

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

MINUTES
Board of Finance Meeting
Wednesday, August 19, 2009
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
Jay Waterman, Finance Director
Ed Sbordone, Accounting Manager
Kim Hanson, BOE Chairman
Ed McCue, Fire Chief
Various members of the Fire Dept.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements

Chairman Joe Hart read an e-mail that he wrote to PBC Chairman Pete Viola asking him to attend a BOF meeting to give an update on PBC projects. Chairman Hart read a response from Mr. Viola stating that it would be better if the BOF appoints a liaison to attend the PBC meetings.

Chairman Joe Hart read an e-mail from Town Treasurer Phil Cammarano regarding setting up a meeting with Bond Counsel Frank D'Ercole. In the e-mail Mr. Cammarano suggested that the Board of Finance review copies the DVD from the July 16, 2008 BOF meeting where most questions were answered and only set up a meeting if the members still feel that questions still need to be answered.

Chairman Joe Hart read an e-mail from Finance Director Jay Waterman with an attached e-mail from Board of Education Chairman Kim Hanson regarding the \$50,000 transfer from the BOE

surplus. In the e-mail Mr. Hanson noted that there were two discussions with BOE legal counsel noting that it was legal to allocate funds from the BOE surplus to the restroom project.

Public Comment

First Selectman John Hodge announced that New Fairfield has received notice that Standard & Poor's has upgraded New Fairfield to a AAA rating. This is the highest rating possible and this is the first time in New Fairfield's history that it has received such rating. Only 168 municipalities out of approximately 13,000 received this rating. Mr. Hodge noted that this will result in an enormous savings for the cost of the school project among other projects. Mr. Hodge thanked town employees, town department heads, the town treasurer, the finance department, the finance director and the BOS, BOF and BOE.

BOF member Lucy DiRocco thanked BOF Chairman Joe Hart for his diligence that attributed to this rating. BOF Chairman Joe Hart thanked the taxpayers of New Fairfield and noted that the town has a 99.69% collection rate.

Approval of Minutes

Lucy DiRocco made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2009 regular meeting with the following amendment. Add under Correspondence and Announcements that in the e-mail read from the PBC Chairman Pete Viola it should be stated that Mr. Viola declined to come to a BOF meeting to discuss the PBC projects. Wes Marsh seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Change in Agenda

Joe Hart made a motion to move item #7A (Discussion of Emergency Radio Communications System) to item #8A on the agenda. Tom Wahlig seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Lucy DiRocco made a motion to add "Senior Center Update" as item #9A to the agenda. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Tom Wahlig made a motion to add "Discuss and possibly vote to form a task force for the Fire Dept. reserve fund." Joe Hart seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Discussion of legal opinion regarding BOE \$50,000 transfer

There was a discussion of the \$50,000 BOE transfer from surplus for the restrooms at Rebel Field. Lucy DiRocco read the motion from the BOE June 18, 2009 meeting and spoke of encumbrances and a prior fiscal year. There was a lengthy discussion of the BOE operating budget and capital projects. BOE Chairman Kim Hanson spoke of the project. BOF Chairman Joe Hart spoke of asking the BOE to rescind their vote if the BOF promises to move \$50,000 to the Town's Capital and Nonrecurring account and mark it for the bathrooms subject to a machine vote.

School Project update

Finance Director Jay Waterman noted that the paperwork for state reimbursement was filed. It was requested that Mr. Waterman provide a monthly update for the BOF regarding the school building project.

PBC update

There was a discussion of if the PBC is involved in the bathroom project or the Emergency Radio communications system. First Selectman John Hodge will give information to the board regarding information he receives from the state regarding the bathrooms.

Discussion of line item transfers resolution

There was a discussion among the members of the BOF regarding a legal opinion and an Intra-Department transfer that was voted down by the BOF at the June 30, 2009 meeting. Chairman Joe Hart asked that Finance Director Jay Waterman provide the BOF with any documentation that is provided to the auditors regarding this transfer.

There was a discussion of getting a legal opinion or an arbitrator for this issue.

Jane Landers made a motion to add “Discuss and possibly retain legal counsel for the BOF” to the agenda under New Business. Lucy DiRocco seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Recess

Joe Hart made a motion to take a ten minutes recess at 9:05pm to allow the board to go over paperwork. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

The board reconvened at 9:15pm.

Emergency Radio Communications

Fire Chief Ed McCue spoke of the Emergency Radio Communications project. There was a discussion among the members of the BOF as to where to take the funds for this project. Chief McCue gave a list of four references concerning Marcus Communications as requested by the BOF at their last meeting. (Such document to be attached to the minutes of this meeting)

Joe Hart made a motion that the BOF approve the following resolution regarding the Emergency Radio Communications system: “Be it resolved that the Town of New Fairfield approve an upgrade to the town’s emergency radio communications system in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000 and authorize the expenditure of the town funds thereof. The project will be financed by using \$150,000 from the emergency radio communications capital and nonrecurring fund and \$1,050,000 from the town’s unappropriated capital and nonrecurring funds.” (Such document to be attached to the minutes of this meeting) Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Fire Department Task Force

There was a discussion of forming a committee to discuss the Fire Department apparatus fund. The BOF asked Fire Chief Ed McCue to come to a future BOF meeting to give an overall explanation of the Fire Dept.

Joe Hart made a motion to appoint Tom Wahlig as a BOF liaison to the Fire Department Task Force. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Jane Landers made a motion to appoint Wes Marsh as a BOF liaison to the Fire Department Task Force. Joe Hart seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Legal Update

There was a discussion among the members of the BOF regarding specific issues that they would like to seek a legal opinion for. There was a discussion of getting a legal opinion or an attorney to arbitrate the matters.

Lucy DiRocco made a motion that the BOF retain legal counsel and appropriate up to \$10,000 to address BOF concerns.

Joe Hart made a motion to amend the previous motion to appropriate an amount not to exceed \$2900. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

After a discussion Lucy DiRocco made a motion to call the question. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

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

Vote to amend motion: 5-1-0 (Motion approved-Al Mardis opposed)

Vote on original motion as amended: 5-1-0 (Motion approved-Al Mardis opposed)

Joe Hart made a motion to appoint Jane Landers and Wes Marsh as representatives of the BOF to contact the attorney. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-1-0 (Motion approved-Al Mardis opposed)

Senior Center update

There was a discussion among the BOF and First Selectman John Hodge about the TV studio at the Senior Center. There was a lengthy discussion of the Community Room at the Senior Center.

Medical update

Finance Director Jay Waterman noted that the Medical fund expenditures were 5.8% less than last year.

Legal update

Lucy DiRocco spoke of total expenditures for the year and asked Finance Director Jay Waterman to provide a work product for the Taxation/Assessment Legal fees.

Year to date expenses review

Finance Director Jay Waterman went over the year-to-date expenditures for 2009-2010.

Capital and Nonrecurring report review- None

Revenue update- None

Public Comment

BOE Chairman Kim Hanson and First Selectman John Hodge spoke of the new TV studio and noted that the equipment for the TV studio will still stay with the students.

Future Agenda Items- None

Board member comments

Lucy DiRocco spoke of the library budget and a presentation that was made by the Library Board Chairman at the last BOF meeting.

Adjournment

Al Mardis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:42pm. Joe Hart seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)