

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

MINUTES
Board of Finance Special Meeting
Wednesday, April 29, 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
Greg Flanagan, BOE member
Kimberly LaTourette, BOE member
Samantha Mannion, BOE member
Rick Regan, BOE member
Stephanie Strazza, BOE member
Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Julie Luby
Director of Technology, Dr. Karen Fildes
James D'Amico, High School Principal
Christine Baldelli, Middle School Principal
Cheryl Milo, Middle School Assistant Principal
James Mandracchia, MHHS Principal
Allyson Story, MHHS Assistant Principal
Mary Stolle, High School Athletic Director
Katherine Matz, Pupil Personnel Director
Melissa Bushnel, Special Education Supervisor

BOE Network Administrator Paul Gouveia gave a brief overview of the rules and procedures for having a virtual meeting.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements

Chairman Wes Marsh noted that he received three emails regarding the budget. The first email from Charlene Fairchild supported no tax increases for this year and suggested that the school building project be put on hold at

this time. The second email was from Tom Quigley supporting the budget as it currently stands and supporting continuing with the school project. The third email was from John McCartney that included several charts with information regarding history of town budgets. These charts will be discussed at next week's BOF meeting.

Public Comment

Many members of the public including members of the Board of Education spoke of their concerns regarding further cuts to the BOE budget. They noted the need for additional services and support that may be needed due to the potential learning curve that may arise with distance learning and students being away from school.

BOE Chairman Peggy Katkocin thanked everyone that spoke of their concerns regarding additional cuts to the budget and noted that the BOE will push back against cuts since they believe it would have a devastating effect on the school district.

Selectman Kim Hanson spoke of how COVID 19 will affect the economy and how it will be very difficult financially for many families in the near future. He spoke in favor of a zero percent or less increase to the budget.

Approval of Minutes

Wes Marsh made a motion to adopt the minutes of the April 20, 2020 joint BOS/BOF meeting as presented. Cheryl Reedy seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Budget Transfers- None

Discussion of Medical Plan for 2020-2021

Tom Kowalchick and Kim Quigley from USI spoke of the medical plan for the Town of New Fairfield. Mr. Kowalchick spoke specifically of the cost impact estimation through August 4, 2020. Mr. Kowalchick spoke of factors that affect the cost and specifically geographic cost factors and industry cost factors and noted that he is optimistic that costs for New Fairfield will be relatively low. At this point, there is a decrease in claims due to no elective surgeries being performed at this time but noted that elective surgeries will increase once the quarantine is lifted. He spoke of how the lack of preventative procedures may affect claims in the future.

There was a brief discussion of how much to put in the medical plan for this year. Mr. Kowalchick cautioned the town not to go too deep into their medical reserves. There will be an update on claims at the May 6th BOF meeting.

Discussion - BOS and BOE requested 2020/21 budgets and reductions

Wes Marsh noted that the BOE met on Monday, April 27th and discussed budget cuts and will meet again on April 30th. The BOS will also meet on April 30th to discuss their cuts. He spoke of a conversation with a member of the Brookfield Board of Finance and noted that they are having similar concerns.

The BOF asked the BOE for a list of any savings or additional expenses expected due to COVID 19. There was a discussion of the possibility of buying equipment or supplies with money from the 2019-2020 budget surplus. There was a discussion of any additional needs and demands for both the BOE and BOS and specifically increased expenses with special education students and/or a larger budget needed for social services. The BOE was asked to give a list of cuts that they made with both the first and second rounds. It was requested that this list be given as soon as possible so that it can be discussed at the May 6 meeting.

First Selectman Pat Del Monaco spoke of unemployment claims throughout March and April. She will be sending the BOF a list every week for comparison purposes. There was a brief discussion of the process for filing for unemployment benefits for self employed individuals.

Discuss - Board of Finance article for the Town Tribune

Wes Marsh spoke of the Town Tribune article written by Brian Shea that will appear in the April 30th edition that gives a time line for the budget and dial in information for public comment.

Members of the BOF thanked members of the public for their participation in tonight's meeting.

There will be another letter in the Town Tribune written by First Selectman Pat Del Monaco, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh and BOE Chairman Peggy Katkocin giving the facts about the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road.

Public Comment

Selectman Kim Hanson spoke of the process for filing for Federal unemployment insurance for self employed individuals. He further spoke of the economy and the possibility of a depression. He suggested that the BOF compare the administrative costs per student for this year to the administrative cost per student six years ago.

Future Agenda items

- Budget- The board will further review the budget on May 6th and do the final Mark up on May 13th. The BOF will continue to meet every Wednesday until the budget is adopted.
- Medical
- Town Tribune article

Board Member Comments

Members of the BOF thanked Brian Shea as well as Pat Del Monaco, Wes Marsh and Peggy Katkocin for the hard work on their respective Town Tribune articles. They thanked the public for all their feedback and were pleased with the number of residents that have dialed into the meetings. Members of the public were encouraged to reach out to the BOF with comments, questions or concerns. This can be done either by attending virtual meetings or at bof@newfairfield.org

Adjournment

Jane Landers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 pm. Michael Cammarota seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)