issue the devices, but also to keep current with the technology around it. Councilor DiMambro asked what the future holds for the Linscott and Altavesta schools. Supt. Crowley said he would point to a feasibility study for all 10 buildings to guide the School Dept. through the next steps. He said a demographic survey was conducted pre-Covid, and they might have to do that again because the demographics may have shifted. President Concannon asked how often the Multi-Lingual Learning situation is evaluated. He said Boston seems the struggle with that issue. Supt. Crowley said the MLL programs are evaluated regularly. He said they do have people in classrooms who do not speak English. He said programs are fashioned depending upon need. He said there are students in the city who speak a variety of languages. He said that has been a new thing for them. Chair pro tem Demers thanked school officials for all their hard work and recognized the School Committee members who were in audience. **Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School** – Representing Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School were Supt-Director David DiBarri, Finance Director James Picone, and Northeast Voke School Committee Chair Deborah Davis, who is also Woburn’s elected representative to the School Committee. Chair Davis said there are two handouts that were previously emailed to the Clerk of Committees regarding the budget. Director Picone said he has supplemental copies for distribution. Motion made by Councilor Dillon and seconded by Councilor Viola to receive and place on file documents entitled “Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School FY 2023 Budget” and Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School FY23 Budget – Presentation to School Committee,” both dated March 10, 2022;” approved, 7-0. Supt. DiBarri said the support from Woburn for the referendum for the new school building was so overwhelming. He said this is his fourth year as superintendent and they took a new approach to the budget this year. He said they are not being as passive. He said they actively sought to obtain money anywhere they could. He said his goal was to make any increase as low as possible. He said school officials worked with local legislators to see what the financial picture will be before the cherry sheets come out. He said they looked at state and federal legislation to increase the amount of money they receive from the state. He said they are looking for more money to reduce the burden of capital costs on cities and towns. He said they do not want to lay people off. He said layoffs hurt morale and increase unemployment costs. He said they are looking every day to bring in money and save money to reduce the money of money that needs to be borrowed for the new school. Director Picone said Northeast Voke understands Woburn is under the constraints of Proposition 2 ½, and that every other municipal department needs to be funded. He said their goal is not to compete with the Woburn Public Schools but to work with the local district and provide educational excellence in the vocational realm. He said the increase in Woburn’s assessment is 0.88-percent. He said the district will receive \$1 million in transportation aid. President Concannon asked what the per pupil assessment is next year. Director Picone said Woburn’s per pupil assessment will be \$18,671. Councilor DiMambro asked if the increase in construction costs and building materials have been accounted for. Director Picone said those have been factored into the budget. Councilor Gately said Northeast Voke is doing a great job. He said he knows Chair Davis works hard. He said any increase the city has to incur is minor compared to what else is going on. He said he will back Northeast Voke’s funding 100 percent. Chair pro tem Demers said he wants to thank the officials from Northeast Voke on behalf of the students who attend the school.

**MOTION** made by Councilor Viola and seconded by Councilor Dillon to adjourn; approved, 7-0. Chair pro tem Demers adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

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Gordon Vincent  
Clerk of Committees