

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

MINUTES

Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, December 20, 2017
7:30 PM
New Fairfield Community Room

Members present:

Wes Marsh, Chairman
Erin Badillo
Michael Cammarota
Jane Landers
Anthony Yorio
Cheryl Reedy, Alternate
Rick Salem, Alternate
Brian Shea, Alternate
Members not present:
Tom Edwards

Other Town Officials Present:

Ed Sbordone, Finance Director
Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman
Khris Hall, Selectman

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments

Wes Marsh noted that Tom Edwards would not be available for tonight's meeting and has appointed Brian Shea to serve in his place.

Correspondence and Announcements- None

Addition to Agenda

Wes Marsh made a motion to add agenda item #12A "Discuss and possibly vote to approve the BOF Department budget for 2018-2019". Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Public Comment- None

Approval of Minutes

Jane Landers made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2017 regular meeting as presented. Michael Cammarota seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-1 (Motion approved- Anthony Yorio abstained)

Election of Officers

Brian Shea nominated Wes Marsh to serve as Chairman of the Board of Finance.

Vote: 6-0-0- Wes Marsh will remain Chairman

Jane Landers nominated Michael Cammarota to serve as Clerk of the Board of Finance.

Vote: 6-0-0- Michael Cammarota will remain Clerk

Budget Transfers- None

Presentation of 2016-2017 audit- Marcia Marien, Partner, PKF O'Connor Davies

Marcia Marien from the firm of O'Connor Davies spoke of the 2016-2017 audit for the Town of New Fairfield. She spoke of the short term balance sheet and the General Fund. It was noted that the Fund balance for New Fairfield is approximately 12% of expenses which equates to approximately 1 ½ months. Revenues for the year were more than expected and expenditures were less than expected. The tax collection rate is the 3rd or 4th highest in the State. Other topics mentioned were the Health Insurance fund, pension liability and OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits). It was noted that the State pays 100% of the teachers' retirement plan on behalf of the town.

Update-Corrective actions progress on audit deficiency findings

It was noted that due to deficiencies found in last year's audit, corrective policies were put in place and the deficiencies were resolved. Ms. Marien noted that this has been the best audit of her tenure as auditor. The BOF thanked Finance Director Ed Sbordone and the entire Finance staff for all their hard work.

Approval of Audit

Wes Marsh made a motion to accept the 2016-2017 audit as prepared by the firm O'Connor Davies.

Anthony Yorio seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Board of Finance Department budget for 2018-2019

The Board discussed their budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. The four components that make up their budget include: Salaries, Materials and supplies, contingency fund and audit fee.

Currently the fee for the audit is \$52,000/year. Wes Marsh noted that this fee may be raised to \$54,000/year. There was a discussion of the contingency budget and whether or not the full \$33,000 is necessary.

Anthony Yorio made a motion to modify the BOF Department budget for 2018-2019 to reduce the contingency fund from \$33,000 per year to \$15,000 per year with all other line items to remain as proposed. Michael Cammarota seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-2-0 (Motion approved- Wes Marsh and Jane Landers opposed)

Fiscal year 2016-2017 budget surplus

The 2016-2017 budget surplus for revenue and expenditures is approximately \$709,000. The Board discussed a policy approved at a prior meeting which puts 100% of the revenue surplus and 50% of the expenditure surplus in the unassigned fund balance. The BOS and BOE will report to the BOF at their

January meeting as to how they would recommend spending of the surplus. The BOF will vote on this at their January meeting.

Medical Plan update

Wes Marsh noted that he met with USI along with the BOS and the Superintendent of Schools and discussed medical claims. It is predicted that medical premiums will increase but they will need to look at December claims before anything can be resolved. It was decided to have a subcommittee meeting to discuss this.

Discussion of improving communication with taxpayers and increasing involvement

Erin Badillo prepared a spreadsheet with suggestions for improving communication with taxpayers. These suggestions are intended to increase public awareness and to increase public participation during the budget process. Suggestions included putting the meeting packet online and including manuals and policies to the town's website. There was a suggestion of putting a projection screen at live meetings so the public can see the worksheets. The Board discussed the pros and cons of creating a Facebook page. It was noted that a Facebook page can be set up as an information only page and it was decided to have one on a trial basis. This will be discussed further at the January meeting.

Elderly Tax Relief program

Income limits for the Elderly Tax Relief program were increased approximately three years ago. The Board inquired as to how this would affect the program. According to Assessor Rich Seman, this added approximately 30 applicants to the program and cost the Town an additional \$50,000. It was noted that there were not a lot of applicants close to the income limit so increasing the limit again would not have a great effect.

ONGOING UPDATES

Medical update- The Medical fund balance is very healthy.

Legal update- The balance in the Legal budget is approximately \$85,938. It was noted that Legal Labor and Legal ZBA have increased.

Year to date expenses review- The Board reviewed police overtime and communications overtime.

Current year revenue update- ECS money has come in. Interest is doing well for the first quarter.

Cap & Non- Finance Director Ed Sbordone noted that he has met with the Board of Selectmen to review outstanding project to see if any can be closed out. There was a brief discussion of Street Scape.

Public Comment- None

Future Agenda Items-The Board will discuss the following at meetings in the near future:

- Health insurance subcommittee
- 2016-2017 budget surplus
- Ways to improve communications with taxpayers
- Approval of auditor

Board Member comments- Board members wished everyone Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. Chairman Wes Marsh reminded everyone to pay their taxes.

Adjournment

Jane Landers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:18pm. Anthony Yorio seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)