



# Franklin Regional Council of Governments

## Finance Committee — *MINUTES*

Date /Time:	Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.
Location:	Open meeting accessed remotely on Zoom by video, or by telephone
Facilitators:	Michelle Giarusso, Chair

### Finance Committee Attendees:

- **Michele Giarusso, Chair**, Leyden
- **Jay DiPucchio**, Regionally-Elected Rep
- **Ellen McKay**, Shutesbury
- **Lynn Sibley**, Whately
- **Kevin Fox, Vice Chair**, Colrain

### Staff and Guest Attendees:

- **Linda Dunlavy**, Executive Director
- **Bill Perlman**, Regionally-Elected Rep
- **Claire McGinnis**, Finance Director
- **Rebekah Boyd**, Admin Services Coordinator

### 1. Review and adopt 7.14.21 minutes

At 5:38 pm, Michele G. called the meeting to order. **Ellen M. moved to adopt the minutes of 7.14.21 as written, seconded by Kevin F. The motion passed with all in favor, by roll-call vote.**

### 2. Review of the *Fiscal Review* report

Claire walked the committee through the draft *Fiscal Review*, pointing out written and illustrative changes to the document. The committee reviewed the addition of the *FRCOG Revenues by Source chart*, a longitudinal breakdown of the portion of revenues with Council oversight (37% in FY21 ), comprised of regional assessments, grant program indirect revenue, administration costs, and municipal programming; and the portion of revenues comprised of federal, state, and local grants and contracts (63% in FY21).

Members expressed satisfaction with the graphic and narrative changes. Bill noted that the *Assessment Change over Time* chart clearly depicts the drop in municipal assessments from the previous fiscal year, and appreciated as a point of reference in the text, the added fact that assessments were higher in FY97, the year FRCOG was established, than in any of the past 7 years.

Members and staff worked together to revise other sections of the document for clarification and accessibility by Council members who will receive the final document later in the week.

Staff highlighted other highlights, including:

- The FY21 surplus of \$231,292
- Use of the general fund balance in FY21 to reduce Accounting assessments to towns.
- OPEB legislation expected next year, which should extinguish the possibility that FRCOG might be charged unfunded liabilities of pension costs along with all other regional planning agencies.

Among other topics, members discussed: The best way to get financial information out to municipal representatives before the Council meeting; adding information to the *Fiscal Review* regarding expected director-level retirements/recruitments; possibly sharing peer-agency salary information to help Councilors better understand the competitive market; the current trickling of staff away from FRCOG to other nearby entities; comparisons between cost of living in Boston vs. that of living in rural areas, and a study that shows that rural life is actually more expensive, as salaries don't keep pace with those in more urban areas.

### **3. FY22 year-to-date budget report**

Members reviewed the General Fund and Municipal Fee-for-Services programs year-to-date budget reports. Everything is going much as planned, staff said, including delivery of \$100,000 earmarks in the budget for both police reform and for Deerfield River recreation and support. Claire suggested that any questions that arise could be emailed to her.

### **4. OPEB projection and actuarial expectations**

An actuarial study was initiated last week, and because the FRCOG's census of those qualifying for retirement benefits has increased by 10 people qualifying, a new liability projection is forthcoming. Thus, FRCOG will not so easily reach the goal of having OPEB 80% funded in 5 years. Claire will add a note in the *Fiscal Review* about the jump in liability so the Council understands the increase.

### **5. Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting**

Staff reminded the Finance Committee that December 2 is the date of the meeting with members of the Personnel Committee.

**Ellen M. moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 p.m. The motion was seconded by Lynn, and passed by voice vote with all in favor.**

#### **DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED and PRESENTATIONS VIEWED:**

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes from 10.7.21 meeting
- *Fiscal Review*
- General fund year-to-date budget report
- Municipal fee-for-services programs year-to-date budget report

*Minutes taken by Rebekah Boyd.*