

**Simsbury Board of Finance
TOWN OF SIMSBURY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 5:45 P.M.
Simsbury Town Hall - Main Meeting Room
933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, Connecticut**

PRESENT: Lisa Heavner, Arthur House, Robert Pomeroy, Kevin Prell, Linda Schofield

ALSO PRESENT: Jackie Battos, BOS; Maria Capriola, Town Manager; Amy Meriwether, Director of Finance/Treasurer; Eric Wellman, First Selectman; and other interested parties

1. Call to Order - Establish Quorum

Mr. Pomeroy called the meeting to order at 5:49 P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Board of Finance Chair and Vice Chair Appointments

Mr. Pomeroy asked for nominations for Chair.

MOTION: Mr. Prell made a motion to nominate Rob Pomeroy to the position of Board of Finance Chair. Ms. Heavner seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Pomeroy asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to nominate Lisa Heavner to the position of Board of Finance Vice Chair. Mr. Prell seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. House inquired about party affiliation of the board members and if there would be any procedural changes. Mr. Pomeroy noted there has been very good communication among board members and encouraged openness. He reminded board members that there can be no caucuses per FOI and State Statute guidelines and there can be no meetings by phone or email. It was noted Mr. Pomeroy and Ms. Heavner will be involved in making meeting agendas.

4. Draft Board of Finance Rules of Procedure

Ms. Heavner referenced the Draft BOF Rules of Procedure in the meeting packet. It was agreed that Item 9 should read, "Members of the Board may participate by telephone or similar electronic means *when unable to physically attend.*"

MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to adopt the Board of Finance Rules of Procedure as presented with that one amendment. Ms. Heavner seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

5. 2020 Board of Finance Meeting Goals & Agenda Topics Discussion

Ms. Heavner referenced the BOF Agenda Planning table in the meeting packet. She noted topics to be discussed, beginning with agenda planning in December. She noted topics to be covered during each month and standing topics, which include monthly Building Department Revenue reports and BOE Task Force updates. It was noted the next BOE Task Force meeting is January 30 at 6:00 P.M. in the BOE Conference Room.

6. School Facilities Long Range Planning Update (Oral Report)

Mr. Pomeroy noted this report will need to be tabled to the next meeting. Discussion followed about enrollment projections, long-range demographics and the impact on schools, public opinion, how operational savings can be achieved, and whether there are educational benefits to building new schools.

7. Parks & Recreation Special Revenue Fund Analysis Workgroup

Ms. Meriwether noted the Parks & Recreation Special Revenue Fund Analysis was included in the meeting packet. She added the BOS voted to establish a workgroup to review this analysis and make policy recommendations. The workgroup will include two BOS members, two BOF members and two Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission members. It was agreed Ms. Schofield and Mr. House will represent the BOF in this workgroup.

MOTION: Mr. Pomeroy made a motion to nominate Ms. Schofield and Mr. House to represent the Board of Finance on the Parks and Recreation Special Revenue Fund Analysis Workgroup. Mr. Prell seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion followed regarding the accounting for expenses using the Special Revenue Fund versus the General Fund. Also discussed was the expiration of contracts for both the restaurant and the golf pro in the next year. Mr. House summarized three principles, including that the Town should subsidize this, user fees need to be appropriate and measured, and points of weakness should be examined.

