

**Town of New Hartford
Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Tuesday April 9, 2019 @ 7pm**

PRESENT: Chairman Regina Wexler, Members: Kerry Guilfoyle, Reggie Smith, Jr., Steve Tuxbury;
Alternates: Lourena (Lou) Helt, Paul Leclair and Recording Secretary Penny Miller

Others Present: Superintendent of Schools Brian Murphy, Board of Education Chairman Tim Goff, First Selectman Dan Jerram, Tom Buzzi, Bob Howson, Bob Nilsson, David Rosengren

Absent: Members: Dan Charest, Ben Witte and Alternate Bart Baxter

Chairman Wexler opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Seating of Alternates: Paul Leclair was seated for Dan Charest. Lou Helt was seated for Ben Witte.

Adoption and/or Revision of Agenda:

MOTION: by Helt to change the agenda by adding Public Comment after Communications to the Board; seconded by Smith.

Unanimous

Approval of Minutes: March 26, 2019 Special Meeting:

Chairman Wexler asked for any motions to amend. Hearing no motions she declared the minutes approved.

April 2, 2019 Special Meeting:

Chairman Wexler asked for any motions to amend. Hearing no motion she declared the minutes approved.

Communications to the Board:

Chairman Wexler said the only communication received was a note from Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward showing the disbursements of the Neighbor to Neighbor fund. That information had been shared with the board members. (this information can be obtained upon request in the Office of the First Selectman)

Public Comment:

David Rosengren, Town Hill Road, spoke on the Truck Wash. In driving by the Barkhamsted Garage, he thought that they might have a Wash Bay. He spoke with Don Stein, Barkhamsted First Selectman, who said that he would be willing to talk with us about allowing our trucks to use the Wash Bay at the Barkhamsted Garage. It would be contingent upon working out a schedule and appropriate cost as they are not hooked up to a sewer system. Mr. Stein concluded the conversation with he wasn't agreeing to it but was willing to speak to Mr. Jerram on this matter. Mr. Rosengren said he had measured the mileage from the stop light in the center of town to the Barkhamsted Garage and it was 1.6 miles and 1.4 miles from the center of town to the proposed site for the town's wash bay. In response to Mr. Rosengren's comment Mr. Jerram said this isn't new information. He has had conversations with Mr. Stein about this but Mr. Stein and his Superintendent have said they aren't sure this is practical or feasible. They don't have a dedicated wash bay so they use the bay for storage of vehicles and equipment. Our fleet is much larger than theirs.

David Rosengren left at 7:08 pm

2019-2020 New Hartford Budget:

Chairman Wexler said that any changes made to the budget will need to be reflected on the C.G.S. 7-344 form. She said that Mr. Witte had mentioned at the last meeting adding the extra revenue into the Board of Ed. Mr. Murphy explained that the Excess Cost Grant, Special Education, is 4.5% of the pupil expenditure. The total figure is \$45,432 for the Excess Cost Grant for next year. Mr. Jerram said that figure goes under the Intergovernmental Revenues on the C.G.S. 7-344 form. It is separately allocated on the Projected Revenue Sheet on the Special Education line.

MOTION: by Helt to change on the line item Intergovernmental Revenues by adding \$28,432 and change the full amount on the town's projected revenue sheet to \$45,432; seconded by Guilfoyle.

Mr. Smith said as a Point of Order there are 5 Republicans seated. He doesn't think that can be done. Chairman Wexler said there weren't any Democrats to seat. Mr. Smith said he would leave the room to make it a legal vote. Mr. Jerram agreed saying you can't create a super majority. You can seat under normal conditions a Republican for a Democrat or a Democrat for a Republican when you have appropriate minority representation. Mr. Smith said it would be best if someone unseats themselves and that he would do that. For clarification in the record since we have recognized this issue, Lou Helt has unseated herself and Reggie Smith will make a motion to revote the items that Ms. Helt had made.

The motion that Ms. Helt made relating to the Excess Cost Grant money will be removed.

MOTION: by Smith to remove Lou Helt's name and insert Reggie Smith's name; seconded by Guilfoyle.
Unanimous

MOTION: by Smith to add Public Comment after Communications to the Board; seconded by Guilfoyle.
Unanimous

MOTION: by Smith to change on the Town's budget Projected Revenue page, under Education change the line Special Ed from \$ 17,000 to \$45,432 and to add \$28,432 on the C.G.S. 7-344 form to the Intergovernmental Revenues line under the proposed 2019-2020 budget; seconded by Leclair.

Unanimous

Chairman Wexler said in the school budget the removal of the island at Bakerville School was in Capital and then was moved to the Maintenance line. She would opine because it needs to go to Planning & Zoning before it is done that it be moved to the Capital budget. If it is left in Operating and if Planning & Zoning doesn't approve it then the money becomes part of the school's operating budget. If it is in Capital and it isn't approved then the money doesn't get spent. BOE Chairman Goff said that he and Superintendent Murphy have spoken about it and they have no issue with moving it from Maintenance to Capital. They will bring this change to their board for approval.

