

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

**MINUTES  
Board of Finance Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, October 23, 2024  
7:30 PM  
Community Room at 33 Route 37**

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

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Appointments**- None

**Correspondence and Announcements**

Thora Perkins thanked Registrar of Voters Elisa Beckett-Flores for conducting a very successful training program for the poll workers.

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

- The BOF calendar is due to the Town Clerk by the end of November.
- The BOF received a letter from a member of the Planning Commission with concerns about the GFOA budget process. The Planning Commission sent a letter to the BOF noting that an additional 8-24 may need to be filed.
- The Capital subcommittee meeting will be held on Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm via Zoom.
- A resident sent an email asking about potential storage fees at the Beach House. It was noted that the town does not pay any storage fees for the Beach House.
- Jamie Wallace updated the BOF page on the Town's website.
- A student has requested an interview with a BOF member. Cheryl Reedy has volunteered.

- The Mission Statement is due to the Finance Department by November 29<sup>th</sup>. This will be discussed further at tonight's meeting.
- Mark Beninson has requested a list of possible dates from BOF members for a tour of Public Works.
- Two emails were sent by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw. The first was to thank the BOF for the capital subcommittee meeting. The second was the September 2024 update on New Fairfield schools.
- Registrar of Voters Dan McDermott sent a list of all new voters in town.
- A resident of New Fairfield sent an email inquiring about whether or not the Town pays for the electric charge. It was confirmed by the Finance Director that the Town does pay for this.
- Finance Director Vladimir Kan sent the BOF a Mission Statement for the Finance Department.
- The meeting with OEM was very successful.

**Public Comment-** None

**Approval of Minutes**

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2024 regular meeting as presented. Wes Marsh seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

**Budget Transfers**

The Board reviewed the budget transfer for the year to date. No vote was necessary. Cheryl Reedy asked Finance Director Vladimir Kan to separate the General Fund transfers from the ARPA funds in the reports.

**BOF Subcommittee Reports**

**Medical Insurance subcommittee update**

The Medical Subcommittee met on Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> and discussed Medical claims for July, August and September. There was a suggestion of possibly having a Wellness Fair for Town employees similar to the one that was held for BOE employees. The subcommittee discussed the possibility of getting a quote from the Eastern Connecticut Medical Health Collaborative. Tom Kowalchik will look into this further.

**BOF Capital subcommittee update**

Cheryl Reedy noted that the BOF Capital subcommittee met on October 7<sup>th</sup> and discussed future options for the Middle School which include "Renovate as New" or do improvements on a piece meal basis. It was noted that the main reason for the need for upgrades was the advances in technology. Town Treasurer Terry Friedman asked for an estimate of the costs for piece meal projects so it can be compared to the Renovate as New option.

The Capital subcommittee meeting will meet again on Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm via Zoom. They will discuss the summary of the 2024 Building Condition Assessments with the Permanent Building Committee.

**Safety**

The last time this subcommittee met was on April 9, 2024. At that meeting, the subcommittee discussed upgrades to the Police Department and possible grants for OEM. Mark Beninson reached out to the new Fire

Chief and will meet with him at his convenience. Thora Perkins asked the BOF members to send an email to Mark Beninson giving their availability for a Public Works tour.

**Ongoing updates**

**Medical update-** Vladimir Kan gave an update on the Medical Fund. He noted that First Selectman Lindsey expressed concerns about the balance of the Medical Fund. He noted that IBNR (Incurred by Not Reported) was for FY2024 was \$561,000 but the budget was \$519,000 which required \$42,000 to be taken out of the reserve fund. There was a discussion of the best ways to calculate claims with the options being a 12-month rolling average or an USI rolling average.

**Legal update-** None

**Year to date expense update**

Thora Perkins asked about expense for Business Machines. Vladimir Kan noted that everything is on track with this expense line.

Vladimir Kan noted that employees have been hired in the Communications center and there are enough funds to cover expenses.

**Year to date revenue update**

Vladimir Kan noted that there was an error regarding the tax collection rate on the last report. He noted that the collection rate is currently 53.54% and the balance is due in January. The BOF thanked Tax Collector Shareen Langdon and her staff for this excellent collection rate.

Vladimir Kan noted that the State Tax Collection rate is lower than anticipated so money that the Town will receive from Municipal Sharing grants will be less than expected. A total of \$343,000 was received for fiscal year 2024 but the estimate was \$400,000.

**Capital and Nonrecurring update-** None

**Unassigned General Fund Balance review**

The current Unassigned Fund balance is \$585,000 which is up by \$20,000 from September.

**Update of BOF Budget process from New Fairfield Finance Director**

Vladimir Kan gave a timeline for the budget process. Budget worksheets will be sent out by the second week of November with a due date of the third week of December. Department heads will be asked for an in-depth explanation for each account line.

Vladimir Kan gave a list of who has sent their Mission Statements to date. The due date for the Mission Statements is November 29<sup>th</sup>.

It was decided that charts that are usually included in the budget books are not necessary. Mark Beninson asked for a comparison of the percentage of BOE vs. BOS expenses.

### **Discussion of BOF Calendar for 2025**

The BOF discussed the calendar of meetings for 2025. The monthly meetings will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month except for November and December due to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Mark Beninson made a motion to approve the Calendar of meetings for 2025 as presented. Wes Marsh seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Thora Perkins spoke of the possibility of have a tri-board meeting with the BOF, BOS and BOE for budget discussions. It was noted that the BOE traditionally has a budget workshop in January and invites the BOF members to attend and ask questions. It was decided that Thora Perkins will check with the BOE Chairman to see if this is a possibility.

### **BOF Budget Mission Statement**

The BOF discussed the draft Mission Statement for the BOF. It was decided that members come up with comments and suggestions for the Mission Statement which will be voted on at the November meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Selectman Tom Perkins spoke of the possibility of using solar energy for the Middle School and also suggested hybrid vs. pure electric buses. He further suggested publicizing the debt cost per million with the public and a percentage of tax increases instead of showing an increase in the Mil Rate. He also spoke of the importance of making sure the Town side of the budget is adequately funded while keeping taxes as low as possible.

### **Future agenda items**

The BOF will discuss the Mission Statement at the November monthly meeting.

### **Board member comments**

The BOF members wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

### **Adjournment**

Wes Marsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 pm. Cheryl Reedy seconded the motion.

**Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos