

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

MINUTES
Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, April 17, 2019
7:30 PM
New Fairfield Community Room

Members present:

Wes Marsh, Chairman
Michael Cammarota
Cheryl Reedy
Anthony Yorio
Tom Garben, Alternate
Brian Shea, Alternate

Members not present:

Erin Badillo
Jane Landers
Rick Salem, Alternate

Other Town Officials Present:

Ed Sbordone, Finance Director
Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman
Peggy Katkocin, BOE Chairman
Kim Hanson, Selectman

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- Wes Marsh noted that Jane Landers will be absent for tonight's meeting and has appointed Tom Garben to serve in her place.

Correspondence and Announcements- Wes Marsh read an email from taxpayer Eric Schonenberg speaking of his disappointment regarding the lack of public participation in the budget process. Mr. Schonenberg thanked the Board of Finance for listening to his comment.

Public Comment- None

Approval of Minutes

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2019 regular meeting as presented. Anthony Yorio seconded the motion. **Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Budget Transfers

Wes Marsh made a motion to approve the following Inter-Departmental transfer in the amount of \$25,000.00. Cheryl Reedy seconded the motion. **Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion approved)**

\$	Transfer From		\$	Transfer To	
\$10,000.00	4160-250	Unclass P&B-Unemployment	\$25,000.00	4221-338	Ambulance- Para/EMT
\$7,500.00	4160-260	Unclass P&B-Workers Compensation			
\$7,500.00	4160-230	Unclass P&B-Pension			
\$25,000.00			\$25,000.00		

Discussion of High School and Consolidated School capital improvement projects-cost estimates

There was a lengthy discussion by the members of the Board of Finance regarding the proposed school building projects for both the High School and Consolidated School. It was noted that the approximate cost of both projects would be \$84 million. Members of the BOF discussed the options and noted opinions that the two school projects should not be done at the same time. Other opinions express by BOF members were that the projects were too expensive and seemed to be rushed. They asked the BOE to explore other options including the possibility of sending elementary school students to Sherman, or going back to the State and asking for another opinion regarding possibly renovating instead of rebuilding. There was a suggestion of polling residents to see if there is any interest in making donations towards the buildings.

There was a brief discussion of possible of the cost of fixing problems in the existing buildings and the potential savings to the operation budget by having new buildings.

The BOF asked the Board of Education to give a report of the following items broken out by project:

- Projected bond costs
- Possible operational savings from the budget that will be realized with new buildings
- The possibility of hiring a professional to looking into charitable giving for the project.

Discussion and vote on Medical Plan for the 2019/2020 budget

The final numbers for the Medical Plan have not yet been received. This agenda item was tabled until the May meeting.

Board of Finance article for the Town Tribune

Wes Marsh will write the next article for the Town Tribune that will outline the five main parts of the budget which include payroll, nonpayroll, Capital and Nonrecurring, Medical Insurance and Debt Service. He noted that the proposed budget for 2019-2020 has an increase of 1.05% which includes added services from the 2018-2019 budget. It was decided to have this article appear in the Town Tribune in the issue immediately preceding the budget vote.

School Safety and Security Committee

Anthony Yorio noted that Dr. Sanzo has been pursuing grant opportunities for school security. Mr. Yorio noted that there is a SVPP Grant that provides up to \$500,000 for a project that involves funding for inner operability, communications and overall safety enhancements. As part of this project, all stakeholders must provide a letter of support for this grant application.

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to authorize Chairman Wes Marsh to sign the letter for the Board of Education's SVPP Grant application as presented. Michael Cammarota seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion approved)

ONGOING UPDATES

Medical update- The Board reviewed the medical plan.

Legal update- The Board reviewed the labor budget and noted that it is trending well. Labor negotiations are currently in progress with the library union.

Year to date expenses review- There was a brief discussion of contracted services.

Current year revenue update- The Board reviewed the revenue accounts. There will be a revenue surplus for the fiscal year 2018-2019. There was a brief discussion of the possibility of using the BOF contingency fund to get a second opinion for a facilities study. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Cap & Non- The Saw Mill Bridge project is projected to be finished by November.

Public Comment

BOE Chairman Peggy Katkocin spoke in support of the school building projects and thanked everyone for their comments. She noted that the June 30th deadline is just to get the project on the state's docket for next year and doesn't bind the district to do anything. She spoke of the possible warning for the high school's accreditation due to the condition of the buildings and possible community uses for new buildings. She invited everyone to come to the BOE meeting on April 23rd at 7:00 pm in the High School Auditorium to learn more about the project and give feedback.

Selectman Kim Hanson spoke of the specific details of the project and the process. He noted that the Permanent Building Committee should be the committee to lead the charge regarding the building project.

John Hodge spoke of the role of the Permanent Building Committee. He encouraged everyone to look at other options and to get multiple opinions from the state regarding reimbursement. He spoke of the history of building the Senior Center and the many obstacles that had to be overcome before building.

Peggy Katkocin noted that there are four options for each building. She also noted that the Permanent Building Committee Chairman has been at many meetings.

Future Agenda items-The Medical Plan and the school construction projects will be discussed at a meeting in the near future. The Mill Rate will be set at a meeting once the budget is approved.

Board member comments

Tom Garben thanked everyone for their input and noted that there is a lot of cost benefit analysis that needs to be done regardless of what is decided for the schools.

Brian Shea thanked everyone for their input.

Michael Cammarota expressed his disappointment with the lack of public input regarding the budget. He encouraged everyone to get involved with the process regarding the building project.

Anthony Yorio explained the process for security upgrades and noted that the School Safety and Security Committee includes members from many aspects of town boards and departments.

Cheryl Reedy thanked everyone for their input.

Wes Marsh encouraged everyone to focus on the long term regarding the proposed school projects. He reminded everyone to vote at the budget referendum and to let the BOF know if they are not in favor of the budget.

Adjournment

Michael Cammarota made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 pm. Anthony Yorio seconded the motion. **Vote: 5-0-0 (Motion approved)**