

Stoneham Override Study Committee

Date:	September 02, 2025
Time:	7p
Location:	Stoneham Town Hall Hearing Room
Present:	Joe Joffe – Chair Stephen Ternullo – Vice Chair Nick Stavre, Jackie Mahoney, Heidi Bilbo, Brendan Dowdle, Eric Scruggs, Cory Mashburn
Absent:	
Guests:	Dennis Sheehan – Town Administrator, Lauri Plourde – Town Accountant

	<p><u>AGENDA</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of Minutes from previous meetings - Vote Required 2. Tax Impacts and General Town Costs/Expenses - Dennis Sheehan/Lauri Plourde will present to the OSC and follow-up discussion 3. Structure of the Report - review written sections, discussion and feedback 4. Central Questions of OSC Charge - Discussion and Feedback Vote Required <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Overall Need for an Override b. Potential Amount(s) c. Timeframe 5. Upcoming meetings & Upcoming business 6. Other business - Non-Deliberative 7. Adjournment - Vote Required

1.	<p>Approval of Minutes from previous meeting - Vote Required</p> <p>The committee discussed and approved the 8/20 meeting minutes.</p>	<p>Mr. Dowdle introduced a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the 8/20 meeting; Mr. Mahoney seconded; Mr. Ternullo abstained; Mr. Mashburn was absent for the vote; all else in favor.</p>
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<p>2.</p>	<p>Tax Impacts and General Town Costs/Expenses</p> <p>Mr. Sheehan and Ms. Plourde presented information about town income, costs, and expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mr. Sheehan presented recent trends for town income and expense items and how that data has been used historically for budget forecasting. ● There was a discussion of debt payments and how those funds are used and repaid. ● Mr. Sheehan reviewed previously completed future fiscal year projections, sources of town revenue, and the calculation for 2.5% levy limit growth. ● There was a discussion about the growth of state aid and the impact of charter school tuition costs over the last few years. ● The town has been impacted by rising insurance costs (part of the “Shared Expenses” line item in the town financial documents), as are other states and municipalities, and there was discussion about the impacts of this trend continuing. The town does regularly shop insurance carriers and currently participates in group coverage to get better purchasing power. ● Cost increases regarding providing special education was reviewed and there were questions as to what is driving those increases. ● The impact of inflation and the compound effect on town expenses was discussed. ● Mr. Sheehan reviewed some data regarding outside contractors used by the town, what services were provided, and the costs of those contracts. ● The committee discussed the DPW budget per road mile and per capita compared to a sample of nearby municipalities. Stoneham’s DPW budget allocation ranked at the bottom of the list for both budget per road mile and budget per capita. ● There was a review of data regarding the funding that would be needed to restore recent funding cuts from FY25 to FY26 and some additional funding requests of select departments. ● The committee discussed “Free Cash” in the town budget and how those funds are used to provide budgeting cushion and stabilization fund contributions. ● There was a request for data regarding outstanding amounts owed for different types of taxes. ● Potential creation of a user friendly override impact calculator was discussed. ● Mr. Sheehan noted that the town believes that they have provided all data requested by the committee as best as possible and if there are additional questions or information needed there was a request to get those questions in as soon as possible. 	<p>No votes needed</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Structure of the Report - review -written sections, discussion and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was a discussion of combining the different draft sections of the report that have been prepared so far to better allow for group editing. 	<p>Mr. Scruggs then introduced a motion to allow the Chair to combine report pages and make clarifying edits to the report; Mr. Stavre seconded; all in favor.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee discussed including a section in the report regarding town financial controls and auditing practices drafted by the Town Accountant. 	
4.	<p>Central Questions of OSC Charge- Vote Required</p> <p>a. Overall Need for an Override b. Potential Amount(s) c. Timeframe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee discussed how to determine the recommended amount of the override using a bottoms up budget approach breaking things down by department in addition to the overall total amount of the recommended override. The number of fiscal years that the override recommendation would attempt to address was discussed by the committee. Timing of a potential override vote was discussed. Potential ways to use override funds that are not specifically needed in year one or two after an override were discussed versus an attempt at a phased in approach. 	No votes needed
5.	<p>Upcoming meetings & Upcoming business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was agreed to attempt to move the Sept 10th meeting time from 7pm to 6:30pm to allow for public comment. The state delegation is planning to attend the meeting on Sept 16th along with the school department. The location will move to the Middle School to better accommodate the meeting. 	No votes needed
6.	<p>Other business – Non-Deliberative</p>	No votes needed
7.	<p>Adjournment - Vote Required</p>	Mr. Ternullo then introduced a motion to adjourn; Mr. Dowdle seconded; all in favor.