

**Board of Finance  
TOWN OF SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, November 15, 2022, at 5:45 P.M.  
In Person Meeting /Simsbury Community Media Live Stream**

**PRESENT:**

Lisa Heavner, Arthur House, Derek Peterson, Robert Helfand, and Linda Schofield.

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Amy Meriwether, Director of Finance; Matt Curtis, Superintendent of Schools, Jason Casey; Director of Infrastructure & Technology; Mike Luzietti, Latimer Lane Principal, Francine Beland, Town Assessor and Jennifer Castelhana, Milliman

**1. Call to Order - Establish Quorum**

Ms. Heavner called the meeting to order at 5:45 P.M.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Announcements:**

Ms. Heavner asked the Board can review the minutes from the last meeting and make any necessary updates. The meeting was not recorded, and the clerk was not present so Ms. Heavner and Ms. Meriwether drafted them up and will send to all to review.

**3. Latimer Lane Project and Public Hearing Date Setting**

Ms. Heavner gave an overview of the meeting stating that through a referendum the Town has been asked to approve an additional \$2,261,837 increase in the Latimer Lane project from the previously approved budget, due to inflation and supply interruptions. She added that this will not result in property tax increases and the overage amount will be taken from cash in their Capital Reserve, ARPA themed money, and from State reimbursement. She stated they are asked to vote on setting a Public Hearing date of Nov 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to be held at the library. Ms. Heavner went through a presentation with details of the timeline of events, dollar amounts, and actions taken to date. She went through the overage requests recommended unanimously by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education. She reviewed the overall numbers and confirmed there are sufficient resources left in the Capital Serve Fund to take care of the needs identified in the Capital Improvement Plan and the Capital Non-Recurring Plan.

Mr. Curtis gave an overview of the project and explained what the money will be used for. He mentioned that about \$1.7M is due to cost escalation from the base bids. He talked about the three alternatives for outdoor learning spaces which will make the spaces available immediately without fundraising.

Mr. Peterson spoke about the value of the project and had a recommendation to use more ARPA themed funds and less Capital Reserves. Ms. Meriwether reviewed a spreadsheet showing overall numbers and Ms. Capriola spoke about the Capital Reserve Fund. Conversation ensued.

Ms. Heavner noted that the spend above what the voters approved, regardless of how it's funded, needs to go back to referendum since the project originally went to referendum as its own question and outlined the upcoming time constraints. A conversation followed on the line items / scope and if they all need to be approved at this time or can they be pushed back to the normal budget cycle.

Mr. House made a motion, effective November 15, 2022, to set a public hearing for November 29, 2022, at the Simsbury Public Library at 5:30PM for the purpose of considering a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$2,261,837 for Latimer Lane Renovation as New Capital Project. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. A discussion followed.

**MOTION:** Ms. Schofield made a motion, effective November 15, 2022, to amend the amount to be approved by the Board to \$1.9M. Mr. Helfand seconded the motion. Ms. Schofield was in favor. Ms. Heavner, Mr. Peterson, Mr. House, and Mr. Helfand were opposed. The motion failed to carry.

**MOTION:** Mr. House made a motion, effective November 15, 2022, to set a public hearing for November 29, 2022, at the Simsbury Public Library at 5:30PM for the purpose of considering a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$2,261,837 for Latimer Lane Renovation as New Capital Project. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Presentation: Milliman Pension Valuations and Experience Study Results**

