

From: SimsburyCT Postings November 28, 2011 12:31:41 PM
Subject: Board of Finance Minutes 11/17/2011-Special Meeting
To: SimsburyCT_FinanceMin
Cc:

BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING - 6:00 PM
NOVEMBER 17, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

Paul Henault, Chairman, called a special meeting of the Board of Finance to order on Thursday, November 17th, at 6:00 p.m., in the Main Meeting Room at the Town Offices. The following members were also present: Anita Mielert, Kevin North, Peter Askham and Barbara Petitjean. Also present were Mary Ann Harris, Finance Director/Treasurer, Burke LaClair, Board of Education Business Manager, Leslie Faraci, Clerk and other interested parties.

I. APPROVE MINUTES

Mr. North made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2011 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Askham and was unanimously passed. (Mr. Henault and Ms. Mielert abstained from the vote, as they were not present at the October 18, 2011 meeting)

Mr. North made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2011 special meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Askham and was unanimously passed.

II. TRANSFER FROM RESERVES

Ms. Harris told the Commission that the Board of Selectmen had approved this Grant at their meeting on Monday, November 14th. Ms. Harris noted that 75% of this amount (\$21,300) would be reimbursed.

Ms. Mielert made a motion to approve the transfer, in the sum of \$28,400, from Reserves (909-C) for the Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program. The motion was seconded by Mr. North and was unanimously passed.

III. REQUEST TO ESTABLISH SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Ms. Petitjean made a motion to set up a Special Revenue Fund entitled "Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program". The motion was seconded by Ms. Mielert and was unanimously passed.

IV. OCTOBER 28TH SNOWSTORM DISCUSSION

Mr. Henault updated the Commission that the bids for the debris removal had gone out and had been approved, which he then stated that all of this information, including the bids and RFP's, are on the Town's website.

Ms. Harris said that the bid was accepted last Thursday and trucks were now arriving. The company that won the bid was CERES. Ms. Harris said there was also a debris monitoring company (TrueNorth) that was hired to work in conjunction with the debris removal. The details of the contract were discussed as well as the details of the pick-up schedule. Ms. Harris told the Commission that the trucks are supposed to follow the snow routes. Mr. Henault asked about the removal of the debris and how that is being handled, which was discussed. Ms. Harris said that the debris is being ultimately taken out of Simsbury. Mr. Henault again mentioned that all of the bid documents are located online for the public to see if they would like.

Ms. Harris gave a brief overview of the different expenses incurred due to the storm, including social services, police over time, shelter costs, etc. Mr. North asked that a more detailed report be presented at the next meeting regarding the break-down of these storm expenses. Ms. Harris said that could be done and then mentioned that the Town will get a reimbursement of 75% of costs incurred due to the storm if there is FEMA Declaration. Ms. Petitjean asked again if there were any further specifics with regard to debris removal routes that the public could be provided, and Ms. Harris said that, as far as she knows, they are supposed to follow the five (5) different snow routes concurrently.

Mr. Henault then asked Mr. LaClair about expenses with regards to the Board of Education. Mr. LaClair said he does have a draft spreadsheet outlining those expenses, but that he has to break out the overtime. The performance of the generators were discussed.

V. RESERVES UPDATE

Ms. Harris discussed the Reserves Accounts and the effect the storm had on those accounts and also the status after the anticipated FEMA reimbursement. Ms. Mielert brought up the possibility of another event of this nature happening and what would be the process if that were to happen.

The Commission discussed the procedures that would have to be followed with the occurrence such an event.

VI. CHARTER REVISION COMMITTEE

Mr. Henault said there was a meeting on November 22 with Charter Revision Committee and that Ms. Harris had put a spreadsheet together containing some proposed changes. Ms. Harris outlined the proposed changes. These proposed changes were discussed amongst the Commission members. Mr. Henault brought up the fact that each year, per the Charter requirement, they take out a full page ad in the Hartford Courant on the Budget, which is of considerable expense (approximately \$8,500). Mr. Henault wanted to address the possibility of a modification to that section in order to adapt to the current times which provide much more cost effective ways of communicating with the tax payers, (i.e., website, email or even a town-wide mailing in conjunction with a legal notice in the paper). These possibilities were discussed amongst the Commission members.

Mr. Henault then brought up the subject of the Emergency Section of the Charter, saying that by taking out the 1% out of reserves, the other sections of reserves were tapped and if there were another event, this could become a serious issue. Therefore, Mr. Henault said, he thinks they should seriously consider raising the 1% up to 2% and make sure that it is clear that it has to be declared an emergency by the First Selectmen and Board of Selectmen, or modify so that there is the flexibility to go up to 2%. He asked the Commission members to think about if they thought there should be some modification of Section 911. Ms. Petitjean said that Section 901(c) does allow for them to borrow that percentage if it were not available in reserves. Ms. Harris said while she agrees, her concern with that would be the delay that would be caused by the necessity of calling a special Town meeting, which calls for a 30 day lead time. It was decided Emergency Funding and Emergency Meetings would need to be looked at prior to the Charter Revision Committee Meeting. Ms. Harris said they could vote to recommend the changes presented tonight and then present the previously discussed additional changes separately.

Mr. North made a motion that the Board of Finance recommend to the Charter Revision Commission that they favorably consider the recommended date changes in the Budget Process put forth by Mary Ann Harris, Town of Simsbury Finance Director, in accordance with the exhibit presented, except that, the date recommended for Section 905 shall be amended to be "not later than March 1st" and not a broad range. The motion was seconded by Mr. Askham and was unanimously passed.

VII. SIX-YEAR CIP PROCESS

Mr. Henault said that during the last year's CI Process, there was the CI Program document, which he thought was very well done and helpful. He then said that he wanted to move forward with that same process. Mr. Askham brought up that the last year plan the Capital Improvement Plan was not in compliance with the debt policy. Ms. Mielert said in the past it has never been in compliance with the debt policy. This compliance issue was discussed amongst the Commission members. Ms. Mielert said, while she does agree with the 7% threshold for actual capital improvements, but that she doesn't think the projection should have to fit that 7%. Mr. North said that he thinks it is useful to ask the Boards of Education and Board of Selectmen to cooperatively work on a six-year plan that does comply with the debt policy. Ms. Petitjean asked that they keep up the CIP document that will break out the plan with specific project details. Ms. Harris confirmed that will be done.

Mr. Henault then thanked Ms. Mielert for her service, as this was her last meeting and also congratulated Ms. Petitjean on her successful re-election. Mr. Henault then called for a five (5) minute break prior to the Budget Presentation to immediately follow.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Henault, Chairman
Commissions Clerk

Leslie U. Faraci,