

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
< AGENDA >**

TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020

6:00 PM

LOCATION: REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM

Please click the link below to join the Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89968620868?pwd=aml5NlZQUdZLaUdWQXpua3JwbjVzd09>

Dial-in, audio only: (929) 205 6099 US

Meeting ID: 899 6862 0868

Password: 776600

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Great Barrington Finance Committee will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the town's website, at www.townofgb.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: See instructions at the top of the agenda. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call Vote
3. Welcome and Congratulations to Newly Elected FC member
Election of Chair and Vice Chair
4. Approval of Minutes:
Minutes of June 16, 2020 Finance Committee Mtg
5. Finance Committee member committee reports
6. Update from Town Manager & Finance Director
7. Finance Committee business:
FC Membership on Trust Policy & Policing Committee - Discussion
Special Annual Town Meeting Date
Police Dept. Therapy Dog Program - Discussion
8. Citizen Speak Time
9. Finance Committee Member Comments
10. Media Time
11. Adjournment

Pursuant to MGL, 7C 30A sec. 20(f), after notifying the Chair of the public body, any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting of a public body, or may transmit the meeting through any medium. At the beginning of the meeting, the Chair shall inform other attendees of any such recordings. Any member of the public wishing to speak at the meeting must receive permission of the Chair.

Whereas, the Town of Great Barrington unequivocally opposes any manifestation of hatred and prejudice towards any group or individual and recognizes that systemic racism is a threat to public health and safety.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Selectboard that the Town of Great Barrington will:

1. Advance the implementation of the 2017 Great Barrington Trust Policy and develop a formal process for addressing violations.
2. Initiate a self-study of the history of race and racism in Great Barrington resulting in a series of recommendations on how to illuminate the role of race and take steps to make amends for past injustices and highlight the positive.
3. Review and reform hiring practices and personnel policies for all town departments to develop a more diverse staff in a supportive and inclusive work environment.
4. Provide implicit bias, de-escalation, crisis intervention, and other similar training for town departments.

Whereas, the Great Barrington Police Department has a special role in our town which calls for additional oversight.

Therefore, the Selectboard resolves to:

1. Create a working group to reflect the needs of our community and to review current practices and policies, and, if necessary, to make recommendations with respect to:
 - a. Department transparency and accountability
 - b. Handling of allegations of misconduct
 - c. Directing resources to community-based services to support residents and divert them from the criminal justice system.
2. Support state and federal police reform efforts which include:
 - a. Creation of Peaceful Officer Support Training (MA H.2146)
 - b. The banning of the use of excessive force and the requirement of the intervention of officers in the event of excessive force is used (MA S.2800 and H.R.7120)
 - c. Creation of an independent special prosecutor at the state level to review and, where appropriate, to prosecute cases of potentially criminal police misconduct (H.R.7120)
 - d. The reform of civil service exams (MA H.2292)
 - e. Creation of the Police Officer Standards and Accreditation Committee (POSAC) that certifies officers, maintains database on officer misconduct, and recertifies or decertifies an officer every three years based on actions (MA S.2800).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Great Barrington supports the work of our Police Department, our Town government, and our schools to make them more diverse, equitable and inclusive and commits to seeking further policy and administrative measures in support of deepening our community's understanding of systemic racism and the deep harm it causes.



TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

As presented at June 23, 2020 Selectboard Mtg

Gt. Barrington Police Therapy Dog Program

A trained Therapy Dog will be a valuable supplement to our resources to improve community relations and provide various therapeutic services to those we serve. The function of the Therapy Dog is to provide interaction during investigations involving children or adults to reduce anxiety and increase communication between the adult or child and to provide aid and comfort to individuals, groups and communities impacted by violence, tragedy or traumatic events. The Therapy Dog will be a valuable tool in fostering dialog and communications between the police department and the community we serve. The Therapy Dog can effectively be used in the Departments Community Policing efforts. We will make frequent visits to all local schools in town both public and private, Town Library, Senior Center, hospital and nursing homes, athletic events and children's programs. A Therapy Dog will also provide therapeutic relief to our officers and all town employees. The possibilities to serve our community are endless.

Chief Walsh, Sergeant Storti and Sergeant Carlotto have selected Officer Kristopher Balestro to be the dog's handler. Officer Balestro is the most senior patrol officer with 30 years of experience and is currently involved in many community policing activities. Officer Balestro will incorporate the Therapy Dog into his daily responsibilities while on patrol.

The Great Barrington Police Department will be the first police agency in Western Mass/ Berkshire County to have such a program. Currently the only agencies close to Great Barrington that already have a similar program are the Northampton MA Police, Greenfield MA Police and Albany NY Police.

Key important facts:

1. No expense to the town. Program funded by select donations and handler. Donations will help cover the cost of training and care of the dog.
2. Dog (English Labrador Retriever) will be 100% donated by Boonefield Labradors to the handler for use as a Therapy Dog at the police department.

William R. Walsh, Jr.
Chief of Police



465 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Telephone: (413) 528-0306
Fax: (413) 528-6342

TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

3. No increase in town's already existing K9 Insurance Policy with MIIA. Therapy Dog will only be covered while working with handler as a Police K9 in official police business.
4. Utilize older cruiser already available being 3831, Car 10 or 535.
5. A Massachusetts Accredited approved policy will be in place.
6. Program can be stopped at any time if funds become unavailable or decision is made not to continue.