Ms. Castelhana presented the results of an experience study for the towns 3 pensions plans (Police, Town, and Board of Education). Ms. Heavner explained experience studies are best practices that help the policy board and pension plan administrators assess the adequacy of contributions needed to fund the benefits and is a critical process for accounting and funding evaluations. Ms. Castelhana said their recommendation is to hold steady at 6.5% interest rate assumption and to continue to evaluate on a yearly basis. They recommended no changes to the pay increase for Police and to continue with the current assumption of 8.25% for the first 7 years and 3.0% after that. They recommended no change to the pay increase for Town employees and the Board of Education, and to continue with the current assumption of 3.5%. For the Administrative Expenses they recommended adjusting the assumptions to the average of the actual administrative expenses paid by the pension trust in the preceding three years, rounded to the nearest \$100. They recommended no change to the mortality table other than updating the mortality improvement scale to the recently updated MP-2021 version. They recommend a slight rate in turnover for Police from 0% to 5% for the first 10 years of service, and 0% after that. For the Town turnover they recommended a slight increase at lower service bands. For the Board of Education turnover, they recommended to slightly modify the rates for 40+. There was no change to the current assumption for Police Retirement of 20% per year starting at normal retirement date; 100% at age 62. For the Town retirement they proposed to modify age buckets and increase rates at younger ages, and For the Board of Education they proposed modify age buckets and increase rates at some ages. She mentioned that for the Town and the Police currently have no disability assumption and Ms. Castelhana recommended no change to that, and for the Board of Education they propose no change also to their published table. She presented no changes to current funding methods and outlined the impact of the proposed changes on the numbers.

Ms. Heavner thanked Ms. Castelhana for a great presentation and added that having done the experience study saved the Town over \$100K per year. She asked Ms. Meriwether to put a motion together for the next meeting to adapt the recommended assumptions.

#### **5. Assessor Update on Revaluation**

Ms. Beland provided an overview on the evaluations and abatements. Ms. Meriwether went over the numbers and reported the tax dollar growth associated with the new growth discovery of \$31M is approx. \$1.1M. This number does not include anything that the Reval company has and is based on the number Francine has in her office. Once the Reval company adds their number she reported it should be well over \$3M. These numbers are based off the previous grand list and does not include market increase and Ms. Beland said she is currently working on that number. Ms. Meriwether reported on the Anticipated Veterans Exemptions number of \$3.3M and Ms. Beland elaborated on the details of that program and the drivers of the increase. She said the numbers are currently an estimate and they will need the final numbers from the grand list to calculate more accurately. Ms. Meriwether went over the levy calculator, an overview of the numbers and projections and the estimated effects on the Mill Rate. The board asked questions and Ms. Beland and Ms. Meriwether elaborated on the approach and the meaning of the numbers.

#### **6. Finance Director's Report**

Ms. Meriwether reported on the Approved Supplemental Appropriations to date and then continued to provide an overview of the financial summary to date.

The board asked questions on the vacancy rate and how the projections are working out year to date on a broad basis. Ms. Capriola said they are budgeted conservatively and there are more details added in the quarterly reports.

#### **7. Proposed Closing of the Try-Athlon Special Revenue Fund**

**MOTION:** Ms. Schofield made a motion, effective November 15, 2022, to close the Try-Athlon special revenue fund and transfer the remaining fund balance of \$14,043.82 to the Parks & Recreation special revenue fund. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **8. Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Information Requests**

Ms. Heavner provided an overview of the budget information requests recommended improvements to the report on making the process easier. She added no new documents needed, but more information on Capital projects, with performance metrics as a wish list for the future, as well as a goal to get a Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Award for Ms. Meriwether.

#### **9. Proposed 2023 Meeting Dates**

Ms. Heavner said there are a few problems with the schedule as presented and suggested changes.

**MOTION:** Mr. House made a motion, effective November 15, 2022, to approve the 2023

Regular Meeting schedule, eliminating April 5, 2023, and adding April 10, 2023, for a budget hearing snow date, a hearing continuation date, and adding March 23, 2023, for a Regular Meeting for continuous budget discussions. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

**10. Approval of Minutes - October 18, 2022 - Postponed**

**11. Communications**

- Fiducient Advisors Performance Summary by Town as of June 30, 2022

Ms. Meriwether provided a summary of a report provided by the town of Glastonbury. They had reached out to all the listed towns who use Fiducient Advisors, and put a comparison together. The report was on performance summary to give an overview on how investments compare to other towns as well as their plans, investments, asset allocations, etc.

**13. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Ms. Schofield made a motion, effective November 15, 2022, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 P.M. Mr. Helfand seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marion Lynott  
Commission Clerk