

Stoneham Finance and Advisory Board (FAB)

Date:	April 7, 2025
Time:	700p
Location:	Stoneham Town Hall Auditorium
Present:	Mike Memmelo - Chair Rod Allen, Joe Combs, Adam Jacobs, Joe Joffe, Lucy Marchese, Jeff Moyer, Wendy Smith, Jim Wilson
Absent:	Jen Gray
Guests:	Dennis Sheehan – Town Administrator Rachel Overbeck – Town Librarian Matthew Grafton – Town Fire Chief James O'Connor – Town Chief of Police

	<p><u>AGENDA</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meeting Minutes – Vote Required 2. Board Election – Secretary 3. Appointment of FAB member to the following committees: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capital Committee b. School Building Committee 4. May 5, 2025 Town Meeting Warrant Articles – VOTE Required 5. Updates <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capital b. School Building Committee c. Subcommittees <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Other business – Non-deliberative</p> 6. Adjournment - Vote required

1.	The April 7, 2025, started with a 90 minute public comment period.	Board unanimously approved 2 30-minute
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extensions to the public comment period.

The meeting then invited the current Stoneham library director, Rachel Overbeck, to speak focused on the budget and certification review, emphasizing the need to make difficult decisions due to a \$2 million gap. The board discussed leveraging additional funds to schools and the impact of decertifying the public library, which could result in a loss of state aid and reciprocal borrowing privileges.

Library Services and Impact on the Community

- Ms. Overbeck spoke to the services provided by the library, including storytime, book delivery, and partnerships with the Senior Center.
- The library has over 60,000 items available in Stoneham and 2.1 million items available through the state's reciprocal borrowing program.
- The digital collection includes Libby, Hoopla, and Canopy, with over 119,000 items checked out from Stoneham and 27,775 items checked out at other libraries by Stoneham residents.
- The library is open 56 hours a week, has 8,700 cardholders, and has seen an increase in foot traffic and time spent at the library.

Budget Scenarios and Certification Requirements

- Ms. Overbeck spoke to the consequences of decertifying a library, including the loss of state aid and reciprocal borrowing privileges. Spoke to a 167% ROI at the library.
- The library is currently eligible for state aid of around \$57,000 and can apply for grants and services from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).
- If the library cannot meet the municipal appropriation requirement (MAR), it can apply for a waiver showing significant fiscal hardship and proportional budget cuts.
- The minimum requirements for certification include being open at least 45 hours for four days a week for 38 consecutive weeks and spending at least 13.5% of the allocated operating budget on materials for patron use.
- Ms. Overbeck presented various budget scenarios, including a minimal reduction of \$50,000, complete elimination of the budget, and a 50% reduction.
- A 50% reduction would mean bare-bones staffing, reduced programming, and no technology support from the consortium.
- A proportional cut could avoid decertification and still provide library services, but it would mean significantly reduced access for residents.
- Ms. Overbeck outlined the next steps based on the board's recommendation, including determining a proportional cut and assessing the scope of feasible services within that

budget.

Police and Fire Department Certification and Budget Impact

- Police Chief O'Connor discussed the impact of budget cuts on the department's ability to maintain certification and meet best practices.
- Fire Chief Grafton explained the minimum staffing requirements and the impact of budget cuts on the department's ability to respond to calls.
- The board discussed the potential for starting an in-house ambulance service and the associated costs and training requirements.
- The administrator emphasized the need for a balanced budget and the potential for amending the budget at a subsequent town meeting.

- No vote on meeting minutes.

2. Board Election – Secretary

- a. The board appointed Jim Wilson as the secretary for the finance advisory board for the months of April and May.

3. Appointment of FAB member to the following committees:

- a. Capital Committee
- b. School Building Committee

- The board appointed Joe Joffe as liaison to the capital committee.
- The board appointed Adam Jacobs as liaison to the building committee. The School Committee Update

4. May 5, 2025 Town Meeting Warrant Articles – **VOTE Required**

5. Updates

Mr Joffe introduced a motion to return to regular order of business, seconded by Ms. Smith. Passed 9-0.

Motion was made by Ms. Smith and seconded by Ms. Marchese. Passed 9-0.

Motion was made by Ms. Smith and seconded by Mr. Wilson. Passed 9-0.

Motion was made by Mr. Joffe and seconded by Mr. Wilson. Passed 9-0.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Capitalb. School Building Committeec. Subcommittees <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Joffe spoke to the redistricting consultant being engaged by Superintendent Ljunberg.	
6.	Adjournment at 10:08pm- Vote required	Mr. Combs then introduced a motion to adjourn; Mr. Jacobs seconded; all in favor.