

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

MINUTES

Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 16, 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. Rich Sanzo, Director of Business and Operations
Dr. Pat Cosentino, Superintendent of Schools
Peggy Katkocin, BOE Chairman
Rick Regan, BOE member

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements- None

Public Comment-None

Approval of Minutes

Michael Cammarota made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2020 regular meeting as presented. Jane Landers seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2020 Pension and Bonding subcommittee meeting as presented. Michael Cammarota seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Budget Transfers

Cheryl Reedy made a motion approve the transfer of the following Inter-Departmental transfer for fiscal year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$4,984.82. Jane Landers seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

\$	Transfer From		\$	Transfer To	
\$4,984.82	4195/626.00	Utilities-Gasoline & Diesel	\$1,735.82	4162/421.00	Intergov. Agency- Household Hazardous Waste
			\$2,199.00	4163/520.01	General Insurance-Property and Casualty
			\$1,050.00	4710/001.01	Debt Service-Town-Bond Registration Fees
\$4,984.82			\$4,984.82		

BOS and BOE Budget surplus for fiscal year 2019/2020 update

Finance Director Ed Sbordone noted that the BOE Operating surplus for the year 2019-2020 is \$625,540.89 and the BOS Operating surplus is \$623,027.90. He spoke of the possibility of putting the BOE surplus into a non-lapsing account for COVID 19 and special education expenses and putting the Town surplus towards a variety of items that were taken out of the Town budget last year. These items include boat dock repair, truck replacement, sewer studies, road repair, tax revaluation and zoning regulations. It was noted that these items still need to be voted on by the BOE or the BOS.

Superintendent of Schools Pat Cosentino noted that there were many unexpected expenses due to COVID and Special Education. She asked that the BOF allow the surplus to be put into an account to be used for these expenses. Ed Sbordone gave a brief history of what has been done in prior years.

There was a brief discussion of the process for appropriating the surplus to the Town considering that Town Meetings are not permissible at this time. There was a suggestion of making sure any meetings that are called for this appropriation be specifically noticed with all the information that would normally be given on the Warning of a Town Meeting. There was a discussion as to whether or not this notice would be necessary.

Cheryl Reedy made a motion to include a notice on the October regular BOF meeting agenda to discuss and possibly vote approve an additional appropriation from the fund balance of \$625,540.89 to a BOE non-lapsing account for COVID 19 and Special Education expenses. Jane Landers seconded the motion.
Vote: 2-4-0 (Motion denied- Jane Landers and Cheryl Reedy in favor, Michael Cammarota, Tom Garben, Wes Marsh and Anthony Yorio opposed)

Discussion of Medical Plan for 2020-2021 budget

Wes Marsh noted that Medical Consultant Tom Kowalchik will give an update at the October meeting. It was asked that Mr. Kowalchik give an update of the status of the laser account.

Boat dock replacement cost update

First Selectman Pat Del Monaco gave an update of the Boat dock replacement cost. She noted that Phase I was to reposition the existing docks and the cost is approximately \$735,000. She spoke of the balance in the Boat dock replacement fund:

Phase I cost	\$735,000
Boat dock replacement fund balance 6/30/2020	\$405,355
2019-2020 surplus request	\$225,000
Additional fund required	\$104,645-covered by next year's contribution

The deficit can be covered by next year's boat dock contribution of \$108,833. It was noted that in order to be able to fund the project, it must be broken down into two separate contracts. The first contract would be for \$625,000 and the second contract would be \$110,000 to be signed once the money is in the account. There was a brief discussion of labor costs and repair costs. It was noted that there was a FEMA reimbursement for some damage done by the May 2018 storm.

BOE's forecasted schools' reopening costs due to COVID 19

BOE Director of Business and Operations Dr. Rich Sanzo spoke of estimated expenses to the district due to COVID 19. He spoke of accommodations that have been requested by staff members. Some accommodations were able to be granted so that staff members could return to work safely and others required staff members to go on paid leave. Additional staff was needed to be hired in order to replace anyone on paid leave. He spoke of additional nurses that needed to be hired and increased custodial staffing and the expenses of extra cleaning supplies as well as additional cafeteria aids, long-term substitutes and bus monitors. Other expenses include additional supplies for students since sharing of supplies is not recommended. Utility costs due to increased use of ventilation systems have increased.

