

**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
**BOARD OF FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 428  
DURHAM, CONNECTICUT 06422-0428

BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

April 14, 2008

MINUTES

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**Members Present:** Fran Korn, Loraine Coe, Elmer Clark, Rosemarie Naples, and Rob DeSimone

**Members Absent:** Jay Berardino

**Others Present:** Board of Selectmen and approximately 35 members of the community and press.

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**1) Call to order:**

The hearing was called to order by Chairman Fran Korn at 8:00 PM. Elmer Clark let the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Fran Korn introduced the members of the Board of Finance who were in attendance.

**2) Budget Public Hearing:**

Fran Korn started the hearing with a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation outlined the financial position of the town in relation to its fund balance. It also detailed the proposed budget for fiscal year 2008-2009.

Elected Officials: Fran Korn explained the process that was followed which led to the recommendations for elected officials' salaries. The process began in 2006 with a salary survey done by Randi Frank and was since then given extensive review by the Compensation Review Board. The salaries included in the budget proposal are the recommendations made by the Compensation Review Board. He noted that the town has already implemented the salary survey recommendations for the non-union/non-elected employees in the current year.

The Board of Finance has asked for studies to be done on all culverts in town and on the public works department in general. These studies account for the increase in the budget for the Office of the First Selectman. He explained that the board wants to be sure that we are moving in the right direction with the public works department, that the study is in no way a reflection on how the department is being managed.

Professional Services: Fran Korn noted that the Assessor's budget reflects an increase in printing costs for the grand list. The Building & Health and Finance Department salary budgets are based on the salary survey.

Harry Hall asked if the proposed budget in Planning & Zoning Legal will be sufficient based on current issues. Mr. Korn replied that Geoff Colgrove feels that the budget will be enough at this point.

Town Commissions: Mr. Korn noted that the Inland Wetland budget includes the addition of \$1,500 for the services of a soil scientist. The Economic Development budget includes some hours for consulting services through CREC. The Planning & Zoning budget increase is for consulting services through Midstate.

General Expenses: Mr. Korn explained that the Elections budget includes an increase in the hourly rate of pay for poll workers and additional hours for the registrars due to additional duties that have been placed on them. Tree removal costs have been returned to the Tree Warden budget this year. He noted that additional tree removal expenses may also be going to town meeting in order to complete the bulk of the project without adding additional costs the budget.

Harry Hall asked if the tree removal was being done by outside contractors or public works. Kurt Bober explained that public works handles small issues, but that a contractor has been hired for tree removal.

Public Works: Mr. Korn explained that over the last couple of years the Board of Finance has changed the format of the public works budget to better enumerate the line items. This year tire expenses were moved from the public works general budget into vehicle maintenance. The increase in chip sealing is due to increases in the costs of materials and fuel. The Board chose to defer the purchase of a new truck until the public works study is completed. He noted that road sweeping is put out to bid and the budget reflects that cost.

Public Safety: Mr. Korn noted that the fire department budgets have increased mainly due to additional turn out gear, AC sensors, heating and fuel costs. The communications budget includes contracted services to relieve Scott Wright of some of the maintenance issues. It also includes warranties for the pagers. The fire marshal budget includes the purchase of a file cabinet and propane meters. He explained that the expenses for the resident state trooper budget #4055 are offset by revenues totaling \$108,800. He also noted that the cost of the resident state trooper contract is Durham's share, which is 70%. The public safety budget includes additional training and a house numbering program.

Health & Welfare: Mr. Korn stated that there are no notable changes.

Library: Mr. Korn explained that the library requested increases in staffing hours and that a portion of the request was approved. He quoted some statistics to back up this request. He noted an error in the amounts listed on the budget for the library which incorrectly reflect a 211% increase in line #5003. The amounts will be corrected for the annual budget meeting.

Maryann Boord asked if there are any public works road projects in the budget. Mr. Korn explained that \$50,000 has been placed in reserve, but that there is no specific list of projects at this time. Kurt Bober noted that he provided the list to the Selectmen.

Harry Hall asked if the cost of hooking up the firehouse to the water system will be covered by a grant. Laura Francis stated that it is the intent to have the project totally funded by the STEAP grant.

Recreation: Mr. Korn noted that the only additions to recreation are summer movies and a new sign at Allyn Brook Park.

Contingency: Mr. Korn noted that contingency has been kept at \$200,000. The Board was concerned that this year budgets are so tight that we might need contingency to cover any difficulties that arise.

Reserve Fund: Mr. Korn listed the recommendations for reserve fund appropriations totaling \$405,000, noting that \$140,000 of interest will be reallocated.

Debt Service: Mr. Korn stated that the Board is proud to say the Town is debt free, not including Durham's portion of school debt.

Environmental Services: Mr. Korn noted that although tipping fees are increasing for DMIAAB, recycling revenues are expected to offset that anticipated increase.

Revenues: Mr. Korn explained that revenues that have not been budgeted in past years, such as Tax Collection Interest, have been included in the proposal. He noted that an appropriation from fund balance to offset the elderly tax freeze is also included.

Mr. Korn then asked for questions and/or comments from the audience.

Laura Francis thanked the Board of Finance, the Selectmen, the Finance Director, and the Chairmen of our boards and commission for sharpening their pencils and providing the town with good down-to-earth budgets.

Ms. Francis also thanked the Board of Finance for giving the Selectmen the resources to study public works and reiterated Mr. Korn's comments that this was being done not because there is anything wrong, but because the department deserves our attention. The study is in no way a reflection on their performance.

Mr. Korn ended the evening by thanking the Board of Selectmen for making the Board of Finance's job easier and harder. It was harder to wait for the Selectmen to provide the numbers, but easier for them to work on strategic issues since the Selectmen did such a thorough job putting together the budget proposal.

Mr. Korn thanked everyone for their attendance this evening.

**3) Adjourn:**

The hearing was adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryjane Malavasi