

New Hartford Board of Finance
Special Virtual Meeting via ZOOM
Thursday, May 28, 2020 @ 5:00 pm

Present (virtually) Chairman Regina Wexler, Members: Dan Charest, Kerry Guilfoyle, Reggie Smith, Jr., Steve Tuxbury and Ben Witte; Alternates: Lou Helt, Paul LeClair and Recording Secretary Penny Miller

Others Present (virtually) First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectmen Alesia Kennerson, David Rosengren, Town Treasurer Gordon Ross

Chairman Wexler called the special virtual meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 5:00 pm

Seating of Alternates None

FY 2020-2021 Municipal Budget (includes Board of Ed – regional and local) discussion and possible action

Chairman Wexler said that at this meeting a budget would be set so that it can go to a public hearing. The municipal budget and the local Board of Education budgets have been passed. The numbers are in for the Regional 7 budget. First Selectman Jerram said that there are some slight changes to the municipal side of the budget since the last meeting. The changes are: the union contract has been finalized and there are no pay raises in the first year and a couple changes in the Revenue in Probate and the Pequot Grant. A provision was made for the 10-248a account but nothing was put in. Mr. Jerram said it is up to the Board of Finance if you want to put it in as Revenue. The collection rate was altered at a previous meeting. Mr. Witte did note that these changes had been included in a previous meeting. Ms. Guilfoyle added that at that time the budget numbers for Regional were not known.

Mr. Jerram said on the Regional numbers there was an alteration in the budget. Their original number was \$10,481,737 and they voted to approve a budget of \$10,440,000, roughly \$41,714 lower.

Mr. Charest asked about the overall percent increase and Mr. Jerram responded it is 1.79%. Ms. Wexler said this does not include the anticipated \$100,000 from the local Board of Education. She read into the record the following, part of an email sent to Supt. Of Schools Brian Murphy and BOE Chair Tim Goff:

Brian and Tim:

It may not have been clear from our meeting that the BoF is relying on your representation that the \$100 in savings realized will returned to the taxpayers. The intention was that the decrease of \$50k was contingent upon the minimum \$100k in savings remaining available on June 30 to be returned into the general fund.

Their response in part from Mr. Goff was:

The last vote the BOE took regarding the \$100k was a vote to apply it to next year's budget. At our last meeting we discussed that it might not be possible to do so but we were waiting on more guidance from the BOF (whether the non-lapsing account would be established or not).

While we have not formally voted to give back the \$100k during this fiscal year, the Board has every intention of giving back the \$100k to the Town in some fashion (whether it be to the general fund or the non-lapsing account). We will formally vote on this and on the \$50k cut during our next BOE meeting.

Mr. Jerram said looking at the education budget it depends what the intention of the board is regarding the \$100,000. Currently the local Board of Education is at \$8,539,106. Ms. Wexler said right now the \$100,000 is relevant to this budget because it is not plugged into the budget anywhere. Mr. Jerram replied if the intention of the board is to allow the local Board of Ed to spend \$8,539,106 then the budget is accurate. That would presume if they had \$100,000 the assumption would be without putting it into an account that it would go to the general fund where have to you designate it. If the intention of the Board of Finance is to offset this number then you could put it in as revenue.

Ms. Wexler said on the Revenue page there is a line for this account but there isn't a dollar figure associated with it. Mr. Jerram said he didn't know if you were trying to offset the \$8.5 million or add to it. Mr. Witte said at the last meeting a motion was made to cut \$200,000 from the BOE budget but offset it by this \$100,000 which he called surplus revenue. That was voted down. What was accepted was a cut of \$50,000 with no tie-in to this non-lapsing account.

Statute 10-248a – Discussion & Possible Action on Unexpended education funds account

Motion by Guilfoyle to add the anticipated \$100,000 surplus from the 2019-2020 New Hartford Board of Education budget to the 10-248a Non-Lapsing Account. Second by Smith.

Discussion followed. Mr. Goff said the \$50,000 cut will come out of the \$8,539,106. The BOE has an extra \$100,000 in savings from the school closure this year. He felt there would be no additional savings this year.

Aye: Wexler, Charest, Guilfoyle, Smith; Opposed: Witte, Tuxbury

Motion passes

Mr. Jerram said the newly revised assessment number from Regional is \$10,440,023, a cut of \$41,714. Ms. Wexler said that a firm number of savings realized from the school closure has never been received. Mr. Jerram said he was working on getting that number from Dr. Palmer. There are still a lot of unanswered questions as to what their savings are. Many questions were asked at the Region 7 recent BOE meeting and many of those questions went unanswered. The Regional budget was passed over the objection of our local reps to that board.

Motion by Charest to approve the budget to a hearing in the amount of \$25,564,884.87. Second by Smith.

Aye: Wexler, Smith, Guilfoyle, Charest; Opposed: Tuxbury, Witte

Motion passes

Motion by Smith to approve the Revenue Sheet dated May 28, 2020 in the amount of \$25,564,884.87 as presented. Second by Guilfoyle.

Aye: Wexler, Smith, Guilfoyle, Charest; Opposed: Tuxbury, Witte

Motion passes

Set Budget Public Hearing Date – June 2, 2020

Motion by Guilfoyle to set the public hearing date for June 2, 2020 at 7:00 pm. Second by Smith.

Unanimous

Adjournment

By unanimous consent the meeting was adjourned at 5:48 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Penny Miller
Recording Secretary