

**New Hartford Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
December 12, 2023**

Present Chairperson Kerry Guilfoyle, Members: Lou Helt, Charlie Neale, Alternates: Ryan Bingham, Steve Seltzer.

Also, present First Selectman Dan Jerram, Bookkeeper Annie Witte, Member of the Public John Russo and Recording Secretary Penny Miller

Absent Camille Burford, Dan Charest, Paul LeClair and Ben Witte

Call to Order

Chairperson Guilfoyle called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Seating of Alternates

Ryan Bingham was seated for Ben Witte and Steve Seltzer was seated for Dan Charest.

Welcoming of New Members

Chairperson Guilfoyle welcomed the new members. She asked the board to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting November 14th, 2023

Motion by Ms. Helt to approve the minutes of November 14, 2023. Second by Mr. Neale.

Unanimous

Communications and Other Items Presented to Board

Ms. Guilfoyle and First Selectman Jerram recently attended a meeting at Region 7 with the new Region 7 board members and other town selectmen. Ms. Guilfoyle said that based on population size New Hartford will be up 1.36%. We will have a loss of 11 students with a grand total loss of 42 students at Region 7 from 807 to 765 students. Benefits are estimated to go up 11.6% for 2024/2025. In Special Ed there are 3 new out-placements – 2 are new students. Those two-line items total 36% of the budget as it stands now. Region 7 is promoting the AG programs for out-of-town students but they are limited as to how many out-of-district students they can take.

Opportunity for Public Comment

John Russo, Vickers Road, said he sent a letter to the Superintendent of Schools regarding the security officer. He said the school system takes a large amount of the budget. He would like to inspire everyone as to how it is for single family homes and retirees who live on a restricted income. There are people in town who are struggling. He said keep in mind that \$100/month might not be a lot for you but for others it's the difference between turning up the thermostat, buying extra food or medical expenses. He also wondered how do we make the town nicer or more memorable. When people out of our area hear New Hartford, they think that we have a lot of trees here. We could look for ways to spend money in advertising to bring business back downtown. We educate people in Connecticut and upon completion of their education, many leave town and the state. We need to invest in our town and people to have them stay here.

Discuss and Approve 2024 Regular Meeting Calendar

A copy of the 2024 Regular Meeting Calendar is available for viewing at the Town Clerk's Office.

Motion by Mr. Bingham to approve the 2024 Regular Meeting Calendar with the date changed to 2024 and an asterisk (*) next to March 26th – this meeting may be needed for budget discussion. Second by Ms. Helt.

Unanimous

Discuss 2024/25 Budget Calendar

Ms. Guilfoyle said on the suggested Budget Timeline the date for the CAPEX meeting is on March 12, 2024. On Saturday, March 16th starting at 8 a.m. the Budget Workshop will be held. At that time Region 7, New Hartford Board of Education and the Town Government budgets will be presented. April 2nd at 7 p.m. will be the Public Hearing. A quorum of board members is needed for that meeting. April 9th will be a regular meeting. The Budget Meeting led by the First Selectman is April 23rd followed by the Annual Town Meeting. Region 7 will have their Annual District Meeting on May 6th. On May 7th the town will vote on the budgets. A copy of the Budget Timeline Calendar is available for viewing in the Town Clerk's Office.

Reports

Treasurer's Report

None as Mr. Ross was not present

First Selectman's Report

Mr. Jerram reported that the transition of the WPCA continues. The last billing went out in October. The balances still owed will either go to collections or liens will be placed on the properties. A Building Committee was named at the last Board of Selectmen meeting. A contract for CDM Smith was authorized. Surveying will be starting shortly. This will be a 2–3-year project with surveying as a starting point. Ground was broken on the Brodie bathrooms. ME Carroll was the low bidder. Excavations have been done and the foundations poured. They are trying to complete as much of the concrete work before the snow comes. Slate Construction will be doing the woodwork.

We have had a couple of small call-outs. Winter drives the budget.

In the 10 categories for the ARPA money – Emergency Services – we are about 76% expended. A lot went to the Fire Departments and Ambulance Association. In the governmental section we spent about \$325,000. A big truck was purchased for \$250,000. Public Utilities – the \$532,000 for the sewer line extension will go towards paying the \$490,000 to the engineering firm doing the surveying work, etc. In Non-Profits we have spent 45% or \$9,500. The West Hill Pond Trustees have been doing water quality studies and weed mitigation. About 5 or 6 years ago the towns of New Hartford & Barkhamsted and West Hill Pond Association raised about \$120,000 to rebuild the dam. The DEEP said there is no spillway so the dam needs to be modified. This is a \$700,000 to \$1 million dollar project. Mr. Jerram will investigate whether a natural hazard mitigation grant could be used to fix the dam and spillway. The Association has some money and are starting the engineering path. We asked them not to commit the Town of New Hartford to any level of funding as the dam is in Barkhamsted.

Library Funding – about \$75,000 has been spent at the Beekley Library. At the Bakerville Library David Slate of DCS Construction has been picked to do the handicapped bathrooms. Parks & Rec – out of the \$300,000 allotted about \$122,000 has been spent. Resident relief – of the \$20,000, most of that has

been spent. The Seniors were allocated \$85,000 to redo the kitchen. The EDC website has been started with Greg Watkins of Quadro Marketing along with Byron Watson on the EDC group. Following the ARPA discussion, Mr. Neale asked how much has been spent for tree removal. Mr. Jerram replied that about \$31,000 has been spent out of the \$65,000 in that budget line.

Bookkeeper's Report

First Selectman Jerram acknowledged and thanked Annie Witte for her 27 years of service. Mr. Neale asked what the \$7,000 in Other Income was. Ms. Witte said this is the scrap sales, finger prints, miscellaneous road cut permits, sale of a truck and other obscure items. Ms. Witte gave a quick explanation of Wash Accounts. The town has three wash accounts. A wash account for the town has to do with salaries – wages paid. A wash account is outside of the budget. Typically, you spend the money, take the money and net zero. Police overtime is when you need extra police for traffic duty for Eversource or the phone company and the funeral home. You expense it to pay the officer through our payroll and then it is billed to whoever then entity is. We take the money in and net zero. This works the same for Senior Wash and Recreation Wash accounts. The Recreation Wash includes the lifeguards, camp counselors and any special programs like ballroom dancing. Where you have to pay the people. We have charges. The fees for the beach stickers & camp goes into this program account. The school has pass-through grants. The town takes in the money. These grants are given to the school. The school expenses it and fill out paperwork to obtain the reimbursement. When they get the reimbursements back, they go into the general fund – no matter if they are a Title 1 or Title 2. They can't receive the money but they can spend it. They expense it in the school office and the town takes in the revenue. These pass-through accounts are on the revenue side. Some pass-through grants can go on for a few years.

Other Business

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Helt to adjourn at 8:05 pm. Second by Mr. Neale.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted, Penny Miller, Recording Secretary

*Attachments at the Town Clerk's Office
2024 Regular Meeting Calendar
New Hartford 2024 -2025 Budget Timeline*