8. Budget Status Report

Ms. Meriwether gave a Budget Status Report as of December 31, 2019. She noted highlights in the General Fund Overview, including higher revenues of \$4,895,031, primarily due to tax collection rates. Further, she noted a variance of \$226,676 in the Finance Department, which is due to investment income. In the Town Clerk's Department, actuals are in excess of estimates by \$142,469 due to conveyance fees. Regarding expenditures, she noted the total is \$6,329,452 less in expenditures in 2020 compared to the same time in 2019 due to a lag in BOE journal entries. As of the meeting date, these entries have been made and the total as of December 31, 2019 is now \$31,731,000, in line with last year. Questions and discussion followed. Regarding the Parks and Recreation (Simsbury Farms) Fund, she noted the golf course is doing great, however, the recreation programs and Simsbury Farms complex programs are down compared to the same time last year. Discussion followed. Further, Ms. Meriwether noted Health Insurance Fund reserves as of December 31, 2019 totaled \$4,897,338, or 33% of expected claims, adding that the Fund is in a positive position. In the Residential Rental Property Fund she noted there was an unexpected charge of \$17,000 due to a septic replacement. She noted the Sewer Use Fund has a net change in fund balance of \$1,556,394, which will go down as expenditures catch

up to revenues. Ms. Meriwether was asked about Town Aid Road and will follow-up on that. There was discussion about projects that still have balances.

9. Supplemental Appropriation - Ice Rink Boiler

Ms. Meriwether reported that the BOS recommended moving forward with a \$10,000 transfer from the General Fund to the Parks and Recreation (Simsbury Farms) Fund to cover the cost of a new boiler. There was agreement to table the transfer until the end of the year. No action was taken.

10. Finance Director's Report

Ms. Meriwether referenced the updated listing of grants and donations in the meeting packet. She noted all responses have been received for the Defined Contribution and Deferred Compensation Pension Plans RFQ and FIA is putting all of those responses together for management to review. For the FY20 Bond Issuance she noted the Town will be issuing debt in FY20 to pay for one half of the HJMS renovation project in the amount of about \$9M. Funds are expected to be received in mid-February and their bond rating call last Friday went well. She will keep the Board updated on this. Ms. Heavner was on that call and noted Ms. Meriwether, Ms. Capriola and Ms. Appleby did a wonderful job with the prep work and presentation. Ms. Meriwether reported the Debt Policy Workgroup is in process and will meet January 30, 2020. Under Shared Financial Services, she referenced a memorandum of agreement for temporary shared financial services between the Town and the BOE. It was noted this is an opportunity to look at combining departments to achieve savings. For the Volunteer Firefighter and Ambulance Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance, Ms. Meriwether noted towns are allowed to increase the amount of tax abatement for first responders. She added the Chief Administrative Officer for the Simsbury Fire District has requested that the BOS re-open the Volunteer Firefighter and Ambulance Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance for revision to include the State legislation. The BOS agreed to re-open the workgroup. She noted updated abatement balances provided in her report. Discussion ensued.

11. Capital Plan Review & Discussion

Mr. Pomeroy started the discussion by providing background. Ms. Heavner suggested starting with discussing existing debt. Discussion followed regarding Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) and mill rates. Mr. Pomeroy presented a spreadsheet showing a layering of projects based on 3 school builds and 1 renovation to see the impact on total debt. Discussion followed. Mr. Wellman noted the BOS is interested in fast-tracking the Town Facilities Master Plan so that capital needs are looked at holistically.

12. Approval of Minutes - December 3, 2019

Mr. Pomeroy noted an addendum was added to the minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to approve the December 3, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Ms. Heavner seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

13. Communication

- 2020 Capital Budget Form

Ms. Meriwether noted the updated Capital Request Form included in the meeting packet.

- Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Simsbury and the Simsbury Board of Education for Financial Management Services

Ms. Meriwether noted the memo was included in the packet as well.

On the Capital Request Form, Ms. Heavner inquired about tracking start and end dates for construction. Ms. Capriola noted this would be very difficult, particularly for end dates for projects that may not come to fruition or those that have not entered the design phase.

Ms. Schofield asked if the BOF can make something similar to the BOE newsletter that was recently mailed. It was agreed this is something that should be discussed further and that State Statute requirements should be looked into, as well as what other towns are doing.

14. Adjourn

MOTION: Mr. Prell, Ms. Schofield second, to adjourn at 7:25 P.M.; unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Haberlin
Commission Clerk