

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

BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING
Saturday, March 3, 2007
10:00 AM
New Fairfield High School Library

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order.** Chairman Joe Hart called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

Members Present:

Joe Hart, Chairman
Bob Burke
Michael Cockburn
Lucy DiRocco
Wesley Marsh
Art Azzarito, Alternate
Roger Wise, Alternate

Other Town Officials Present:

(Morning Session)

Ron Oliveri, Selectman
Dr. Joseph Castagnola, Superintendent of Schools
John Boccuzzi, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Jay Waterman, Finance Department
Phil Cammarano, Town Treasurer
Mike Santogatta, Director of Management Services
Victor Flagello, Board of Education
Ralph Langham, Board of Education
Al Mardis, Board of Education
Ken Chapman, Board of Education
Ed Siebert, Board of Education
Karen Chance, Board of Education
Ron Lyons, Board of Education
Alicia Roy, High School Principal
Diane Hartman, Middle School Principal
Christine Baldelli, Middle School Ass't Principal
Sarah McLain, MHHS Principal
Wendy Seely, MHHS Principal
Jane Harwood, Consolidated School Principal
Lynn Fichtel, Consolidated School Ass't Principal
JoAnne Panicek, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

(Afternoon Session)

John Hodge, First Selectman
Ron Oliveri, Selectman
Peggy Katkocin, Selectman
Jay Waterman, Finance Department
Phil Cammarano, Town Treasurer
Ed McCue, Fire Department Chief

Amendment to the Agenda

Joe Hart made a motion to add item 1A “Appointments” to the agenda. Lucy DiRocco seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion approved)

Appointments

Joe Hart announced that Ron Graiff had asked that Roger Wise be appointed in his absence for the purposes of this meeting.

Discussion of the Board of Education Requested Budget for 2007/2008

Members of the Board of Finance asked questions of Dr. Castagnola and various administrators regarding the proposed budget for 2007/2008. Specific questions included the need for certain staffing requests recommended by the Board of Education. The majority of the budget increase will be spent on salaries and benefits. Consolidated Principal Mrs. Jane Harwood and Meeting House Hill Principal Mrs. Sarah McLain spoke of the need for a “math specialist” in the elementary grades.

Other questions and discussions included the need for more money for maintenance for the schools.

Dr. Castagnola announced that the Board of Education will attend another Board of Finance meeting in the near future.

Public Comment on the Board of Education Requested Budget for 2007/2008

Resident Rudy Bahrens gave his opinions regarding the proposed school budget.

Resident Mary Bahrens asked for clarification of a .6 position and whether or not they get benefits.

Recess

Wes Marsh made a motion to recess at 11:18am. Bob Burke seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

The meeting reconvened at 1:00pm.

Budget Transfers

Joe Hart made a motion to make an inter-departmental transfer **from** line item #4151-801 (BOF Contingency) for Settlement of Legal Action in the amount of \$3,000. Bob Burke seconded the motion. (Such document to be attached to the minutes of this meeting)

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Discussion of funding for the Fire Dept. Apparatus equipment

Town Treasurer Phil Cammarano spoke of bonding vs. paying outright for the Fire Department Apparatus equipment. Mr. Cammarano strongly recommended bonding for this project since paying outright out of the general fund could impact the Town’s bond rating.

Wes Marsh made a motion to buy the three fire trucks as proposed by the Fire Dept. via bonding for an amount no more than \$1,175,000. Such bonding will be repaid based on the proposal by the Fire Dept. Mike Cockburn seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Discussion of Board of Selectmen Requested Budget 2007/2008

First Selectman John Hodge asked the Board of Finance to review the current “Elderly Tax Relief” program and consider raising the income level. Mr. Hodge stated that the last time the income level was raised only sixteen additional people were added to the program. There was a discussion as to raising the income level in order to accommodate more taxpayers. It was decided that a discussion of the “Elderly Tax Relief” program will be put on a BOF agenda in the near future.

Members of the Board of Finance asked questions of First Selectman Hodge and Jay Waterman regarding the proposed Board of Selectman budget for 2007/2008. Specific questions included asking for a breakdown of overtime hours worked for the Public Works Department.

Lucy DiRocco made a motion that the Board of Selectman provide the Board of Finance with details of overtime relative to the allocation of the Historic homes. Wes Marsh seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-2-0 (Motion approved)

(Roger Wise, Lucy DiRocco, Bob Burke and Wes Marsh approved)

(Joe Hart and Mike Cockburn opposed)

Members of the BOF also asked questions regarding the legal budget and the Director of Social Services position.

Parks and Recreation Committee member Sean Loughran spoke of upcoming proposed projects by the Parks and Rec Department.

Chairman Joe Hart announced that there will be Board of Finance meetings on March 14th, March 21st and March 28th.

Public Comment on the Board of Selectmen Requested Budget for 2007/2008

Resident Rudy Bahrens gave his opinion regarding the budget.

Parks and Recreation Committee Chairman spoke about adding bathrooms to the Rebel Field.

Resident Mary Bahrens asked about the budget and Board of Education maintenance costs.

Selectman Ron Oliveri spoke of funding for maintenance in the schools.

Adjournment

Joe Hart made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:12pm. Bob Burke seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

