

**New Hartford Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
November 14, 2023 @ 7:00 pm**

**Present** Chairperson Kerry Guilfoyle, Lou Helt, Charlie Neale, Ben Witte and on Zoom – Ryan Bingham and Paul LeClair (in at 7:10), First Selectman Dan Jerram, Superintendent of Schools Jeff Sousa, Town Treasurer Gordon Ross and Recording Secretary Penny Miller

**Absent** Jack Casey, Dan Charest and Allen Voghel

Chairperson Kerry Guilfoyle called the meeting to order at 6:59 pm

**Seating of Alternates** Ryan Bingham was seated for Dan Charest

**Approval of Minutes:** Regular Meeting October 10th 2023

**Motion** by Ms. Helt to approve the October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 minutes. Second by Mr. Neale.

*Unanimous*

**Communications and Other Items Presented to Board**

Chairperson Guilfoyle said she had received a copy of the proposed 2024-2025 BOE Calendar. Ms. Guilfoyle said the new board members will be attending the December meeting and the final draft of the budget calendar will be approved then.

Mr. Jerram said he had received a letter from Region 7 Superintendent Steve LePage inviting the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance chairs to a meeting on December 12 @ 5:30 pm to go over Region 7's proposed budget.

**Public Comment** None

**Updates from New Hartford Public Schools**

Superintendent Sousa congratulated the members recently re-elected to the Board of Finance. He thanked the board for their continuing support in bringing forward information relative to the non-lapsing account. As of November 1, 2023 the schools are full staffed. Those hired are a kindergarten teacher, library media specialist and a special education teacher. Because of increased enrollment this year the additional kindergarten teacher was needed. Most recently because of increased case loads a special education teacher was hired. He said his projection as of November 14<sup>th</sup> is approximately \$90,000 is needed. He will be looking to use those funds in the non-lapsing account. He also reported that the school district received from the State Department of Education the Small-Town Right to Read Grant which may offset further funds. Supt. Sousa said he will be working on a 3-year timeline as the New Hartford Public Schools was awarded from the State of Connecticut two security grants for enhancements to the schools. The grants total around \$600,000 with a match of about \$0.52 (52 cents) on the dollar.

Those will mostly be encompassed in the BOE Capital Expenditures. The grants will enhance the phone system, communications, cameras and window glazing to name a few.

Ms. Guilfoyle asked about the first security meeting. Mr. Sousa said that 4 people signed up to speak and they were in favor of an armed security officer. This person will not be a school resource officer as the town does not have a Police Department. This person will be contracted through an outside agency and the agency will be in charge of certifications, making sure they are a POST certified officer, in good standing, etc. The agency would be in charge of the officer and it will not be connected with the local police department. The next security informational meeting will be held on November 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm in the Antolini School Library.

Mr. Witte said that two positions have been added that are not in the budget this year and you are looking to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> position? Mr. Sousa said the School Resource Officer would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. Mr. Witte said at some point you need to know that you have the funds to cover. If you find funds this year because of the non-lapsing account that will just cover you for one year.

Then next year you are looking at some large increases. You need to think wisely as there is only so much money to go around.

## **Reports:**

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Ross reviewed the bank accounts and the settling of the WPCA sale proceeds. Ms. Guilfoyle asked about the monies in the Rec Program Account. Mr. Jerram replied that amount will go down once the town is paid back for the payroll they fronted.

### **Bookkeeper: Revenue & Expenditures Fiscal YTD**

The allocation of the Debt Service is booked differently and not in the reports. The \$3,055,000 has been taken out and the USDA is satisfied. One of the 3 bonds has been fully satisfied. The smaller ones have also been satisfied. Some ECS money was received this month. The only line out of whack is the Administrative Expenses. We were hit early for Software. That renewal is \$5,000. Mr. Neale asked about the Pension Obligations for \$109,000. Mr. Jerram responded we made the whole payment and this doesn't reflect what the BOE does.

