

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

MINUTES

**Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 20, 2013
7:30 PM
New Fairfield Community Room**

Members present:

Wes Marsh, Chairman
Don Blackwell
Tom Edwards
Keith Landa
Jane Landers
Tom Quigley
Michael Cammarota, Alternate
Cheryl Reedy, Alternate
Brian Shea, Alternate (arrived 7:50)

Other Town Officials Present:

Susan Chapman, Selectman
Mike Gill, Selectman
Jay Waterman, Finance Director
Ed Sbordone, Accounting Manager
Dr. Alicia Roy, Superintendent of Schools
Barbara Mechler, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mariana Coelho, High School Principal
Christine Baldelli, Middle School Principal
Sarah McLain, Meeting House Hill School Principal
Aimee Turner, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Craig McClain, Business Manager
Kim Hanson, BOE Chairman
Scott Akam, BOE member
Steve Burfeind, BOE member
Vic Flagello, BOE member
Peter Ohring, BOE member

Call To Order Chairman Wes Marsh called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements- None

Public Comment

Resident Linda Norris spoke of the revenue side of the budget and suggested raising boat dock fees and enforcing fines for illegal parking as means to raise revenue.

BOE Member Steve Burfeind spoke of the following components of the budget: Debt Service, GASB 45, Medical, Capital and Nonrecurring and Operations, spoke of the percentage increase compared to last year and spoke of the declining grant list and declining non-tax revenues. Mr. Burfeind asked the BOF to consider this when deciding on the budget.

BOE Chairman Kim Hanson corrected some misconceptions printed in the *Citizen News* that he stated at last week's BOF meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Keith Landa made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2013 regular meeting as presented. Tom Edwards seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-1 (Motion approved-Tom Quigley abstained)

Budget transfers

Finance Director Jay Waterman noted that this transfer was to give the part-time Land Use employee more hours in order to scan Land Use documents.

Jane Landers made a motion to approve the following Inter-Departmental transfer in the amount of \$2,000.00. Tom Quigley seconded the motion. (Such document to be attached to the minutes of this meeting)

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

\$	Transfer To		\$	Transfer From	
2,000.00	4197-110	General Land Use-Salaries	2,000.00	4192-331	Zoning Comm.-Regulations Maintenance
\$2,000.00			\$2,000.00		

Medical report

Finance Director Jay Waterman noted that the Medical Reserve balance went up because medical claims went down. This amounts to approximately \$50,000 and increases the projection from \$1,300,000 to \$1,357,000.

Discussion of the Board of Selectman's requested 2013/2014 budget

Chairman Wes Marsh spoke of the proposed overall budget and went over what needs to be cut in order to reduce the percentage increase. The final mark-up will be the first week in April. It was noted that this is a particularly difficult year due to the decline in the Grand List due to the First Light settlement and the decline in projected non taxpayer revenue.

Members of the BOF each gave their opinion on what percentage increase they would like to see. Some members asked that the percentage increase not go over 3%. Other members of the BOF asked that a higher percentage be presented and let the voters decide.

There was a discussion of the pros and cons of not fully funding GASB 45 for the full \$350,000 for next year. Members discussed their opinions on this and asked the Finance Director for a projection of what the impact would be if lesser amounts were contributed to GASB 45.

There was a discussion of what cuts would be made for the town. It was noted that the paving of the roads may not be done on the same schedule if cuts are made to the town.

Keith Landa made a motion to cut \$200,000 for the Town budget with cuts decided by the Board of Selectmen. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 1-5-0 (Motion denied- Keith Landa in favor, Wes Marsh, Jane Landers, Tom Quigley, Tom Edwards and Don Blackwell opposed)

Tom Edwards made a motion to identify cuts in both the Town and BOE budget that will generate a budget increase of 4.5% over the 2012-2103 budget. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 1-4-1 (Motion denied- Tom Edwards in favor, Wes Marsh, Jane Landers, Tom Quigley, and Don Blackwell opposed, Keith Landa abstained)

Discussion of the Board of Education's requested 2013/2014 budget

Chairman Wes Marsh noted that he compared our BOE requested budget to the school budget at Brookfield and noted that budgets were very similar but Brookfield has 85 more students and 32 fewer employees. Mr. Marsh suggested cuts to the Capital and Nonrecurring account, security and some cuts to the operation budget. There was a discussion of possibly contracting out some services.

The BOF discussed attrition in the schools and the incentives given to teachers to notify the Superintendent of their intention to retire by April 1st.

The members of the BOF each gave their opinions regarding the BOE budget and discussed the impact of cuts.

Public Comment

BOE Chairman Kim Hanson spoke of the potential cuts and asked specifically about security in the schools. It was noted that it is currently not in the Cap & Non account and would be in the Operations budget.

BOE Member Scott Akam asked how it is decided how much to put into the General Fund. He suggested that having a lot of money in the General Fund may hurt the town during contract negotiations.

Resident Linda Norris spoke in support of the BOE budget.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Alicia Roy spoke of the BOE budget and specifically spoke of saving initiatives that were implemented this year. They include Electricity savings, Capital and Nonrecurring savings, a new phone system and a new Health Insurance Plan.

Consolidated School Teacher Elaine Schlosser spoke in support of the BOE budget and specifically security in the schools. She asked the BOF to put the budget up for vote as is and to let the voters decide.

BOE Member Vic Flagello spoke in support of the BOE budget and noted that he thought that there should be a separate vote concerning security in the town.

Resident Ellen Waltmeyer spoke in support of the BOE budget and noted that it is not fiscally prudent to have a 3% increase and that it should be higher.

Future Agenda items- The BOF will discuss GASB 45 and finalize the budget numbers at the upcoming meetings.

Board member comments

Don Blackwell thanked the BOS, BOE, teachers and administrators for all their hard work and noted that everyone does a fantastic job but it's still a difficult budget year and thus cuts need to be made.

Jane Landers noted that everyone is making the best possible situation in a bad economy.

Adjournment

Don Blackwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 pm. Tom Edwards seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)