

**New Hartford Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, April 10, 2018**

**Present** Chairman Jim Fitzgerald, Dan Charest, Reggie Smith, Jr., Steve Tuxbury, Regina Wexler,  
Alternates: Kerry Guilfoyle, Paul LeClair

**Absent** Bart Baxter, Ben Witte

**Others Present** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Supt. of School Brian Murphy, BOE Chair Josh Adams, BOE members: Tim Goff, Tom Buzzi, Kelly Odell Longhi; John Burdick, Peter Anderheggen and other members of the public.

Chairman Fitzgerald opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

**Seating of Alternates**

Kerry Guilfoyle was seated for Ben Witte.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** by Tuxbury to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2018 Board of Finance Special Meeting. Second by Wexler.

*Aye: Fitzgerald, Smith, Tuxbury, Wexler, Guilfoyle; Opposed: none; Abstained: Charest*

***Motion passes***

**MOTION:** by Tuxbury to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2018 Board of Finance Special Meeting, Public Hearing. Second by Wexler.

**MOTION:** by Guilfoyle to amend the minutes as follows:

On page 2 make a new paragraph on line 3, starting with "One of their areas of focus is..."

The sentence that starts: "Currently the CREC bill around \$90,000 for those students attending the magnet schools. This was increased by \$4500 this year. Remove the sentence where it mentioned the "purchase of the Stand-Up Desks are in the Capital Request. They are under the Equipment Line. "  
Second by Smith.

*Aye: Fitzgerald, Smith, Tuxbury, Wexler, Guilfoyle; Opposed: none; Abstained: Charest*

***Motion passes***

Motion by Wexler to amend minutes of April 3, 2018 Special Meeting to add the following sentence on Page 3 after "an additional pre-K class": "Mr. Murphy indicated that there are not enough sign ups to justify a second pre-K class. Ms. Wexler asked when this was determined. Mr. Murphy indicated this was determined after screening. Ms. Wexler asked whether this screening occurred subsequent to the March 17 budget workshop, at which the expansion of the pre-K program was requested. M. Murphy answered in the affirmative." Second by Smith.

*Aye: Fitzgerald, Smith, Tuxbury, Wexler, Guilfoyle; Opposed: none; Abstained: Charest*

***Motion passes***

**Communication to the Board**

An email from Raimie H. Weber in support of the Beekley Library. A copy is available for viewing in the Town Clerk's Office.

**2018-19 New Hartford Budget: Discuss feedback from the April 3, 2018, Public Budget Hearing, Discuss (all aspects – town, schools, capital, revenue, etc.) and take any action on the proposed 2018-2019 budget, take any action on approval and adoption of the Budget, and sending the Budget to the Board of Selectmen for the Annual Town Meeting with Subsequent approval by the Legislative Body at a Town referendum**

Mr. Jerram said when the budget was previously discussed some of the numbers were soft. Those numbers that have been firmed up are in Health Care, Dental, Pension and State Trooper. With each of those changes there is room to consider moving \$10,000 - \$12,000 in an attempt to restore some of the library funding. The trooper line, emergency service has been recalculated with a \$4,000 savings. In looking at the pension and health, the actuarial came in close to where they are.

Mr. Smith said he suggesting moving \$10,000 to the Library and the other \$2,000 into West Hill Lake Association. He said he wasn't ready to make a motion until we could find an additional \$1,000.

**MOTION:** by Tuxbury - From the Town of New Hartford budget remove the following amounts: \$3,165 from the Pension, \$5,000 from Health Care, \$4,000 from the State Trooper Line for a total of \$12,165. Add \$10,000 to the Beekley Library and \$3,000 to the West Hill Lake Association. Request that the Town of New Hartford BOE remove \$90,000 from their operating budget. Second by Wexler.

Discussion followed with Ms. Guilfoyle saying that previously the BOE had been asked to cut \$67,000. Why are they being asked to cut an additional \$90,000? Mr. Tuxbury responded that he feels the BOE can operate with a 0% budget. In order to effect the changes that need to be done we need to make cuts. He feels they can do it. Class sizes are way down. Items that were cut previously are now back in.

Ms. Wexler said that the \$61,000 they were asked to cut ended up not being a cut. The BOE had said they were going to expand the Pre-K program in the budget presented on March 17<sup>th</sup>. As it turned out the numbers weren't there to justify the expansion and the teaching position was cut. It was exactly \$61,000 for staff and benefits for this position. It wasn't really a cut it was a give back. She hopes the trend of the increase in school population continues and that we can support three schools. Looking over the budget it appears we are top heavy in percentages of administration. Until the population comes back up she feels we can wait another year before a full-time Curriculum Coordinator is hired. Our teachers do so much but with small class sizes she doesn't feel the student population can support the total hours requested for IA's. There are many wants and not needs. There is concern about the ECS funding. If it does get cut below the numbers Mr. Jerram presented it will come from the town budget and not the school budget. If we have to pick some of that up it is an additional concern. She would like to reward Beekley and West Hill. They go all out with fund-raising, managed professionally and their operating budgets are done in a transparent and responsible manner. She feels strongly they should be restored in terms of funding. In order to support 3 schools with lower population we need to make some cuts.

