

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

MINUTES

Board of Finance Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 2008

7:30 PM

New Fairfield High School Library

Members present:

Joe Hart, Chairman
Lucy DiRocco
Jane Landers
Al Mardis
Wes Marsh
Tom Wahlig
Art Azzarito, Alternate
Tony Sanches, Alternate
Brian Shea, Alternate

Other Town Officials Present:

John Hodge, First Selectman
Ron Oliveri, Selectman
Joe Castagnola, Superintendent of Schools
Jay Waterman, Finance Director
Ed Sbordone, Finance Department
John Boccuzzi, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mike Santogatta, Director of Management Services
Steve Rinaldi, Everett James, Inc.
Diane Hartman Chesley, Middle School Principal
Sarah McLain, Meeting House Hill School Principal
Wendy Seeley, Consolidated School Principal
Lynn Fichtel, Consolidated School Assistant Principal
Phil Ross, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Kim Hanson, Board of Education Chairman
Karen Chance, Board of Education member
Ken Chapman, Board of Education member
Vic Flagello, Board of Education member
Ralph Langham, Board of Education member
Ron Lyons, Board of Education member
Ed Siebert, Board of Education member

Call To Order Chairman Joe Hart called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments -None

Correspondence and Announcements- None

Public Comment

Many residents including a number of High School students talked about the education budget and specifically courses offered in the High School. Members of the Board of Education as well as teachers and administrators also spoke about the education budget.

Robert Brearton spoke of the boat dock fees in New Fairfield.

Approval of Minutes

Jane Landers made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2008 regular meeting as presented. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Lucy DiRocco made a motion to amend the previous motion to have the minutes of March 19, 2008 reflect that there was a discussion among the members of the BOF regarding using the Capital and Nonrecurring fund to supplement the budget for Capital and Nonrecurring items. It was decided by the BOF that this would not be a good idea at this time. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote to amend motion: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Vote on original motion as amended: 5-0-1 (Joe Hart abstained)

Medical Update- Steve Rinaldi- Everett James, Inc.

Steve Rinaldi from the firm of Everett James, Inc. spoke of the Medical Fund for the Town of New Fairfield. The medical fund is running slightly better than last year. There was a discussion regarding the projected fund balance and having at least 20 months of stop loss coverage.

Discussion of 2008-2009 requested budgets

A lengthy discussion ensued among the members of the BOF regarding the requested BOE and BOS budgets for 2008-2009. It was noted that interest income will be much lower this year due to the drop in interest rates. There was a discussion regarding the Capital and Nonrecurring fund as well as the increase in operating expenses from last year. There was a discussion of what would be a viable increase for the taxpayers. Chairman Joe Hart gave out a spreadsheet which spelled out the different percentages and how they would affect taxes. (Such document to be attached to the minutes of this meeting.)

Joe Hart made a motion to request that each board come back to the BOF at next week at the April 2, 2008 BOF meeting with a proposal for the following adjustments, \$500,000 from the BOS and 1,323,000 from the BOE. It is requested that each board present to the BOF various programs and services that will be adjusted. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Superintendent of School Dr. Joseph Castagnola spoke of the \$1,323,000 proposed cut and how it would affect the education budget.

First Selectman John Hodge spoke of the \$500,000 proposed cut and how it would affect the town's budget. Mr. Hodge spoke specifically about the Capital and Nonrecurring plan and the General Fund.

Board of Education Chairman Kim Hanson spoke of the proposed budget cuts and the difficulty of putting together a meeting in only one week.

Public Comment

Many members of the public including Selectman Ron Oliveri spoke of the budget and proposed cuts to the budget.

Board member comments

Members of the Board of Finance gave their opinions on the budget cuts.

Adjournment

Wes Marsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:05pm. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)