

**NORFOLK BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES OF MARCH 24, 2026 SPECIAL MEETING**



Members present were: M. Sconyers, S. Anderson, J. Bickford, G. Mudge, J. Tarrant and alternate L. Battis.

L. Battis was appointed to fill in for M. Kwast.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by M. Sconyers.

The First Selectman presented the Board of Selectmen 2026-2027 Budget including handouts to the BOF of an Income Summary sheet, and Budget Summary by Department, etc. The proposed budget would result in an increase to the mill rate of 6.8%. A 2% increase in the general town budget due to \$270,000 for one plow truck and \$130,000 towards a fire truck with no offsets significantly impacts the bottom line.

The Positive Fund Balance is robust. Additionally, there remains approximately \$700,000 in the Union Savings Bank account from closing out the defined benefit package, \$180,875.62 of which will be the second to last payment for the EMS garage and Botelle School roof and a final payment in next year's budget.

Gas spill negotiations: The First Selectman is awaiting a response from the Defendants. The Town will need to reimburse litigation costs to the line from which they were withdrawn.

The Capital Reserve account has slightly over \$1,000,000, with an estimated balance of \$768,000 in the event \$270,000 is deducted for the purchase of one new plow truck.

The BOF discussed various ways to avoid increasing the mill rate.

A deposit is not required for the plow truck; but payment is required immediately upon receipt. Chairman Sconyers would prefer the funds derive from the Union Savings defined pension cashout or from the settlement of the gas spill litigation. Selectman Leo Colwell, Jr. reported the Truck Committee is hopeful to have a truck in this year's budget and one in next year's budget to avoid having trucks be unavailable when needed. The Board of Selectman are proposing to replace 2007 and 2009 plow trucks. There is a significant delay in acquiring a new truck. There are six (6) drivers with seven (7) trucks, but often one truck is out of service. The newest truck by age is 9 years old, With an old fleet, repairs are costlier and there is great difficulty acquiring parts. Chairman Sconyers prefers that a truck be purchased now, and again in the 2027-2028 budget. First Selectman Tirrell feels the Town has over \$1,000,000 in Capital Reserve, and that spending \$270,000 towards the first truck will still leave sufficient funds remaining with a preference to purchase two (2) plow trucks. As far as timing, if the Town votes in April, that truck would be ready in November or December. If delayed until July 1st, it won't be ready until the winter after. The hope is to buy one truck asap and one on or about July 1st.

The Board discussed various scenarios to fund the plow truck(s).

To lessen the impact of increases to the Budget and an ensuing mill rate increase, the standard draw down from the Positive Fund Balance is \$150,000. The remaining former pension account is part of the Positive Fund Balance.

Debt Service: The 2027-2028 budget is where/when the 20-year bond on the firehouse will appear.

The Town is fortunate to be locked in for fuel oil and diesel.

The First Selectman will ask for George Sinnamon's opinion on the Positive Fund Balance.

The Board voted unanimously to appropriate \$270,000 toward a new plow truck and \$130,000 towards a fire truck from the Union Savings Bank former defined pension account to bring to a Special Town Meeting to be held on or about April 6th.

The Annual Town Meeting will be May 11th.

Mountain Road Bridge Replacement: First Selectman Tirrell relayed that the Town needs to expense the cost and submit for reimbursements. Bond counsel recommended a Grant Anticipation Note/Revenue Anticipation Note of just over \$1,000,000 to draw down from as invoices for construction and engineering are received. It would come due in December or January. The lowest interest rate received thus far is at 3.75%. Interest and fees are budgeted at \$50,000. The anticipated completion date is November.

On Motion of M. Sconyers, second by L. Battis and unanimously approved, the Board approved a resolution recommending an appropriation and bond authorization for replacement of the bridge located on Mountain Road over Spaulding Brook.

On Motion of M. Sconyers, second by S. Anderson and unanimously approved, the Board approved transferring \$400,000 from the Positive Fund Balance to reduce mill rate increases to the 2026-2027 budget.

L. Battis, on behalf of the BOF, thanked the Truck Committee for all of their hard work.

On Motion of J. Torrant, second by G. Mudge and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Ryan

Jennifer M. Ryan, Secretary