

Town of New Fairfield
Board of Finance
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812

MINUTES
Board of Finance Special Meeting
Monday, May 9 2022
7:30 PM
Virtual meeting via Zoom

Members present via Zoom

Wes Marsh, Chairman
Mark Beninson
Michael Cammarota
Thora Perkins
Cheryl Reedy
Claudia Willard

Board member absent

Dave Coleman, Alternate
Chris D'Esposito, Alternate
Greg Williams, Alternate

Other Town Officials Present via Zoom

Olga Melnikov, Finance Director
Dr. Pat Cosentino, Superintendent of Schools
Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman
Lori Beninson, Selectman
Dr. Rich Sanzo, BOE Director of Business and Operations
Terry Friedman, Town Treasurer
Kerrie Greening, Tax Collector
Julie Luby, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Melissa Busnel, BOE Special Education Supervisor
Bruce Taylor, Fire Chief
Dominic Cipollone, BOE Chairman
Amy Johnson, BOE member
Kimberly LaTourette, BOE member
Ed Sbordone, BOE member
Stephanie Strazza, BOE member

Network Administrator Paul Gouveia gave a brief overview of the rules and procedures for a virtual meeting.

Call To Order Chairman Wes Marsh called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. He noted that the purpose of this special meeting was to discuss potentially offensive comments made by an alternate member of the Board of Finance during the April 20th budget discussions. Mr. Marsh asked that the members of the Board of Finance give their opinions regarding the comments and the correct course of action. The meeting will then be open to the public for comments.

Appointments- None

Discussion of comments made at the April 20, 2022 Board of Finance meeting

Michael Cammarota spoke of his tenure on the Board of Finance and noted that all Board members are human and may have said something that could have been better said when reviewed in hindsight. He vowed to be more conscience and to point it out if a similar situation arises in the future.

Cheryl Reedy agreed with Michael Cammarota and noted that everyone has spoke out of turn at some point. She spoke of some Zoom classes and workshop about sensitivity and civility at public meetings and encouraged everyone to attend.

Thora Perkins and Claudia Williams spoke of their respective backgrounds and how words and attitudes have changed over the years.

Mark Beninson thanked Michael Cammarota and Cheryl Reedy for their comments. He noted that terms vary based on context and did not believe that the comments in question were meant to be offensive.

Chairman Wes Marsh spoke of his disappointment that the member in question did not attend tonight's meeting. He encouraged Board members to be more mindful of words and actions in the future.

Public Comment

Many members of the public spoke of the comments made at the April 20th meeting and expressed their disappointment and outrage over the comments. Many residents did not feel that the offending member deserved the "benefit of the doubt" and many asked for a public apology.

Board Member Comments

Members of the Board thanked the public for their comments and vowed to be more mindful in the future. Cheryl Reedy will send links for information on classes regarding sensitivity and civility at public meetings. She encouraged both Board members and members of the public to attend these trainings.

Adjournment

Thora Perkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 pm. Mark Beninson seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Received by email on 05/13/2022 @ 8:30 a.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield