

**New Hartford Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
January 11, 2022 @ 7 pm**

Present: Chairman Kerry Guilfoyle, Members: Dan Charest, Lou Helt, Paul LeClair, Charles Neale, Ben Witte, Alternates: Ryan Bingham, Krish Dasgupta, Allen Voghel and Penny Miller Recording Secretary

Also present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, member of the public Aulay Carlson

Chairman Guilfoyle called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and welcomed the new members – Charlie Neale and Krish Dasgupta.

Adoption and/or Revision of Agenda

No changes were made

Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2021 Regular Meeting

MOTION by Ms. Helt to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. LeClair

Mr. Neale asked about the procedure for exhibits being attached to the minutes. Chairman Guilfoyle said any communications need to be received by the board 48 hours before the meeting to be included as an attachment.

Motion passed

Communications and Other Items Presented to Board

Chairman Guilfoyle said she received communication from Denton Butler about the WPCA which will be discussed later, a General Summary from King & King about the audit (a confidential note just for the board and not included with these minutes). Chris King and Debbie Franklin of King & King Associates will be at the February Board of Finance meeting. Copies of the audit will be given to the board members for review. The other communication received was the meeting dates between the local BOE and Region 7.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Aulay Carlson, 455 West Hill Road, would like to see comment section after the agenda items have been discussed.

Water Asset Sale Update- Denton Butler

Mr. Butler was unable to attend tonight's meeting. He did send a detailed letter to Chairman Guilfoyle for the board. Mr. Jerram informed the Finance Board members that Mr. Butler represents the Post Sale Transition Team. The committee has a 6-charge challenge. Five of the six are to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.

1. Make recommendations in regard to the administration of the extension of the sewers.
2. Make recommendations regarding grant funding (Mr. Jerram stated that many grants have strings attached – need to be careful that they do not include loans.)
3. Make recommendations to BOS for implementation of the subsidies towards fees
4. Make recommendations on how to pursue lateral connections on the sewer project/subsidize fees
5. Make recommendations to change the WPCA ordinance.

6. For them to work independently with Aquarion about implementing sewer regulations. We will be Aquarion's first sewer customer. They will work with Aquarion to develop New Hartford sewer regulations post sale.

They haven't made any recommendation to the Board of Selectmen yet. Most of their charges are to occur post sale. The Contract of Sale is essentially done. The Board of Selectmen have to approve the contract. This may be an agenda item at their January 25th meeting. This will spur the application to PURA.

Mr. Butler wrote about the viability of the sewer extension. Mr. Butler believes that we may need state funding and grants. Mr. Jerram interjected that it is his understanding that this proposed sewer extension is not subject to DEEP approval. Municipal sewer projects in the State of Connecticut require DEEP approval and review if it falls into 3 categories:

1. Affects your sewer plant.
2. Uses any state money.
3. Involves a pump station that pumps more than 5 million gallons of effluent a day.

Mr. Jerram stated that he felt that Mr. Butler wrote the letter under the premise that he believes it will need to be reviewed and that DEEP has some oversight. Mr. Jerram said as our referendum has been approved this isn't the case. Our funding is self-sustaining and it's not based on the inclusion of any state funding. The only thing that needs to be done on a local project for a sewer line extension is to:

1. Submit a map showing the location of the project and, if appropriate, any changes to the sewer service area. (Mr. Jerram said there are none).
2. A statement from the municipality or regional entity having a regulatory authority that all aspects of the project meet at a minimum the requirements of the current New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission Guidelines and Design of Wastewater Treatment Works. Mr. Jerram said we have plenty of capacity within our plant to add an additional 100 homes.
3. A statement of the local entity having regulatory authority that they have determined that the project is consistent with the requirements of the current state and local plans of conservation and development.

Our plant currently processes 40,000 gallons a day, but is capable of 400,000.

