

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

MINUTES

**Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 25, 2024
7:30 PM
Via Zoom**

<u>Board of Finance members present:</u> Thora Perkins, Chairman Mark Beninson Patrick Hearty Wes Marsh Cheryl Reedy Claudia Willard John Arizzi, Alternate Peggy Katkocin, Alternate <u>Board of Finance members not present:</u> Greg Williams, Alternate	<u>Other Town officials and Educators present:</u> Tom Perkins, Selectman Vladimir Kan, Finance Director Terry Friedman, Town Treasurer
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Call To Order Chairman Thora Perkins called the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

Quintin Flower gave a brief overview of the rules and procedures for a virtual meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements

Chairman Thora Perkins spoke of the following correspondence to the BOF:

- The referendum vote for the ARPA funds will be held this Saturday, Sept. 28th from 10am to 8pm.
- Spoke of the audit process for this year. The auditors will check in November to see if an extension is needed.
- Finance Director Vladimir Kan will present ideas for a new budget process. He sent out a complete list of invoice requirements.
- The annual test of the New Fairfield Schools Emergency Broadcast system has been completed.
- The Registrars of Voters are in need of poll workers for the Presidential Election.
- OEM tour scheduled for September 24th will be rescheduled due to illness
- The BOF received an email about the reallocation of the ARPA funds with concerns that legal fees and grant allocation fees were also rescinded.

- Capital subcommittee and Medical subcommittee met in September
- The BOF received inspection documents for 2024 from the PBC.
- Public Works Tour will be scheduled in the near future.
- The BOF received an updated ARPA document from First Selectman Lindsey prior to the joint BOS/BOF meeting on September 4th.
- Pension Commission meeting was held on September 4th.

Public Comment- None

Approval of Minutes

Patrick Hearty made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2024 regular meeting, the September 4, 2024 special BOS/BOF meeting as presented. Mark Beninson seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Budget Transfers

Finance Director Vladimir Kan gave a summary of both Intra-departmental and Inter-departmental budget transfers that were approved by the BOS and the BOF.

Medical Insurance subcommittee update

Thora Perkins noted that the Medical Insurance subcommittee met on September 3rd. Consultant Tom Kowalchik noted that the reason for the high claims in July were due to two large claims. One of which has reached the Stop Loss. He noted that the prescription claims are up. The aggregate number has not yet been received. The August claims are significantly lower than July. The subcommittee discussed the possibility of getting a quote from the Eastern Connecticut Medical Health Collaborative. This will be discussed further by the subcommittee in the future. There will be a discussion of Utilization details and the Wellness initiative at the October 16th subcommittee meeting.

BOF Capital subcommittee update

Cheryl Reedy noted that the BOF Capital subcommittee met on September 16th and discussed the Plan of Conservation and Development and a Model for the Town of New Fairfield debt service presented by Town Treasurer Terry Friedman. This model breaks down the list of bonded projects and shows total interest and principal for respective fiscal years. The subcommittee also discussed ways to increase non-tax revenue specifically the possibility of increasing boat slip fees at the Town Marina.

New Budget process presentation

Finance Director Vladimir Kan gave a presentation regarding a new process for Department Heads and Board Chairmen to use when presenting their respective budgets. He spoke of mission statements, goals, objectives and accomplishments that can be used to justify the need for budgetary items. He spoke of the benefits of SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Based.) The deadline for these goals is November 29, 2024. There was a discussion of the benefits and/or additional work associated with this process. There was a suggestion of looking at this closer at the October BOF meeting and to pick one department to use an example.

Close-out information update

Vladimir Kan noted that the majority of the purchase orders for fiscal year 2023-2024 have been closed out and he is waiting for the auditors to tell if there are any adjustments. As of now, the available surplus is \$1,160,000. Of this surplus, \$600,000 will be used for the track and turf replacement. The balance of \$560,000 that will stay in the General Fund until the BOF decides otherwise. Mr. Kan spoke of the fluidity of the budget and encouraged the town to be vigilant about spending. There was a discussion among the BOF members about the optimal amount to keep in the Unassigned Fund Balance. Town Treasurer Terry Friedman spoke of the need to lay out money for the school projects until reimbursement from the State. She further noted that if the unassigned fund balance falls significantly below 16.67%, it could negatively affect the town's bond rating.

Ongoing updates

Medical update- Vladimir Kan reviewed the Medical report as of August 31, 2024 for the months of July and August. There was a discussion of amending the report to do a rolling average of actual expenditures or the year-end projection. It was decided to include both numbers in the report.

Legal update- None

Year to date expense update

There was a discussion of the overtime expenses for the Communications Center.

Year to date revenue update

There was a discussion as to the amount of revenue that has been received to date this year. It was noted that it could appear low due to when the report was written and the amount is actually higher. Town Treasurer Terry Friedman noted that she budgeted for interest revenue with the anticipation that interest rates would decrease.

Discussion of Member goals for 2025-2026

Thora Perkins asked fellow BOF members to present goals for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in time for the October meeting. She noted that her current goals are for the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Board of Education to work together for the financial benefit for New Fairfield and to ask the BOS and BOE to present a lean operating budget so that the Town can afford capital projects.

Wes Marsh suggested that the BOF have a goal to present a budget to the taxpayers that will pass on the first referendum.

Cheryl Reedy gave her goals that the BOF present a budget that passes at the first referendum and suggested that at least \$750,000 be spent on capital projects.

John Arizzi suggested that the budget protect the credit rating and to come up with alternative revenue sources. He offered to collect and collate the goals for the BOF members.

Peggy Katkocin suggested having Listening Sessions specifically centered on the budget.

Public Comment

Jennifer Pappas asked if the Town 's electric bill includes the Public Benefit charge and if so, is it in the budget. She further asked about renovations to the Beach House and the possibility of gaining more revenue from the use of the Beach.

Future agenda items

Mark Beninson will be scheduling tours for OEM and Public Works. He asked that members send him emails for preferred dates and he will set it up.

The 2025 Calendar of meetings will be approved at the October meeting.

Future BOF meetings:

Wednesday, October 23rd- 4th Wednesday of the month.

Wednesday, November 20th- 3rd Wednesday of the month due to Thanksgiving.

Wednesday, December 18th- 3rd Wednesday of the month due to Christmas.

Board member comments- None

Adjournment

Mark Beninson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28pm. Patrick Hearty seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos