Finance Committee
July 30, 2026
Minutes

Call to Order 6:30

Roll Call. Bruce Capron, Al Carvill, Jennifer Sinsebox, Alyssa Benjamin-Trego.
Dave Gates absent.

Introductions

New Member: Dr. Jennifer Sinsebox, Moved from West Henrietta to South Bristol 3 years ago for quiet, access to the lake, natural beauty and wine. Alyssa lived in downtown Rochester but also moved to get a break from rat race and little gems are here. Bristol Theater.

Jenn has PhD, St. John Fisher, and is currently adjunct professor, SUNY Brockport. Taught special ed for 16 years, moved to leadership, and ended up in Innovation and Grants for Newark, Wheatland, Bloomfield. Retired this year. Bruce and Jenn met at SUNY Oswego while both were in the Superintendent Development Program.

Minutes. Al Carvill made motion to approve June minutes; Bruce second. Motion passes.

Grants Update

Heroic effort of finance committee's Working Grants Task Force. Hundreds of pages written. Plus application for various UEI, SFS accounts needed for grant, two special board meetings for various grant resolutions, resolution to fund grant review, resolution to support AARP Age-Friendly Initiative and Gender Based Violence in Workplace (plus policy creation).

Alyssa and Jenn led cross-functional collaborative teams as leads for Finance Committee's Working Grants Task Force. Alyssa led Scenic Overlook Grant team and Jenn lead Comprehensive Plan Grant team and consulted on overlook grants. Labella (chosen from 4 bids) reviewed the grants. Cost $1000 ($500 each). Deadline is July 31, 4pm.

- Comp Plan is submitted (around 40 pages). $125,000 for Comp Plan (15/85 match). To keep "rural character" (i.e., natural beauty) you have to have a plan or development you don't want happens.

  CP, under the auspices of the Community Engagement committee, will have a steering committee and should make sure all SB stakeholders at table. Town board will decide who is on the steering committee.

  Embedded in grant is a survey instrument. Online and on paper. Focus groups. Town meetings. Grant "director" will make sure all those will be done.

  The consultant compiles data and board has to review and go public, with wants/needs/hopes for future. Then redesign around that plan.

Data collected from current plan was by great people but this could be data-driven by experts and steers ship and makes recommendation. Reasonable credible developer that would help develop the community. Affordable housing. Making data driven decisions for the town.

- Scenic Overlook (two grants) not submitted yet. Edits are being incorporated from Labella reviewer. Over 100 pages (same grant, but LWRP additional 40 pp). $130,000 for Parks (LWRP is 15/85 match; EFP is 25/75).

Where will SB growth come from?

- 30% over 60 in SB. Fixed Income. Concerning Characterization.
- Child Care Desert. If residents don't work remotely they have to go to Livonia, Victor/Farmington, Plattsburgh for Childcare. Naples School Enrollment is very low, maybe only 40 in kindergarten.
- Housing an issue. 5 acre lots required. How to achieve affordable Housing? Ideas: Planned Development. Housing clusters. Little House community like Ithaca's "Voiceville." Architecturally pronounced and aesthetic. Charming. Very interactive community. Charming. Not just 60 and over. People are artsy. They love it. Made Architectural Digest (documentary on YouTube). Little house community near SenecaL you own the house but lease the land.
- Growth: Improve SR64 for commercialism. Expanded commercialism would also help tax base.
- Need more here. Have to go to Ithaca (75 miles away), Rochester (51 miles away) for work

Audit Update: no final report yet but can discuss prelims with finance committee, board.

Procurement Policy Update: Modeled from Carvill draft to incorporate suggestions from NYAOT, Auditor, and town lawyer. Fiscal oversight *before* purchases are made still an issue. Consider: Purchasing Agent for Town to monitor budget. Responsible for Approval on all Purchase Orders. Edits on the forms to make South Bristol Forms (Al says to pick up from Williamson). Purchase Req/Purchase Order for over $750. Requisition/log.

