

BOARD OF FINANCE
Meeting Minutes
OCTOBER 11, 2022

Present: Chairman Kerry Guilfoyle, Members Ben Witte, Charlie Neale, Lou Helt, Paul LeClair, Alternates Jack Casey, Allen Voghel.

Chairman Guilfoyle called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

Seating of Alternates:

Alternate Jack Casey was seated for board member Dan Charest.

Adoption and/or Revision of Agenda:

There were no requests to revise the agenda, therefore it was accepted as presented.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: by Helt to approve the minutes dated September 13, 2022 as presented, seconded by Witte.

Unanimous.

Communications and Other Items Presented to the Board:

Chairman Guilfoyle stated that the only correspondence received was notification from Regional 7 regarding dates for negotiations. She shared the dates with the Board members.

Updates from New Hartford Education Association Negotiations – Charlie:

Ms. Guilfoyle asked Board of Finance Member Charles Neale to provide an update regarding the local Board of Education/New Hartford teachers' negotiations. Mr. Neale stated that the initial meeting was held on October 3. There was an exchange of proposed changes to the current contract. The main areas of concern were insurance (Board of Ed 'side') and class size and salaries (Teachers' 'side'). There will be a few more meetings through November and if there is no agreement, mediation would begin which would then be followed by arbitration.

Updates from Regional 7 Teachers' Collective Bargaining – Kerry:

Chairman Guilfoyle informed the Board regarding the Regional 7 negotiations. An initial meeting occurred where the process was reviewed. It was noted that Dr. Palmer has created a list of financials that may be needed. First Selectman Jerram acknowledged that he has the list, but has not yet assembled all of the material. He stated that past experience has shown that many times the material is never used; therefore, he will wait and assemble when it is absolutely necessary. Board of Finance member Neale asked for copies of those documents if and when they are assembled. He thought that they would be useful for local negotiations, if needed.

Mr. Neale commented that he finds the dynamics of the negotiations process to be "strange." He stated that the Board of Education is supposed to support the staff; yet they need to have a different stance when it comes to negotiations. He, as a resident of town, would like to support the teachers; but recognizes that his role as a member of the Finance Board requires that he be cognizant of economic restraint.

Board member Lou Helt commented that Board of Education members are advocates of both the teachers and the taxpayers.

Reports:

Bookkeeper Fiscal 2021/2022 Updates, Year To Date:

Reports were available to Board Members. No questions or concerns were expressed.

First Selectman's Report:

First Selectman Jerram presented his operations updates to the Board.

Superintendent of Schools:

He began by stating that there is a period of uncertainty with respect to the position of Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Murphy has moved on to a new position. Interviews with prospective candidates are being held.

ARPA:

He informed the Board that the remaining 600K in American Recovery Plan Act funding has been received. The Board of Selectmen will work on preparing recommendations for the use of this round of funds and will bring them to the Board of Finance for consideration. The youth sports leagues will be meeting to come up with recommendations for use at Browns Corner and these will be considered by the Board of Selectmen.

Fire District Consolidation:

First Selectman Jerram stated that the process of Consolidation of the Pine Meadow and New Hartford Village Fire Districts has moved forward. The consolidation resolutions have been approved at the respective district meetings. The next step will be to get legislative approval of the consolidation. Pine Meadow Fire District has now contracted with New Hartford Village Fire District for fire protection services. Village Fire District will cover the calls that come in for Pine Meadow Fire.

First Selectman Jerram explained that a district the size of Pine Meadow cannot afford to have their own fire firefighting equipment. The tax revenue is not sufficient to pay for all of the expenses. The Village Fire District has already been taking calls on their behalf. This consolidation effort will benefit the residents of the Pine Meadow district.

Public Works:

Mr. Jerram informed the Board members that Phase 2 of Cedar Lane Bridge was completed this past weekend. The second half of the cost of the project will need to be made soon. The cost for the paving of Farnsworth Drive is estimated to be around \$105,000.

STEAP Grant:

Jerram announced that the STEAP grant application submitted for funding to improve access to the Farmington River for fire fighting access has been approved. This project will include the repaving of the town hall parking lot.

The STEAP grant awarded previously for Brodie Park bathroom improvements is currently in process. Meetings have been held with the architect to develop an RFP for the project.

Carpenter Road Bridge:

Negotiations for resolution of the Carpenter Road Bridge are ongoing. The town is actively seeking a settlement agreement. If no agreement can be reached, a court date is already scheduled for November. Mr. Jerram is hopeful that a settlement can be reached.

National Opioid Settlement:

The First Selectman stated that the Town has received a one-time settlement for the "National Opioid Settlement." This is booked as a revenue.

Capital projects update:

Mr. Jerram informed the Board that he has had some discussion with the interim Superintendent about the Board of Education's capital expenses. It was noted when signing capital checks for expenses that there may be some over-expenditures in some of the capital line items. The interim Superintendent was not familiar with the projected plan and was not the individual who had overseen the use of the funds, but he now has the responsibility of making some adjustments. The Board of Finance members would like the Board of Ed to present a remediation plan to the Finance Board so that they can be assured that there will be no overages in total capital spending. The First Selectman will let the Superintendent know that the Board of Finance would like to be kept informed of the status of the capital plan.

Sale of Water and Wastewater Assets:

First Selectman Jerram told the Board that the Application for sale of the assets has been submitted to PURA for consideration. The next step is to receive a schedule of meetings. There is an inspection of the facilities scheduled for January.

MOTION: by Helt to adjourn at 7:45 PM, seconded by Witte.

Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Substitute for Recording Secretary Penny Miller

No attachments filed with these minutes