

From: SimsburyCT Postings June 18, 2009 9:44:06 AM  
Subject: Board of Finance Minutes 05/19/2009  
To: SimsburyCT\_FinanceMin  
Cc:

BOARD OF FINANCE  
MAY 19, 2009  
REGULAR MEETING

#### CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Finance Regular meeting was called to order at 8:30 PM in the Henry James Middle School cafeteria. The following members were present: Chairman/Moderator Paul Henault, Peter Askham, Candace Fitzpatrick, Nicholas Mason, Kevin North and Anita Mielert. Also present were Finance Director/Treasurer Kevin Kane, First Selectman Mary Glassman, and other interested parties.

Ms. Fitzpatrick made a motion to amend the agenda to take Items 5 and 6 after Item 1. Mr. Mason seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

#### 1. APPROVE MINUTES

An edit was made to the April 7, 2009 minutes.

Mr. North made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2009 Public Hearing as amended. Ms. Fitzpatrick seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

Ms. Fitzpatrick made a motion to approve the minutes of April 14, 2009 Regular Meeting as written. Mr. Mason seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

#### 2. Discuss Results of Referendum

Chairman Henault stated that the Board of Selectmen budget was approved with 1689 yes votes and 396 no votes; the Board of Education budget was approved with 1497 yes votes and 595 no votes; all other approvals had 1704 yes votes and 379 no votes. He stated that the Town had the highest number of votes this year; 2,092 votes were cast.

Chairman Henault thanked the Board of Selectmen and everyone who worked on the budget, including the Board of Education and their staff. He stated that everyone worked hard to bring a balanced budget. The Board of Finance

also worked hard during this tough budget year. He stated that the voters validated the hard work from all of the Boards.

### 3. Mill Rate Consideration

Chairman Henault stated that because the budget passed, there will need to be a .5 increase in the mill rate. The Board of Finance will need to set the new mill rate at 30.1.

Mr. North made a motion to set the mill rate at 30.1. Ms. Fitzpatrick seconded the motion.

Mr. Askham questioned if there was any new information regarding the use of reserves. Ms. Glassman stated that it looks like the Education Cost Sharing fund is stable at this point, although a session without a budget puts everything in jeopardy. Chairman Henault stated that this validates not using reserves.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that there has been a great deal of discussion regarding the future. The State of Connecticut is facing severe shortfalls. The Town cannot rely on anything from the State. She feels that not using reserves is best.

The motion passed 6-0.

### 4. Transfer from RESERVES

Chairman Henault stated that this is a request for a transfer from reserves in the amount of \$10,000, which was requested by the Chief of Police.

Mr. Kane stated that this will be reimbursed by a grant. The items for this grant are: LCD Projector; multi-channel trunked capable portable radios, with charger; digital trunked capable radio scanner with antenna system; and weather alert receiver.

Ms. Glassman stated that the Board of Selectmen did approve this and forwarded it to the Board of Finance for their consideration.

Mr. North made a motion to approve the request for a transfer from reserves in the amount of \$10,000 as requested by the Chief of Police to be reimbursed by a 2009 Emergency Management Performance Grant. Ms. Fitzpatrick seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

### 5. Summer Schedule

Chairman Henault stated that there is a meeting scheduled for June 16th,

July 21st, and August 18th. He stated that they did not hold their August meeting last year because there were no items to discuss. He asked the Board members if they would like to keep that schedule again this year and not hold an August meeting unless there are critical items to discuss. Mr. Mason suggested making that decision at the July meeting.

#### 6. Six-Year Capital Plan

Chairman Henault stated that in January, this Board discussed the Six-Year Plan and moved several items to the voters at a special Town Meeting. At that time, they expressed their concern regarding the size of the 6-year capital plan and how it does not fit into the debt policy. He suggested having a three Board meeting to discuss this from a Board of Finance position. He would like to invite both Chairmen from the Planning and Zoning Commissions to the meeting also. Chairman Henault asked that the three Boards come up with several dates so that the Board of Finance can set a meeting date. He would like to stay away from a regular scheduled meeting in order to discuss this one issue.

Mr. North suggested that prior to this three Board meeting, the Board of Finance decide the direction that they will be going. He feels that this will be helpful for the other Boards to prepare for this meeting. This is a strategic plan for the Town; they need to prioritize projects accordingly.

Mr. Mason stated that there was a suggestion at a prior meeting to think about how the Town is currently doing their finances instead of the traditional methods. Mr. Mason stated that he would like to hear more about this. They need to start thinking about the long-range implications to the Town.

Chairman Henault stated that this Board should hold a special meeting in preparation for the three Board meeting. Ms. Mielert stated that it would be helpful to see the current debt commitments that are retired and information regarding projects that need to be bonded.

Mr. Askham questioned how the Town estimates the need to build more or to renovate. He feels that there needs to be a study that gives an outlook so the Town can plan long-term to maintain what they already have.

Mr. Sennot suggested having two meetings. One meeting to decide what role everyone will have. He feels that the Town should come together to figure

out what the Town's needs are and how to pay for this. There also needs to be a group to prioritize this and to set debt policy guidelines for the Board of Finance. After prioritizing the needs, there needs to be another meeting to decide what needs to get done and then to move forward.

Chairman Henault stated that there will probably need to be several meetings. He would like to start with the first meeting in the summer.

## 7. Other Business

Regarding the Comparison of Key Indicators, Ms. Mielert stated that she is not happy about what this chart has become over the years. This was a comparison of budgetary items; now enrollment has been added. She does not feel that this is a professional picture to give to the voters. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that she agreed that this important information is not being clearly communicated.

Mr. Mason stated that basically what is shown on this comparison is a downward trend that reflects what the Board of Finance has tried to do, which is to control spending. He is not stating that this exhibit is good or bad. Having enrollment on this graph is not relevant. Ms. Mielert stated that she does not feel that they have chosen the right medium to convey that message.

Chairman Henault stated that this graph is primarily used to show the trend. One advantage of this graph is that it shows the percentage over each year from 2000/2001.

Mr. North stated that he feels this is powerful data that is being presented on this graph. The Town looks at CPI as critical indicators to formulate budgets; enrollment is used. He feels that the percentage increases are useful. He also likes this graph because it makes it easier to see the trends.

Chairman Henault stated that there could be a second slide showing the dollar amount trends. He feels that it would be a good companion to this graph. Mr. Mason stated his concerns regarding some of the slides being hard to read. The blue background with red highlights is very hard to read.

8. Adjournment

Mr. North made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Ms. Fitzpatrick seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

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Paul Henault, Chairman  
Clerk

Alison Sturgeon,