

**Board of Finance  
Special Meeting  
December 6, 2017**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Board of Finance Chairman Jim Fitzgerald, Members Steven Tuxbury, Reggie Smith, Regina Wexler; Alternate Members Paul Leclair and Bart Baxter; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward,

**Others Present:** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Eric Claman, Republican American Newspaper Reporter Kathryn Boughton and several members of the public.

Board of Finance Chairman Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

**Seating of Alternates:**

Chairman Fitzgerald announced that Member Dan Charest had requested that Alternate Bart Baxter be seated for him for this meeting. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that Member Ben Witte was also absent and Mr. Paul Leclair was seated in his place.

Mr. Fitzgerald explained to the public assembled that Ct State Statutes dictate that a member of the Board of Finance relays to the Chairman the alternate to be seated in his absence. In the event that a member has not designated who shall be seated for him, the Board of Finance, as a whole shall designate the alternate. Chairman Fitzgerald noted that since Mr. Leclair was the only other alternate present, he would be seated for the absent member Ben Witte.

**Approval of Minutes of November 14, 2017:**

**MOTION** by Smith to accept the minutes of the meeting dated November 14, 2017 as presented; seconded by Wexler.

*AYE: Smith, Tuxbury, Wexler, Fitzgerald                      Abstain: Baxter, Leclair*

*Motion passes, minutes accepted as presented.*

**2017-2018 New Hartford Budget: discuss and take any action regarding recent holdbacks/cuts by Governor Malloy of -247,568 in Educational Aid (ECS & Adult Ed) to New Hartford:**

Chairman Fitzgerald presented some general information regarding the recently accepted 2017-2018 budget. He noted that in between the approval of the budget to go to referendum and the actual referendum vote, the Governor used his Executive Powers to reduce the State approved budget. The Town of New Hartford received additional cuts to anticipated revenue in the amount of \$247,000. These cuts were in the area of Education funding; specifically Education Cost Share Grant (ECS) and funding for Adult Education.

Chairman Fitzgerald addressed First Selectmen Jerram, asking him how he planned to operate when taking the additional revenue losses into consideration. First Selectman Jerram replied that it was his intent to continue to operate the General Government budget in a fiscally conservative manner. He noted that the revenues that were cut were education related. Chairman Fitzgerald commented that there is a provision that allows for Towns that have already approved their budgets to make cuts to the budget based on the loss of revenues that have been announced. Member Wexler asked for clarification of this; asking, "How do we make cuts after the budget has been approved?" She further asked, "Do we need approval from any other Boards to do this?"

Chairman Fitzgerald explained that the Board of Finance approved a budget to go to Referendum and then a town budget meeting was held which adjourned to a Referendum vote. The State made cuts in between the town budget meeting and the Referendum. Changes to the state budget were made before the actual vote occurred. He commented that it is entirely possible that additional cuts in revenues will be made. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he wasn't entirely sure what could be done at this point to address the loss of revenues but he expressed his deep concerns that there could be additional cuts to the state budget.

Board members expressed their concern that revenues may be decreased which will leave some challenges to be faced during the fiscal year.

**Discuss and take possible action on setting of Collection and Mill rate for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018:**

Member Smith asked what the potential mill rate would be, using the information presently available. Mr. Fitzgerald replied that he had calculated it to be 29.890; an increase of .373 mills prior to the Governor taking his action which resulted in loss of anticipated revenues. Taking the cuts into consideration and accounting for the loss of revenues, the figure is revised to 30.276 for a mill rate; which equates to a 2.57% tax increase.

**MOTION:** by Smith to set the 2017-2018 fiscal year mill rate at 30.276 mills; seconded by Tuxbury.

A brief discussion ensued regarding what may happen at the state level budget-wise over the next couple of years, with the consensus being that the next couple of years will remain challenging.

*Unanimous*

Chairman Fitzgerald completed the official notification of the setting of the mill rate to the Tax Collector. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the Tax Collector had informed him that she would begin processing the bills immediately and it was her intent to get the bills completed and mailed out prior to the end of the calendar year.

Member Wexler suggested that the public be notified that they could contact the tax collector in advance of receiving an actual bill to be verbally informed of their tax liability and they could then pay before the end of the year.

**Approve Calendar – BOF meeting dates for 2018:**

Chairman Fitzgerald distributed the listing of dates for regular monthly meetings of the Board of Finance. He noted that meetings would be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM.

**MOTION:** by Wexler to approve the 2018 schedule of regular meetings of the Board of Finance; seconded by Baxter.

*Unanimous*

**Approve New Hartford Budget Timeline for Fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019:**

Chairman Fitzgerald distributed a proposed timeline for the 2018-2019 budget process. He noted that Regional School District #7 Board of Education indicated that their referendum date would most likely be May 8, 2018. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he felt this date was too late and it would be prudent to have the budget vote occur on May 1, 2018. He indicated that he would be discussing this with Superintendent Palmer. He noted that Superintendent Palmer had indicated that there is a bylaw/rule that states when the budget vote occurs. He understood this to be the first Tuesday in May and therefore May 1 would appear to be the correct date for the referendum.

No formal action was taken on the proposed budget timeline.

Chairman Fitzgerald expressed his thanks to the Board of Finance for all of their hard work and dedication throughout this past budget season.

**MOTION:** by Tuxbury to adjourn at 7:25 PM; seconded by Leclair.

*Unanimous*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward; substitute for Recording Secretary*