

**Town of New Hartford
Board of Finance – Special Meeting
New Hartford Town Hall
Monday, April 14, 2014 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Chairman Ben Witte, members: Steve Tuxbury, Reggie Smith, Jr., Jim Fitzgerald, Maria Moore, First Selectman Dan Jerram, Supt. of Schools Dr. Philip O'Reilly, Constable Dan Janco, State Trooper Nick Nigro, BOE members: Martha Busemeyer & Sue Lundin, members of the public, Recording Secretary Penny Miller

Absent: Dan Charest, Steve Roth & Bill Coates

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Seating of Alternates: None

Public Comment:

Constable Janco said that he presented a budget to the exiting budget he had with an increase of \$12,000 for the new constable. He didn't realize that the budget had been cut. His figures were based on the existing budget. He thinks that \$12,000 is a small price to pay for an additional constable.

Member Moore asked if the potential constable would accept a part-time position that could grow into full-time. Mr. Jerram responded that it is inappropriate to ask Constable Janco this question as he is not the person responsible for hiring this person.

BOE member Martha Busemeyer believes that the Board of Finance is doing its due diligence in asking for a 0% increase budget. She believes the 0% increase will come at a cost to our students as far as curriculum and teacher time goes. The BOE originally looked at a 3% increase and went down to 1.5%. To get to this figure they cut the curriculum specialist and teacher hours.

Bill Baxter, former selectman, speaking on public safety realizes that at a distance there are real issues to deal with. We have used the resident state trooper to the maximum. We need to think more in terms of investment. We need to invest in some things. We need to invest in safety and economic development. By rejecting this request it is a penny wise and pound foolish. We need to invest in the public welfare of this town.

Anita Baxter said we are the most eastern town in Litchfield County. The issue of drugs is a big problem. Our geographical area hasn't changed and it is a lot for the police to cover.

New Hartford Board of Education Unanticipated Special Education Costs

Dr. O'Reilly said that back in the fall the BOE was notified that there were 2 students that needed additional help. The cost for these two students which includes transportation and special education services is \$106,810. These students need one-to-one assistance. Between October and March there were additional costs for the code violations at Antolini School. These costs were absorbed by the BOE. Dr. O'Reilly was there representing the board in asking for an additional allocation for these two students that are attending the magnet school. The first bill from CREC has been received and the BOE is paying for it out of their operational budget.

Chairman Witte said that the Board of Finance in the past has funded the unanticipated Special Ed. costs from surplus for the Board of Education

A non-recurring account could be set up for these unanticipated costs and this account would be funded from the Special Ed. checks that come into the town to cover these students.

MOTION: by Tuxbury, second Smith that we support, subject to town meeting approval, the Board of Education \$90,000 request for unanticipated overages in Special Ed. costs from the undesignated fund balance.

Aye: Fitzgerald, Smith, Tuxbury, Moore, Opposed: none, Abstained: none

Motion carries.

Member Smith asked the BOE members: what do you want to add back in. Martha Busemeyer responded in a perfect world she would like the BOF to consider the 1.4% budget. She would like to consider restoring the position of the curriculum specialist. She believes it is a critical position because of the Common Core.

Town Budget Discussion:

Public Safety Budget – Member Moore asked Selectman Jerram if the constable to be hired on July 1st, would it be a possibility that he could be hired as part-time initially. Mr. Jerram said we do not have coverage on the midnight shift. There is a Patrol 4 overlay. If they work 20 shifts each and in a 31 day month – morning & evening there are 80 shifts and that doesn't include the midnight shift. They are looking to cover the late night shift.

Discussion followed on adding the additional constable back into the budget.

MOTION: by Smith, second Moore to cut \$10,000 out of RRDD#1, \$5,000 out of the Ambulance line item \$10,000 from Health Benefits and \$20,000 from Registrar Election Workers for a total of \$45,000 and to add in \$102,241 for a constable with benefits. That is \$72,241 into constable line item and \$30,000 into the constable benefit line item.

Aye: Tuxbury, Smith, Fitzgerald, Moore, Opposition: none, Abstentions: none

Motion carries.

MOTION: by Smith, second Tuxbury to allow the Board of Finance chairman and the First Selectman to draft C.G.S. form 7-344 Budget Summary that will be printed in a newspaper for the annual budget meeting.

Aye: Tuxbury, Smith, Fitzgerald, Moore, Opposition: none, Abstentions: none

Motion carries.

MOTION: by Smith, second Fitzgerald to adjourn at 9:02 p.m.

Aye: Tuxbury, Smith, Fitzgerald, Moore, Opposed: none, Abstained: none

Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller
Recording Secretary