Financial Disclosure Update: Have good start on short form. Bruce has edited. Comptroller to advise. Disclosure goes to County Board of Ethics.

Budget Update

- Budget worksheets done and sent to Town Clerk and Highway Supervisor; others to go out shortly.

- Goal to maintain or lower tax rate. Also transparency for public; possibly workshops for public.

Issues:

- Reval; healthcare costs; union contract; fixed assets (IT/Highway Equipment – now or when?). Focus on minimum total cost of ownership, purchase/operate/re-sell (esp for highway equipment). Snow plow on state contract (3 years and then sell at auction and sold for almost as much as you paid for it).
- Employee wages (4.2% Consumer Price Index, includes housing/energy has been fluctuated a lot -- released every May – guide for discussion; different calculation for Federal Reserve).
- 2% Tax Cap. Exclusions for capital projects voter approved.   in Salt Barn (might be grant money for that – CFA DOS/Senate Bill NYS Local Water).
- Transfer Station bathroom/breakroom costs. Need estimate (48% of costs for materials).
- Curb for blacktop on Scenic Overlook.
- Make sure we take into account when bond can be paid off that we consider interest and how it affects tax levy. Bond needs to be paid from the reserve, so we'll need to stipulate that at budget.
- Salt lining for Salt barn (watershed issue; *grant possibility for next year's CFA*)
- Can we really afford a $200,000 emergency? What is our fund balance?

To consider for 2027:

- School tax will go up. Can we help reduce county rates? Fed reduced SNAP and county will have to make up difference; hits county hard and raises county taxes.
- Reval: What about tax rate or tax levy? Education: assessments and taxes (equalization rate) for community engagement events. Next year is critical.

To consider for future budgets:

- Our bookkeeper is in Buffalo. Collaborating for oversight means bookkeeper needs to work for/with the town – we don't have that with this system. Finance chair shd have access to bookkeeper.
- Multiyear planning is key. Major. Important.

Standing Committee Update. Agreed-to in last meeting.

- What are advantages of a permanent finance committee?
    - Open Meetings Law

- Expertise to support board member decisions.
- Board members have one number to look at. Shouldn't have dueling numbers from supervisor and board members. Should be just THE NUMBERS. Committee reviews and advises on financial policy/procedure for best financial practices, minimize risk management, optimize tax payer dollars.

- Think about role of finance committee and how best to collaborate with the Town Board. Otherwise there is political conflict. One critical thing to make that relationship successful. SB has citizen committees; some others have 2 board members on the finance committee. That way board could understand the logic of the committee and board members would be advocates for sound fiscal policy. Finance make recommendations to Town Board

- What is process? Review charter, appointment process for members; terms for members. Charter: Add review of Financial Policies and Procedures. Add catchall language: Risk Management. Make sure that's part of the charter Collab Supervisor directly with Bruce and then respond over email. Simpler is better to get it through effectively.

Action Items:

- Take grants and "save as," then use as basis to fine-tune to new specs for next year's grants.
- Create Executive Summary of grants with timeline. (When is Comprehensive Plan going to be done?) Money. Suggestions. Post to Website, with similar subheadings, especially for community outreach. Place for ideas and suggestions and comments. Maybe polls. Simple poll with 10 items. Helps to avoid NIMBY concept.
- Look for other grants for Culture, Downtown Revitalization, and Growth (especially salt lining for salt barn - watershed related CFA grant).
- Consider Post Mortem for Grant Writing: Lessons Learned.
- Send potential auditor meetup dates to team for Zoom/Hybrid -- middle of August. Set up meeting.
- Bruce and Lisa will go over some suggestions for procurement policy.
- Lisa to review Bruce's edits on financial disclosure; get comptroller advice.
- Lisa will research 10 year lookback for budget; provide fund balance # to committee.
- Collate other finance committees charters and SB planning board charter (list what they do….) to Bruce. Work with Bruce to create suggestions and send to committee members for comments.

Adjourn @ 8:15.