

**Town of New Hartford
Board of Finance Meeting – Special Meeting
New Hartford Town Hall
Wednesday April 2, 2014 @ 7:00PM**

Present: Chairman Ben Witte (in at 7:13 pm), Members: Steve Tuxbury, Reggie Smith, Jr., Dan Charest, Maria Moore, Alternate Steve Roth, BOE members: Josh Adams (chairman), Sue Lundin, Kate Rieger & Martha Busemeyer, Supt. of School Dr. O'Reilly, Board of Selectman Alesia Kennerson & Jack Casey, Members of the public: Robert Penzero, Joe Toro, John Wilhelm & Bob Moore, Recording Secretary Penny Miller

Absent: Bill Coates, Jim Fitzgerald

The meeting was called by order by Acting Chairman Smith.

Seating of Alternates: Steve Roth for Jim Fitzgerald

Public Comments:

BOE member Martha Busemeyer stated that at the Board of Education meeting there were presented with a budget of a 0% increase. She understands the position everyone is in. She feels that with the 0% budget it will be a detriment to the children. She feels the cutting of a curriculum specialist and part-time secretary in the front office was not a good move. She would like the Board of Finance to consider the original budget. Member Moore asked – will it be easier when the security is in place? Ms. Busemeyer feels that additional help will be needed.

Robert Penzero, East Cotton Hill, stated his opinion that he felt that much could be done to improve the town roads and bridges. He said that the town didn't get a 2nd opinion on the Carpenter Road Bridge and he has someone in mind that he feels should be allowed to look at the bridge.

BOE Chairman Adams said the Board of Education heard your request for a 0% increase and Dr. O'Reilly did that. He doesn't believe that this budget presented will have any impact on our students. The curriculum is being changed for the implementation of the Common Core. A listing of the BOE cuts was part of the package distributed to the BOF members.

Member Moore said regarding the cutting of the Curriculum Specialist, at the BOE meeting last night a teacher read a letter endorsing Dr. Roxanne Pangallo to be appointed as the principal of New Hartford Elementary School and Bakerville. Under the scenario will you still be retaining the expertise of her as a Curriculum Specialist? Chairman Adams said that she will be too busy to do this as a new principal.

Member Smith has a hard time going with a zero budget increase when Regional gets as much as they do.

Chairman Witte said you need to take to the hearing what you want the people to pass as a budget.

Member Tuxbury said with the loss of students this has to happen. Structural changes need to happen.

Bill Coates in at 7:40 pm

Revised Town Budget:

Selectman Kennerson said on Page 4 the health insurance line item for the constable was removed and on Page 7 the pay for the constable was removed. We are running 3 constables and 1 trooper.

The third cut on the capital side is to make do with existing excavator. .

A letter was received from Constable Dan Janco supporting the elimination of the constable. He compared us to other towns and believes it is a mistake to cut the constable. His letter is filed with these minutes.

Member Smith would like Constable Janco to come to the budget hearing and present his case to the public.

Member Moore said that the BOE did a good job to come in at 0% budget. Her concern is Public Act No. 13-60. Dr. O'Reilly said it was only for the maintenance of the buildings. Member Smith would like to review this information at a future meeting.

Budget roll up with revised NW Region 7 BOE approved budget:

Region 7 came down to 3.43% increase for New Hartford.

MOTION: by Smith, second Roth that the New Hartford Board of Finance does not support the increases for the region 7 budget for the 2014/2015 year.

Aye: Smith, Charest, Tuxbury, Roth, Opposed: Moore, Abstained: none

Motion carries.

Suggested norms for April 8 budget hearing:

Chairman Witte has noticed in the last couple of years this board has asked questions that have been asked at our meeting. His view is that the budget hearing is to hear what the people in the audience have to say. It doesn't mean that we can't point out some of our biases. Let the public speak and then step back to listen to the dialogue. He went on to say you can make a comment but that is different than a back & forth discussion.

MOTION: by Smith, second Roth to adjourn at 8:46 p.m.

Aye: Smith, Charest, Tuxbury, Roth, Moore, Opposed: none, Abstained: none

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller
Recording Secretary