### **First Selectman's Report**

Mr. Jerram said we still have a lot of tree work to be done this fall. The trucks are ready for the winter. The new wing plow truck and the smaller truck have arrived. The town crew is catching up with the road work. Annie is training Kim Ahrens. There can be a difficult cross-over when you close out one fiscal year and start a new one. Annie may have to come back in as a consultant with the cross-over.

A portion of the Police Accountability Bill has been funded off-budget. The last bill received was \$27,130 for cameras and computers. Each officer will have two cameras. One will be in the car and the other on the officer. There was \$7,000 in ARPA money. When we replaced the police car that was vandalized, we had about \$7,000 in that account. We needed about \$13,000. The Selectmen recommended to deal and address most of the dormant Capital accounts and get them off the books. This would solve an unbudgeted problem and would clean up several smaller balances left from previously approved expenditures. We are asking for a department transfer to cover this bill for cameras, computers, licensing, batteries, charging cords to make us

compliant with state statute. We had \$7525 remaining for Police Technology. The capital projects that have funds remaining are: Police car - \$7111.05; WPCA well improvements -\$3880.00 and \$1.00 (there are 2-line items for this), Mower (Parks) \$1006.00; Woodchipper/tractor - \$256.00; DPW Gates- \$350.00; Mini Excavator \$4222.62; Skid Steer \$759.00; Muni Projects \$2019.33. The only other way to satisfy this would be to take it from the Resident Trooper Line. By closing out these accounts you clean up a whole lot. Mr. Bingham said he thought there is a state grant for up to 50% for distress and 30% for non-distress. He will look further into this and send the information to Mr. Jerram. Ms. Guilfoyle said the total of the dormant capital accounts totals \$19,605.

**Motion** by Mr. Witte to reallocate \$19,605 of unexpended capital project funds from prior years to help fund police cameras and associated hardware for compliance with the police accountability bill. Second by Ms. Helt.

Mr. Bingham said that any body worn cameras or storage devices procured with certain federal grant funds and bond funds are not eligible. He said it sounds like we are not using federal dollars. If we used ARPA funds, we would not be eligible for these funds.

*Unanimous*

Mr. Jerram said we are getting between \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year on the opioid settlement grant. We might consider putting this money towards a specific thing next year. We are getting about \$1,500 on the Mini-Bottle deposit money. The state wants us to do a recycling program. A report was filed with the state that we are using that money for a composting program at RRDD #1. Blue Earth Composting will be offering a composting program to New Hartford residents. The last payment has been scheduled for the 2017 bond for Carpenter Road Bridge and the Antolini roof.

Mr. Jerram said he, Supt. Sousa and Dave Helt, highway superintendent, have toured our 3 schools. We have allocated \$175,000 for the schools. Most of it going to New Hartford Elementary for a new roof. The original estimates by the previous Superintendent were far lower than current prices. He said Bakerville School is in pretty good shape except for a few maintenance items like the floors and the siding. Antolini School is in fairly good shape. A lot of water is coming off the hill. The floor in the gymnasium is failing. There are not enough catch basins at the bottom of the hill by the back wall of the school. At New Hartford Elementary there is the roofing issue. The soffit is hanging in some areas. Some of the brick needs pointing. The two skylights are creating a heat loss. Mr. Sousa is looking into grants and is applying for them.

### **Arpa Fund Project Updates**

Out of the almost \$2 million we are at \$957,000. We spent about \$250,000 on the new truck. We received a bill for \$16,000 for the picket ball fencing at Brown's Corner. All the ARPA money has been designated.

Mr. Neale asked about the Rails to Trails project and the codification with the property owners. Mr. Jerram responded they are actively working on it but an agreement hasn't been reached yet.

Mr. Neale asked about the business website. Mr. Jerram said that Brian Watson has been working on it but people are slow in returning their information. Greg Watkins of Quadro Marketing is doing the website.

### **Other Business**

### **Adjournment**

**Motion** by Ms. Helt to adjourn at 8:19 pm. Second by Mr. Witte.

*Unanimous*

*Respectfully submitted, Penny Miller, Recording Secretary*