Mr. LeClair said with the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest class size moving out last year we went up 15 children. It isn't that we went up in the year but we ended up losing the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest class. We have heard of declining enrollment but this past year it is trending in the opposite direction. According to a projection, we paid

a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to do, we were supposed to have 41 children in Kindergarten and there are actually 69. We are talking about rewarding Beekley and West Hill. There are increases in wages but we are hacking our school system. Mr. Fitzgerald said after the budget was passed at referendum last year we were cut \$248,000 in ECS and Adult Ed. The BOE didn't carry the brunt of it – the taxpayers did. That board didn't come up with one penny.

*Aye: Fitzgerald, Smith, Tuxbury, Wexler; Opposed: Guilfoyle, Charest; Abstained: none*

***Motion passes***

Mr. Tuxbury said on Region 7 looking at their pupil expenditure it shows from 2017 – 2018 – 2019 they are increasing by 5.8%. Looking at their enrollments, we are heading down the same road as the local schools. We should send them a letter and ask that they come in with a 0% increase to the whole district.

**MOTION:** by Tuxbury to request that Chairman Fitzgerald write to Region 7 and ask that they come in with a 0% increase to their total budget. Second by Smith.

Mr. Smith said the one thing that bothers him is - in the Ag program tuition students come in and pay \$10,000 and it costs \$17,000 - \$18,000 to educate the children. Doing some quick math New Hartford is paying a little more than 51-52%. When Ms. Sexton-Reed was asked (at the budget hearing) how many children from New Hartford are attending the program she couldn't say. So we are picking up \$191,000 the cost that other towns should be paying. Mr. Jerram said that it is controlled by statute. Mr. Smith feels that the state should be picking up this cost.

***Unanimous***

**MOTION:** by Guilfoyle to request that Region 7 create a Surplus Line item removing the Surplus that's embedded in the Employee Benefits and Purchased Property Services, so that each line item reflects the true costs that are associated with them. Second by Tuxbury

***Unanimous***

Continuing on with the budget, Mr. Tuxbury said the town should have a plan for road paving. He would like to see a breakdown on the Rec Capital to see what is going to be done along with Downtown Improvements. He said he would like to see the police share cars and that we need to move in that direction. On the budget we have now it doesn't show the 5-year capital plan. He hopes the final budget does show that. Mr. Jerram said they would attach the copy of the whole Capital Plan. Mr. Fitzgerald asked if the details about the Rec. Capital and Downtown Improvements were available. Mr. Jerram responded Downtown Improvements includes working on the sidewalks with the state from the bridge to Wickett Street. The \$30,000 doesn't quite cover it. The Rec Capital is several items. Berkshire Hall had a freeze-up last winter that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Fitzgerald went through the budget noting some of the changes. Pension is at \$140,000, Health Insurance at \$434,810, Board of Education at \$7,966,575, Res. State Trooper \$151,000, Beekley Community Library at \$239,835.23, Economic Development at \$6,000 and West Hill Lake Association at \$15,000. The number for Special Education at \$10,000, Supt. Murphy said it was a fluid number and he

is leaving it at \$10,000. Mr. Fitzgerald said the number for Short Term interest at \$20,000 is a good number. With all these changes it brings us at a Mill Rate Required - 30.761 - 1.6% tax increase.

Mr. Charest asked about the EDC and the increase they wanted. Mr. Jerram said that the EDC website is now being covered by the town. They had been budgeted at \$8,000 with \$5,000 in the proposed budget.

**MOTION:** by Charest to increase the Economic Development Commission by \$1,000. Second by Guilfoyle.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Smith to approve the Town of New Hartford 2018-2019 budget of \$24,662,089.94 for a budget increase of 2.15% and to forward it to the Board of Selectman for a Town Meeting and Referendum. Second by Charest.

*Unanimous*

**Subject to Agenda Item V. above, Discuss and take any action on C.G.S. 7-344 Budget Summary, and approval of C.G.S. 7-344 for Publication of the 2018-2019 Budget Summary in a newspaper with a substantial local circulation**

**MOTION:** by Smith to approve the C.G.S. 7-344 Form presented by Chairman Fitzgerald and authorize him to work with the First Selectman and staff for it to be published in the newspaper. Second by Charest.

*Unanimous*

A copy of C.G.S. 7-344 is available for viewing in the Town Clerk's Office.

**MOTION:** by Smith to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Second by Guilfoyle.

*Unanimous*

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller  
Recording Secretary

Available from the Town Clerk  
Letter from Raimie H. Weber  
C.G.S. Form 7-344