Dr. Sanzo spoke of the ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Grant) in the amount of \$2000,000 and the possibility of Coronavirus Relief Funds and FEMA reimbursement.

There was a discussion of putting the 2019-2020 BOE surplus into a non-lapsing account for COVID 19 related expenses and Special Education expenses. This will be discussed further at the next regular BOF meeting on October 21.

Pension and Bonding subcommittee update

Mark Werner spoke of the Pension and Bonding subcommittee meeting held on August 17th. The subcommittee discussed the five retirement plans for the Town which include the Town pension plan, BOE pension plan, OPEB, Firefighter length of service award program and the Town's 457B plan. The subcommittee is focusing on the investment decisions for the plans and how the bonding process works. The next meeting of the subcommittee will be Wednesday, September 23 at 7:30 pm. More information of will be given to the BOF at their October regular meeting.

Discussion of Fraud and Conflict of interest policies

Anthony Yorio and Jane Landers collaborated on the fraud policy and noted that it needs some revisions to make it more specific. It was suggested that it be reviewed by Town Counsel before any decisions are made.

Wes Marsh spoke of the Conflict of Interest policy and noted that he sent it the Town's auditor Joseph Centofanti from O'Connor Davies for review. Mr. Centofanti responded with some suggestions to update the policy and noted it should include provisions for Treatment of the Public, Use of Town Resources and Employment incompatible with Town duties. It was noted that the BOF can make recommendations to changes to this policy but adopting of the policy is the purview of the Board of Selectmen.

ONGOING UPDATES

Medical update- It is expected that final numbers from 2019-2020 will be available at the October BOF meeting.

Legal update- No comments.

Year to date expenses review- Cheryl Reedy asked for a column showing the percentage expended year to date be added to the expenses report.

Current year revenue update- No comments.

Cap & Non- Cheryl Reedy asked if Lake Studies, Paramedic capital, Police Department oil tank and Library renovations were still active. Ed Sbordone noted that there all were still active. The Library project is considered still active because it has not been audited yet. There was a brief discussion of the library project and a problem with the controller board on the elevator. The cost to repair this would be approximately \$37,000. It is possible that this problem may have been caused by the power outage. First Selectman Pat Del Monaco spoke of contacting the manufacturer of the elevator regarding the problem. Cheryl Reedy asked about the status of the intersection of Bigelow Road. Pat Del Monaco will look into this.

There was a discussion of the status of the school building projects as of June 30, 2020. Dr. Sanzo noted that both projects are expected to be on the priority list for the Special Session of the State Legislative. He noted that he has continually met with the Office of School Construction Grants and Reimbursements regarding the school construction projects throughout the COVID 19 crisis.

Public Comment- Selectman Kim Hanson spoke in support of publishing the information about the budget surplus in the Town Tribune similar to how it was done with the budget to allow taxpayers to have as much information as possible and enough time to voice opinions. He also spoke of concerns as to why there was such a large surplus and the possibility of building a budget that is inflated. Lastly, he asked the BOF to challenge the BOE to come up with some savings that could be realized with the school budget.

Future Agenda items- The following items will discussed in the near future:

- Medical update
- Boat dock fund
- Pension and Bonding subcommittee

- Fraud policy
- Surplus for both the Town and BOE
- COVID 19 expenses

Board Member Comments- Members of the Board of Finance reminded everyone that COVID 19 cases were increasing in Connecticut and encouraged everyone to stay safe. Anthony Yorio and Wes Marsh thanked everyone involved in the school system for all the professionalism and wonderful job they are doing this year despite all the challenges.

Adjournment

Michael Cammarota made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 pm. Anthony Yorio seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Received by Email on 9/23/2020 @ 1:00 pm
By: Holly Z. Smith, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield