

**Town of New Hartford
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting**

September 10, 2019

Present: Chairman Regina Wexler; Members Reggie Smith, Steve Tuxbury, Ben Witte, Dan Charest, Kerry Guilfoyle; Alternate Lourena Helt

Others Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Town Treasurer Gordon Ross, Town Bookkeeper Annie Witte; Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton (Republican-American); Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

Chairman Wexler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

All regular members present, no alternates to be seated.

Adjustment to Agenda:

Town Treasurer Gordon Ross noted his presence at the meeting and asked the Chairman when an appropriate time would be for him to address the Board and present updates. Ms. Wexler asked for a motion to add to the agenda.

MOTION: by Smith, second Wexler to amend the agenda to add Treasurer's report to follow bookkeeper's report.

No objections; Chairman noted that Mr. Ross would present under reports.

MOTION: by Smith to approve the Minutes dated June 11, 2019; seconded by Charest. Chairman Wexler asked if there were any changes that needed to be made to the minutes, no request for changes. Chairman Wexler ruled that the minutes were adopted as presented.

Communications and Other items presented to the Board:

Chairman Wexler received correspondence from Regional School District 7 informing her and the Board of Finance of the upcoming contract negotiations with the teacher's bargaining unit and the administrators bargaining unit.

Opportunity for Public Comment:

No public present

Reports:

Bookkeeper: Revenue & Expenditures Fiscal YTD and previous Fiscal YTD:

Bookkeeper Annie Witte distributed her monthly report to the Board of Finance members, along with monthly revenue and expenditure reports, proposed line item transfers FYE June 30, 2019 and Revenue Report for the year end. She also reviewed the revenues for the 2019

fiscal year. She informed the Board that the year ended with a surplus of \$422, 163.13. Of note was the short term interest that was received due to the Treasurer investing in the CT STIF account. The Tax collection rate came in at 98.85%. A projected rate of 97.5% was used when developing the budget. Ms. Witte pointed out that there were no revenues received in the Special Ed/Excess costs, although there had been a projection of \$10,000. Member Charest questioned the lack of revenues received from the WPCA. Ms. Witte replied that the WPCA recently made some payments, but they occurred after the fiscal year end. Member Guilfoyle questioned the Pass-through Grants, asking what they were – Ms. Witte replied that there are funds received through the schools and are tracked by them; they can span over a couple of years and are monitored by the Auditors.

Expenses were highlighted in the report distributed by Ms. Witte. Of note is the tree removal line item which is over-expended due to the Emerald Ash Borer which has killed many trees in town, necessitating their removal.

There were no questions asked regarding any of the expenditures or any regarding any other information distributed.

Treasurer's Report:

Town Treasurer Gordon Ross distributed information related to the current balances in the town accounts. Mr. Ross began to discuss the results of a recent Moody's report.

MOTION: by Tuxbury to postpone this review to a future meeting, seconded by Witte.

AYE: Witte, Tuxbury, Smith, Wexler

OPPOSED: Charest, Guilfoyle

Motion carries, discussion postponed.

First Selectman's Report:

Mr. Jerram reiterated that the Fiscal Year ended with a \$422,000 surplus. He noted that the auditors will be at town hall soon in order to gather the information needed to produce the annual audit report.

A lot of roadwork has been completed in the past few months. Johnnycake Lane, Meadow Street and Cedar Lane have all been paved. West Road is being prepared for paving that should be done within a few weeks.

Jerram noted that all Municipal employee bargaining units will be entering contact negotiations this year – police, highway and town hall employee contracts all expire at the end of June 2020.

The front loader that was approved to be purchased using capital funds has been received.

The downtown parking project will begin soon. The engineers are developing a plan.

The Recreation Program Account is in much better shape this year than last year due to a successful camp year. The weather cooperated this year which meant that a lot of campers returned for additional weeks. The program fund has paid back the general fund for employee wages.

Carpenter Road Bridge is nearing completion. The road has been prepped for paving, site remediation is being done. Guard rails will be installed. Jerram is hopeful that completion will occur by September 19. The First Selectman noted that the Board of Selectmen are prepared to meet on September 19 if the bridge is not almost fully completed.

New Hartford Day will be at Brodie Park this weekend. There are some changes that have been made to the layout of the vendors and entertainment. Things are being changed up a bit in the hopes of improving attendance.

A question was posed as to what will happen to the “old Dunkin Donuts” building once the move is made to the new building. Mr. Jerram replied that it is up to the landlord. The building is privately owned.

Mr. Charest asked when the Library plans to start with their construction. Mr. Jerram replied that there is a ‘groundbreaking’ ceremony scheduled for September 22, 2019.

Discussion re: NH Board of Education and NW Regional 7 contract negotiations:

Mediation dates were discussed; Steve Tuxbury will be present as needed.

Letter from Regional 7 was received and presented under Communications.

Other Business:

Chairman Wexler mentioned her concern regarding recent ‘ransom ware’ attacks that have occurred in some towns in Connecticut. She asked member Smith if he had been satisfied with the conversation he had with the Town of New Hartford IT consultant regarding security measures. She noted that the Board of Education and the town do not share the same IT person and questioned if Mr. Smith is comfortable with both.

Mr. Smith stated that he had a good conversation with the Town’s IT consultant, but added that having someone from the outside come in and review the IT system provides valuable feedback. He recommended that a security consultant be hired to perform a security audit. He is willing to work with the First Selectman to get this process started. He can provide the names of some firms that do this kind of assessment. An RFP for services can be issued.

Mr. Jerram was in agreement with this recommendation, but asked how this would be paid for. He noted that he did not plan for this type of service within his budget and also stated that the assessment would be for both the Board of Education and the town and that the cost should not impact his budget alone. The Board members discussed the issue and there was consensus that an appropriation from surplus could be considered to provide the funding for this unanticipated expense. A comprehensive review of the IT system, practices and policies was considered to be a worthy idea.

Mr. Jerram will contact Mr. Smith to get the names of firms and hopefully a quote can be obtained for the next Board of Finance meeting.

Having no other business, the Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: by Smith to adjourn at 7:50 PM; seconded by Witte.

Unanimous.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

Attachments filed with the Town Clerk:

*Letter dated July 11, 2019 from Regional School District No. 7 Regina Wexler
Bookkeepers report dated September 10, 2019
Proposed line item transfers FYE 2019
Year End Revenue report*

Attachments available in the Office of the First Selectman:

Revenue and Expenditure Reports for August 2019