

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

**MINUTES
Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, May 17, 2023
7:30 PM
via Zoom**

<u>Board of Finance members present:</u> Wes Marsh, Chairman Mark Beninson Kim Hanson Thora Perkins Cheryl Reedy Claudia Willard Dave Coleman, Alternate Chris D’Esposito, Alternate <u>Board of Finance not members present:</u> Greg Williams, Alternate	<u>Other Town officials and Educators present:</u> Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman Khris Hall, Selectman Lori-Ann Beninson, Selectman Olga Melnikov, Finance Director Terry Friedman, Town Treasurer Shareen Langdon, Tax Collector Holly Smith, Town Clerk Elisa Beckett-Flores, Registrar of Voters Dan McDermott, Registrar of Voters Amy Johnson, BOE member
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Quintin Flower 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.

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements

Wes Marsh noted that the auditor from PKF O’Connor Davies was unable to attend this meeting. If he is not available for the June meeting, the audit subcommittee will give a report in his absence.

Wes Marsh noted that the BOF received 15 emails since the last meeting broken down as follows:

- Ten in favor of keeping the BOE and BOS Operating budgets as is.
- Two emails asked the BOF to keep the cuts to the budget to a minimum.
- One email asked that the Talented and Gifted Program in the schools not be cut.
- One email thanked the members of the BOF for their service.
- Once email was in reference to the salaries for New Fairfield elected officials.

Public Comment

John McCartney spoke in support of elected officials and encouraged the BOF to consider raises for these positions.

Approval of Minutes

Kim Hanson made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2023 special meeting as presented. Mark Beninson seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Budget Transfers

Finance Director Olga Melnikov spoke of the need for this additional appropriation and noted that there is no budgetary impact for this.

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to recommend to a Town Meeting the following Additional Appropriation in the amount of \$30,000. Kim Hanson seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

\$	Transfer From		\$	Transfer To	
\$30,000.00	001-R3422006	Police Private Duty Revenue	\$30,000.00	001-4210-0002-000/130.02	Police-Private Duty Overtime
\$30,000.00			\$30,000.00		

Discussion and vote on Public Comment requirements

There was a brief discussion of the laws requiring member of the public to give their name before giving a public comment. BOF Members gave their opinions about how they feel about listening to members of the public without knowing their names. Cheryl Reedy spoke of State Statute and noted that not giving names in a virtual meeting is a violation of law.

Wes Marsh made a motion that the BOF require members of the public to state their names before giving public comment. Cheryl Reedy seconded the motion.

Vote: 2-4-0 (Motion denied- Cheryl Reedy and Wes Marsh in favor, Mark Beninson, Kim Hanson, Thora Perkins and Claudia Willard opposed)

Suspense List from the New Fairfield Tax Collector

Tax Collector Shareen Langdon explained the process for the putting residents on the Suspense List.

Kim Hanson made a motion to approve the Tax Collector Suspense List for 2023 as presented and to attach to the minutes of this meeting. Cheryl Reedy seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Vote to retain PKF O'Connor Davies for the 2022/2023 audit

There was a discussion of the timing of the audit and the town's history with PKF O'Connor Davies.

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to retain the firm of PKF O'Connor Davies for the 2022-2023 audit. Claudia Willard seconded the motion.

Mark Beninson made a motion to call the question regarding the previous motion. Thora Perkins seconded the motion.

Vote to call question: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Vote on original motion after the question was called: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Discussion and vote on elected official salaries

Cheryl Reedy presented the board with a list of salaries for the town's elected officials and compared them with respective salaries in surrounding towns. There was a suggestion of whether this vote should be done outside of the budget process. Cheryl Reedy asked the other BOF members to let her know if they are interested in pursuing this further. It was decided that this will be discussed further in future meeting. Cheryl Reedy asked the other BOF members to reach out to her with any questions or comments regarding elected official salaries.

Discussion of General Fund policy

Thora Perkins spoke of her request to learn more about the policy for the General Fund. She noted that she received a response from BOF member Cheryl Reedy and Finance Director Olga Melnikov. There was a brief discussion of the policy for accounting for the revenue surplus and open purchase orders. Olga Melnikov gave an explanation of the General Fund policy. Thora Perkins thanked Town Treasurer Terry Friedman, BOF member Cheryl Reedy and Finance Director Olga Melnikov for their help in this matter.

ONGOING UPDATES

Medical update

There was a discussion of the medical fund and the increase in projections from last month. It was decided to invite Insurance consultant Tom Kowalchik to the June BOF meeting on June 21st to discuss stop loss.

Legal update

First Selectman Pat Del Monaco noted that there are some concerns with the legal budget due to unexpected legal issues for this fiscal year. It was decided that the BOF will watch the legal budget and discuss further at the next BOF meeting.

Year to date expenses review

Finance Director Olga Melnikov spoke of possible concerns with utility expenses. Other than utilities and legal, other expenditures are in line with the budget.

Current year revenue update

Wes Marsh noted that the property tax collection is 99.46%. Olga Melnikov spoke of revenue collections that are scheduled to be received in the near future. She noted that there will be a revenue surplus despite the additional appropriation for the police overtime.

Capital and Nonrecurring update

The Board reviewed the capital and nonrecurring account.

Public Comment

Elisa Beckett-Flores thanked the Board for reviewing the elected salaries. She clarified that other towns have on site staff that New Fairfield does not. She asked the BOF to consider a lot of factors when considering salaries and encouraged the Board to come into the office or to contact her with any questions. She noted that if the budget does not pass on May 20th, a transfer will be necessary to cover a second vote.

Future Agenda items

The following will be discussed at future meetings.

- Elected Salaries
- Audit
- Medical Insurance
- Public Comment policy

Board Member Comments

Members of the BOF encouraged everyone to vote on Saturday, May 20th at the budget referendum.

Cheryl Reedy thanked Elisa Beckett-Flores for her comments about elected salaries. She asked if she and Town Clerk Holly Smith could send their budget presentation that they made to the BOS to the BOF members in order to shed light on these positions. Cheryl Reedy will ask the other elected officials to do the same.

Adjournment

Kim Hanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 pm. Mark Beninson seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Received by email on 05/22/2023 @ 8:30 a.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield