

Approved 5/8/08

Special Board of Finance Meeting
February 25, 2007
8:00 PM Town Hall, Meeting Room
Board of Finance reviews Board of Selectmens' Budget

Board Members Present:

Chairman Mike O'Brien, Vice Chairman Gerald Sargent, Ms. Patty Kopas, Ms. Melissa Koller, Messrs., Atkinson and Carter. Secretary Donna M. Anastasia. *Absent:* David Muller.

Also present:

Town Administrator Tom Landry, Finance Director Rick Darling, First Selectman Woody Bliss, Selectman W. Glenn Major, Selectman Gayle Weinstein, Brian Gioiele from the Weston Forum, Margaret Wirtenberg of Wilson Rd, Walter Erikson of Lyons Plain Rd, Betsy Peyreigne of the Veterans Affairs Committee, Town Engineer John Conte, Senior Center Director, Conservation Planner Fred Anderson, Fire Dept. President Curtis Gunn, Library Director Jane Atkinson, Fire Dept. Chief & Fire Marshal John Pokorny, Fire Dept. Treasurer Matthew Ogiba, Animal Control Officer Mark Harper, Land Use Director Tracy Kulikowski, Information Systems Manager Sharon Shattuck, Parks & Rec. member Bob Uzenoff, Human Services Director Charlene Hillman, Chief of Police John Troxell, Police Commission Chair Rick Philips, Arts Commission Chair Christine Lomuscio and Director of Public Works Joe Lametta.

First Selectman Bliss began the meeting with a presentation, a copy of which is made part of these minutes.

Estimated Fund Balance forecast for 6/30/08 \$10,419,296.

Currently at about 16%, the fund balance target is 12%.

Expenditures for 2008-2009 Estimate \$63,417,586.

Health Insurance Costs have decreased overall with some of the savings attributable to HSA plans. Although costs have gone down, it is expected that FY 09-10 will show an increase in health insurance costs. The Town has received approximately \$62,000. in Workers' compensation refunds and is expected to receive an additional \$40,000. in six months.

Energy costs have climbed substantially from 260,124 in 2006 to an estimated 338,259 for 2008. Energy costs for 2009 is projected at 381,304.

Grand List growth is down .1% and anticipated to fall about .3% next year.

New construction is down about 5% and remodeling about 2%.

Luxury permits are also down about 10%.

Tax Collection remains strong at 97.9% which includes exemptions and abatements.

Tax Assessor **Account 143**
No discussion/comments

Tax Collector **Account 144**
No discussion/comments

Board of Assessment Appeals **Account 145**
No discussion/comments

Legal Counsel **Account 150**
There was some discussion regarding retainer and litigation fees currently charged for legal counsel. Selectman Major who is also an attorney felt the fees were on target with the market.

Town Clerk **Account 160**

There was some discussion regarding the computer upgrade from Cott Systems approved last year. Document images are now available in the vault by computer.

Historic District Commission **Account 175**
No discussion/comments

Planning & Zoning **Account 170**

Land Use Director Tracy Kulikowski discussed the new full time Zoning Enforcement Officer position and a contractual agreement with Code Enforcement Officer Bob Turner. Her department may have to incur outside consultant costs for preparation of the Town Plan due to the State by 2010 to be eligible for discretionary State funding.

Zoning Board of Appeals **Account 180**
No discussion/comments

Conservation Commission **Account 520**
No discussion/comments

Building Inspector **Account 191**
No discussion/comments

Building Committee **Account 195**
No discussion/comments

Volunteer Fire Department **Account 220**
No discussion/comments

Fire Marshal **Account 240**
No discussion/comments

Animal Control **Account 250**

Mark Harper answered some questions regarding the licensing of unregistered dogs in town. State Statute 22-349-1 now allows Animal Control Officers to conduct door to door search procedures for unregistered dogs. The fine for an unlicensed dog is \$76.00.

Communication Center **Account 260**

The issue was raised regarding the hiring of a new Communications Center Director and Mr. Landry stated that he intended to fill this position.

Southwest CT Emer Svcs **Account 263**
No discussion/comments

Emergency Medical Comm Svcs **Account 264**
No discussion/comments

Regional Paramedic **Account 266**
No discussion/comments

Police Services **Account 210**

There was some discussion regarding Chief Troxell's salary which was started at 88,975. and increased to 92,089. based on his experience. Chief Troxell will also have a six month review according to Police Commission Chairman Rick Philips.

The part time employee currently working on projects will terminate 6/30/08 and will be used as a Special Officer and extra duty officer for approximately 10 hours a week.

There was some discussion regarding overtime costs which Chairman Philips attributes to salary increases and anticipated vacation and sick leave coverage. It is more cost effective to have two officers working and incur overtime than three officers covering the same time period at regular pay.

Public Works/Highway **Account 300**

There was discussion regarding the paving and re-paving of roads. Tom Landry stated that the Town's goal is to pave all roads every 20 years. Mr. Landry suggested the 3.4 miles per year should be increased.

Solid Waste Disposal **Account 410**
No discussion/comments

Westport/Weston Health Dist **Account 510**
No discussion/comments

SW Regional Mental Health **Account 515**
No discussion/comments

Weston Water Utility **Account 530**
No discussion/comments

School/Town Water Supply **Account 550**
No discussion/comments

Human Services **Account 600**

Charlene Hillman answered some questions for the Board regarding her position as a part time employee and the necessity for this position to be full time. Union negotiations are still taking place.

Youth Services **Account 700**
No discussion/comments

Commission On Aging **Account 750**
No discussion/comments

Library **Account 810**
No discussion/comments

Parks & Rec **Account 910**
No discussion/comments

Parks & Fields

Account 912

There was some discussion about the decreased contributions for soccer, football etc. Discussion regarding the fields and maintenance was brought up by Mr. Sargent. At the current rate of contributions there may well be a short fall to address this issue. He also suggested a sinking fund-type account for this purpose. Chairman O'Brien requested an accounting/ explanation of Parks & Rec fees possibly at a later regular BOF meeting.

Middle School Pool

Account 913

No discussion/comments

Municipal Debt (Interest)

Account 930

No discussion/comments

Municipal Debt (Principal)

Account 950

No discussion/comments

Town/School Capital Budget

Account 970

Town Administrator Tom Landry included a memorandum prepared for the Board of Selectmen which contains four Capital requests;

Police Cruisers \$42,000.00; Bridge Repair \$25,000.00; Building Repair \$60,000.00; Turf Replacement \$20,000.00. Priority projects have yet to be selected from the Kaestle Boos report.

Two Highway department trucks have been requested, one vehicle for the Director and a new plow truck. Only one vehicle will be needed for the Fire Chief John Pokorny who is now also the Fire Marshal.

The Fire Department requested a new fire truck. Mark Harper who has been active in procuring dry hydrants for Weston told the Board that five new locations are being discussed. Highway Director Joe Lametta and his staff have done all of the work to date and funding has been through the Fire Department. Chairman O'Brien mentioned improving homeowners' insurance rates with better fire protection.

Mr. Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Kopas seconded, meeting adjourned at 11:07 PM

Respectfully submitted
Donna M. Anastasia, Secretary