MOTION: by Smith to cut \$6,000 from the local Board of Education Operating Budget and creating a line item in the Capital budget titled Island Removal/Paving in the amount of \$6,000; seconded by Guilfoyle.

Discussion followed. Mr. Tuxbury said the total BOE budget will be \$8,351,516 and the total Capital budget will be \$110,500

Unanimous

Chairman Wexler thanked Supt. Murphy and BOE Chair Goff for working with her and the board on the budget. She said based on our population projections for the regional school district next year and the probability that our hit will go up, we can't get comfortable in our levels of funding from year to year. She said in the school Capital budget she hopes the projects are the projects they have prioritized. She is concerned if next year we ask for cuts in Capital, as well as in operating, if we get hit by regional, she is cautious and concerned if there is an emergency, such as the septic system, that we would have a hard time saying that you have to put it off for a year. She hopes that the board has considered that. Next year she suspects we can't support a 6-figure capital budget for the school if we get a big hit from Regional. We will all have to absorb that. It is a concern going forward.

Mr. Tuxbury said he is concerned and he will have a hard time cutting Capital. He is more concerned about the Operating Budget. These 3 budgets are absorbing around \$650,000 of savings that we should have had because of the bonding. When we cut capital you will have to fund that sooner or later. If you don't spend it this year you might be spending that plus more next year.

Town Budget:

Mr. Tuxbury said that our auditor recommended that we make certain moves and we aren't. He won't support a budget that doesn't show a move in that direction). The accountant recommends we address the physical controls with the accounting software and staffing controls with a business manager. Ms. Wexler said that professionalizing the tax collector's office is a step in that direction. In speaking with some of the board members and the First Selectman, some of that will continue through attrition, retirements and personnel changes. In her discussions with Mr. King on whether we need to consider a full-time business manager, we are on the border - population-wise.

MOTION: by Smith to support Mr. Tuxbury's position on the town auditor's recommendations and to politely encourage the selectmen to move in that direction; seconded by Tuxbury.

Discussion followed. Mr. Jerram said he has given his response to the auditor's recommendations to the BOF Chairman. Mr. Tuxbury said the auditor recommended physical controls, accounting software to limit expenditures that exceed budget line items, staffing controls, adding a business manager, and recommending line item transfers throughout the budget year.

Unanimous

Ms. Wexler asked for comments on Region 7 saying that next year we may be hit with an increase. Mr. Tuxbury asked if Barkhamsted or any of the other member towns said anything about their increases. Did their Board of Finance say anything at their meetings? Ms. Helt said at the Region 7 meeting the people representing Barkhamsted said something there. Mr. Tuxbury said they are absorbing their increase by taking money from Capital and putting it into their Operating budget.

MOTION: by Tuxbury to request that the Board of Finance chairman send a letter to Region 7 recommending that their Surplus be a Surplus and not be spread around the line items so that we can keep track of it and mitigate costs as population decreases; seconded by Leclair.

Discussion followed. Mr. Smith said he supports the concept of what is being done but as we have a representative form of government we should be inviting Rob Jerram and Noel Gauthier to a future BOF meeting.

Aye: Tuxbury, Smith, Leclair, Guilfoyle; Opposed: Wexler

Motion carries

Mr. Jerram said we reduced the local BOE budget by \$6,000 which brings that total to \$8,351,516 and added \$6,000 to the Capital for a total of \$110,500. Projected Revenues - Special Ed is \$45,432. The mill rate 1.41% increase and the equalized mill rate is 29.994, the mill rate to support the budget is 30.416.

MOTION: by Smith to approve the 2019-2020 budget General Government \$5,372,887.35, local Board of Education \$8,351,516, Region 7 \$9,716,378, Adult Education \$2,774; Teacher's Retirement \$42,270; for a total Education Budget of \$18,113,298. Total Capital Budget of \$545,500 for the Board of Education and General Government; including the revenue sheet (as presented) in the amount of \$24,832,480.35; seconded by Leclair.

Aye: Wexler, Guilfoyle, Leclair and Smith; Opposed: Tuxbury

Motion carries

Discuss and take action on 2019-2020 C.G.S. Form 7-344 Budget Summary and approval of same for Publication in newspaper with a substantial local circulation

Ms. Wexler read the changes to the C.G.S. 7-344 as follows: Intergovernmental Revenues are now \$3,483,308 reflecting an increase in Special Education; Local Education-Town is \$8,351,516 to reflect the \$6,000 transfer; Capital outlays \$545,500 reflecting the \$6,000 transfer from the Education Operating Budget.

MOTION: by Smith to authorize the First Selectman and the BOF chair to take any and all action necessary to complete publication of document C.G.S. 7-344 in a newspaper with a substantial local publication in the Town of New Hartford; seconded by Guilfoyle.

Unanimous

MOTION: by Smith to adjourn at 8:06 pm; seconded by Guilfoyle.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller
Recording Secretary

On file with the Town Clerk:
C.G.S. #7-344