ARPA Update- Board of Selectmen and Ryan Bingham

Ryan Bingham said that he met twice with Mr. Jerram to review all the requests. Chairman Guilfoyle & Mr. Neale attended the Board of Selectmen meeting. The thought was topline and not try to spend all the money at once and to put it into buckets – prioritize and evaluate. That we shouldn't rush to spend all the money immediately. We should really look at what could / should get out the door first and then work through the rest of the requests. Mr. Jerram said there have been about 35 requests. The request range from the largest which is from the WPCA for about \$475,000 down to the local Cub Scouts smaller request for \$1,000 to lower their membership fees. The Board of Selectmen has talked about all the requests and would like to see them in the buckets that Mr. Bingham had mentioned. Some of the categories are: emergency services, ambulance, school board, town government, town hall, public utilities which includes the sewer line extension. It was felt to split non-profit relief into two categories. The large non-profit relief was asked for by the libraries and the smaller non-profit relief like the cub scouts. The most requests came from the small non-profit groups from all over the north-west corner. Parks & Recreation, individual resident relief, small business relief, senior specific need (the senior center was one request), Economic Development and calculation of lost revenue. The money needs to be used by 2024. The next Board of Selectmen meeting is January 25th.

Mr. Dasgupta asked about creating a fund for small business relief. Mr. Jerram said currently the town has a state funded Small Cities program for residents who are income eligible, low income who have issues with their homes. If they meet certain criteria they are eligible for a no interest loan that we administer. There is \$900,000 in the program. There are 30 of these loans that exist.

Mr. Neale said when we are considering loans or grants to businesses or non-profits we should still require for the people requesting the money to show how the money is being used. We will need to show the negative effects of the pandemic. Mr. Jerram said that if you choose to appropriate money to non-profits then it is your responsibility to make sure they use the money for use consistent with what it was designated for. We like to issue the check to the end user.

Bookkeeper: Revenue & Expenditures Fiscal YTD and Previous Fiscal YTD

Chairman Guilfoyle asked about the Litchfield Dispatch line item. Mr. Jerram said we are a member of the Litchfield County Dispatch based in Torrington. If we were our own sole entity like Simsbury we would need to employ 8 dispatchers on our payroll. They would tell our police, firemen and ambulance where the problem was. This is a service fee. There is no supplemental funding request. We pay an annual contract.

When discussing the ambulance line item, Mr. Jerram said that the paramedics lost their rental space in Winsted and are now located in New Hartford at the ambulance barn. This is good for New Hartford residents. Emergency services are going to change.

On Expenditures, a couple lines are over because of rounding. We will have to do some fixes later in the year. Attorney Roraback is putting in a lot of time with the WPCA asset sale. He is also helping with the fire department consolidation. Pine Meadow & New Hartford Fire Departments have voted to merge their services.

Paving is off because Galasso, the paving company, was unable to do all the work this past fall because of problems getting sufficient labor.

First Selectman's Report

First Selectman Jerram said his main focus this past few weeks has been the Aquarion contract plus the distribution of COVID test kits & masks.

Discussion and Possible Action on 2022/23 Budget Timeline

Chairman Guilfoyle explained about the budget timeline. The Board of Education's meeting in April is in conflict. Ms. Guilfoyle has asked Supt. Murphy about changing that date.

Ms. Guilfoyle has been on the Capital Committee and would like to pass the baton to a new member. Lou Helt agreed to take over and be on the Capital Advisory Sub-Committee.

The Budget workshop will be on March 12th. Region 7 will present at 8 am, New Hartford Board of Education at 9 am and Town of New Hartford at 10:30 am.

Adjournment

MOTION by Ms. Helt to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm. Second by Mr. Witte.

Motion passed

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Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller, Recording Secretary

Attachments available for review in the Town Clerk's office

Aulay Carlson's letter

Denton Butler's Asset Sale Updates

Letter from DEEP standard for how local projects get approved.

Budget Timeline