

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

MINUTES  
**Board of Finance Special Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 1, 2020**  
**7:30 PM**  
**Virtual meeting via Zoom**

***Members present via Zoom***

Wes Marsh, Chairman  
Michael Cammarota  
Tom Garben  
Jane Landers  
Cheryl Reedy  
Anthony Yorio  
Brian Shea, Alternate  
Mark Werner, Alternate  
Greg Williams, Alternate

***Other Town Officials Present via Zoom***

Ed Sbordone, Finance Director and Town Treasurer  
Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman  
Khris Hall, Selectman  
Kim Hanson, Selectman  
Dr. Pat Cosentino, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Rich Sanzo, Director of Business and Operations  
Peggy Katkocin, BOE Chairman

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

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Rich Sanzo gave a brief overview of the rules and procedures for having a virtual meeting.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Appointments**- None

**Correspondence and Announcements**

Finance Director and Town Treasurer Ed Sbordone noted that the town will have a bond sale date of Tuesday, April 7. The municipal rates have come down to approximately 2-2.5%. He also noted that according to the Governor's order, all ECS grants and special education revenue will still be given for this year and next year.

**Public Comment**

Selectman Kim Hanson spoke of the upcoming Town Tribune article by the BOF and asked that it clarify to the members of the public that the BOS is **required** to instruct the BOF to set the Mil Rate and adopt the budget for 2020-2021 in light of the coronavirus pandemic. He further asked the BOF to wait as long as possible before adopting a budget so that the public can give as much input as possible. He also spoke of his concerns regarding bond issues and the upcoming building projects and suggested that these projects be delayed as long as possible to make sure that State revenue is still available.

Selectman Khris Hall agreed that the BOF should wait as long as possible to adopt a budget so that they have as much information as possible.

First Selectman Pat Del Monaco also suggested waiting as long as possible to set the budget.

Mike Gill gave his opinion regarding the school projects and the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road and suggested that it be delayed until the Town has a better idea of how it will be affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Michael Cammarota made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2020 regular meeting as presented. Jane Landers seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

### **Budget Transfers-** None

### **Discussion of Medical Plan for 2020-2021- Tom Kowalchik, USI**

Tom Kowalchick from USI spoke of the Medical Plan for the Town of New Fairfield and noted that he will most likely have updated information by the April 15, 2020 meeting. It was noted that May data numbers can be given by early June if the budget is delayed until then.

### **Discussion and vote of 2018-2019 Audit from PKF O'Connor Davies**

Joseph Centofanti and Kathryn Ta from O'Connor Davies gave a presentation of the audit for the Town of New Fairfield that included the Annual Financial Report, Financial Reports, Federal Single Audit reports, required communications, recommendations, best practices and future considerations. The Financial highlights included notation that the unassigned fund balance has increased and represents 17.95% of total general fund expenditures. The audit noted that the Town received reimbursement from FEMA for the May 2018 storm and the tax collection rate for New Fairfield for 2018-2019 was 99.4%. It was noted that pension plans were well funded and higher than average. Recommendations, best practices and future considerations for 2020-2022 were discussed. Mr. Centofanti noted that the Town is in overall good financial health. BOF Member Cheryl Reedy asked Finance Director Ed Sbordone to put together a report regarding a plan and timeline for the recommendations. Wes Marsh noted that the subcommittee recently met and voted to recommend the acceptance of this audit to the full BOF.

Wes Marsh made a motion that the BOF accept the 2018-2019 audit as prepared by the firm of PKF O'Connor Davies. Tom Garben seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

### **Discussion of the BOS and BOE requested budgets for 2020-2021**

Wes Marsh noted that the BOF voted at their March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting to ask the BOE and BOS to come back with the following respective cuts: BOE- \$100,000 in capital and \$337,600 in operating and BOS- \$300,000 capital and \$84,400 in operating. He noted that the BOE met on March 19<sup>th</sup> and voted to accept the cuts to the BOE budget but did not yet decide on specific details.

First Selectman Pat Del Monaco noted that the BOS met on March 26<sup>th</sup> and voted to make the following cuts to their budget. She noted that some of the postponed cuts may be deferred to the budget surplus.

There was a brief discussion of these cuts and specifically the Mil Rate increases regarding a 5-year capital plan.

Capital and Nonrecurring:

Additional Tower Reserve	\$ 25,000
Business Machines (Social Services)	\$ 900
Business Machines (Library)	\$ 2,200
Replace NF17	\$215,000 (Postponed)
Tax Revaluation	\$ 40,000 (Postponed)
Zoning Regulations	\$ 16,900 (Postponed)
<b>Total Capital reductions</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>

Operating:

NW CT Public Service Communications	\$ 5,200
Worker's Comp	\$ 15,000
Road Repair	\$ 64,200
<b>Total Operating reductions</b>	<b>\$ 84,400</b>

**Update on School Building projects**

Anthony Yorio gave an update on the building project for the high school and specifically the challenge with the designs for the building location. He spoke of the possibility of the town purchasing the property at 78 Gillotti Road which would solve a lot of design challenges including parking issues well removals that would result in a substantial savings for the project. There was a discussion of the funding for the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road and it was noted that approved bond money could not be used for the purchase of property. There was a lengthy discussion of the possible purchase of 78 Gillotti Road. There was a suggestion of asking the Permanent Building Committee to virtually air their meetings and to show the cost difference of the project with each scenario. There was a suggestion that there be an agreement with the BOE and PBC that whatever is taken from the Town to fund the purchase of the property be returned to the Cap and Non Fund once the project is completed.

**Boat dock invoice-** None

**Town Tribune article**

Wes Marsh spoke of a draft article for the *Town Tribune* written by Cheryl Reedy and Khris Hall. The main topics of this article included the process for the adoption of the budget and the schedule for upcoming BOF meetings. Cheryl Reedy noted that she spoke with the Tax Collector to inquire about the last possible date to set the Mil Rate. It was noted that the Tax Collector would need two weeks after the Mil Rate is set to print and mail the tax bills. The Assessor's office would also need a week to calculate the elderly tax relief. Suggested dates for the BOF to set the Mil Rate would be May 27 or June 3. The consensus among the BOF members was to wait as long as possible to set the Mil Rate so that they can get as much information as possible.

Wes Marsh spoke of the process for adopting the budget and noted that the BOF must do a budget mark up, publish it in the newspaper and then set the Mil Rate. There was a discussion of getting as much public comment as possible in order to make up for the fact that there will be no referendum. Wes Marsh

noted that the BOF will meet often in April and May via Zoom allowing for the public to log in. Members of the public can also send emails directly to the BOF.

### **Public Comment**

Selectman Kim Hanson encouraged the members of the BOF to take a careful look at the governor's directive regarding setting the budget without taxpayer approval and didn't think that the BOF had a choice but to set the Mil Rate unless the order is lifted. He further spoke of his concerns about incoming revenue from the State and its ability to pay.

### **Future Agenda Items**

The Board will review the budget following at meetings in the near future:

- Vote to retain auditor
- Budget items for the 2020-2021 budget
- Potential purchase of 78 Gillotti Road
- Inter-departmental transfers
- Update from State on Executive orders

### **Board member comments**

Members of the Board of Finance thanked everyone involved in setting up the Zoom virtual meeting and encouraged everyone to stay safe and healthy and to stay home. They encouraged members of the public to give their opinions on the budget and spoke of the advantages of having as much public input as possible. Anthony Yorio clarified the plans for the high school project and specifically the potential purchase of 78 Gillotti Road.

### **Adjournment**

Jane Landers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 pm. Michael Cammarota seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**