

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

BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING

April 15, 2008

MINUTES

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

**Others Present:** Laura Francis, Martin French, Kim Garvis, Maryjane Malavasi, Donya Viola, Charles Corley (*Town Times*)

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**1) Call to order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fran Korn at 7:30 PM.

**2) Fire Marshal Cell Phones:** This item was tabled until the next meeting since Bill Witecki was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

**3) Durham Center Water Improvement Project Update:**

Laura Francis reported on a meeting held today with all of the parties involved with the water project. We are over budget on the project approximately \$36,000 and we need to pay the final application so that we can close out both grants for the project. She noted that of the \$36,000 we are looking to recoup about \$16,000 due to deficiencies in the size of the pipe for the fair. Weston & Sampson is willing to share the responsibility for this deficiency with the Town and the water company.

There was discussion related to how grants will be better tracked in the future so that we are better aware of issues that might arise.

MOTION MADE BY NAPLES, SECONDED BY DESIMONE, TO REQUEST THE  
SELECTMEN CALL A TOWN MEETING TO TRANSFER \$36,000 FROM  
UNDESIGNATED FUND BALANCE TO #7532 DURHAM CENTER WATER  
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

Jay Berardino expressed concerns with the fact that it appears there was no detailed budget for this project and no oversight, and questioned when we knew about this overage.

Ms. Francis explained that it appears that soft costs were not included in the original budget, but that our grant administrator oversees our compliance with the grants. By tracking these projects through MUNIS, we will have a better process for administrating them in the future.

Fran Korn noted that Jim McLaughlin came in more than once to inform the board that the project might go over budget, but that final numbers were not available.

Jay Berardino was concerned that Weston & Sampson made a mistake on the size of the pipe but won't cover the expense. Loraine Coe stated that she felt Weston & Sampson should cover the entire cost of the pipe error.

VOTE ON MOTION: KORN, NAPLES, COE, BERARDINO & DESIMONE-AYE; CLARK-ABSTAIN. MOTION CARRIED.

#### **4) Maple Avenue and Tri-Mountain Road Projects:**

The Board reviewed the budgets prepared by public works detailing costs associated with the two projects. After review, it was the consensus of the board to have public works move forward with the projects in-house.

#### **5) Senior Tax Relief Programs:**

Fran Korn referred to a listing of interest rates charged by other towns for their deferral programs. He stated that he was not in favor of making the interest rate zero. Jay Berardino suggested inviting the Treasurer to the next meeting to provide current interest rates on our investments. Rosemarie Naples noted that 5% appears to be the average of the rates on the list of other towns. Maryjane Malavasi and Martin French noted that some people may be waiting for the interest rate before making a decision on whether or not to join the program and that they only have until May 15 to apply.

MOTION MADE BY CLARK TO SET THE INTEREST RATE FOR THE SENIOR TAX DEFERRAL PROGRAM AT 6%. NO SECOND – MOTION FAILED.

MOTION MADE BY NAPLES, SECONDED BY BERARDINO, TO SET THE INTEREST RATE FOR THE SENIOR TAX DEFERRAL PROGRAM AT 5%. UNANIMOUS AYE.

It was noted that this interest rate will only be in effect until January, when the Board of Finance will set the rate for the following year.

#### **6) 2007-2008 Elected Official Salaries:**

Fran Korn recommended tabling this item until after the May budget vote.

Donya Viola stated that the increases in elected officials' salaries for the 2009 are exorbitant, and now that the question of retro is on the table she cannot support it. She stated that there is nothing to substantiate the increases.

Fran Korn stated that the process set in place in 2006, with the request for a salary survey, is an attempt to pay competitive wages. We now have the tool to guide us through wage information. The survey provides a systematic way to determine wages.

Kim Garvis stated that as Assistant Town Clerk she had surpassed the Town Clerk's salary, and that should not happen. If we don't adjust the structure, it will happen again. All employees should be treated equally. Randi Frank's survey valued all the jobs and set a system in place where subordinates will not make more than their supervisors. She noted that the increases are so apparent now because it's been on the back burner for so long. This is a one-time hit.

Laura Francis asked to put the correct question on the table: What was the intention of the Board of Finance for putting off the decision of elected officials pay grades until after the December election? Was the intent to implement the salary adjustments at the start of the new term, December 3, or at the start of the new fiscal year, July 1?

This item was tabled until the next regular meeting.

## **7) Additional Appropriations:**

a) 1020 Office of the Tax Collector:

MOTION MADE BY BERARDINO, SECONDED BY CLARK, TO TRANSFER \$3,000 FROM #6020 CONTINGENCY TO #1020 OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR.

Maryjane Malavasi explained that this request is for funds to purchase stamped envelopes now for the July 1 bills. It places the expense in the fiscal year that it is incurred, and eliminates the need to utilize the Tax Collector Account. She noted that moving forward; the budget will properly reflect each year's purchase.

VOTE ON MOTION: UNANIMOUS AYE.

b) 2500 Elections:

Maryjane Malavasi reported that the Registrars of Voters are preparing for the upcoming BOE referendum, but that there is not enough funds left in their budget. Due to increased duties and compliance with 3 State audits, they have spent the majority of their current year appropriation. Ms. Malavasi stated that they estimate needing an additional \$6,800 to carry them through the end of the fiscal year. She recommended allowing the budget to go over until final transfers are done at year end. The Board agreed.

## **8) 2008-2009 Budget:**

Rosemarie Naples stated that she felt the hearing went well and that the Board should leave the budget as is.

Laura Francis stated that she has received a lot of good feedback about the hearing, and that it was great to have a lot of chairmen there just in case there were questions. She felt that the chairmen must feel that their budgets are workable since none of them expressed any concern.

Lorraine Coe felt the PowerPoint was a great addition. Ms. Francis said that it would be put on our website.

MOTION MADE BY BERARDINO, SECONDED BY NAPLES, TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TAKE TO THE ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET MEETING A TOTAL TOWN BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,336,939, LESS STATE AND LOCAL ESTIMATED REVENUE OF \$1,676,979, FOR A NET TOWN BUDGET OF \$3,659,960. KORN, COE, DESIMONE, BERARDINO AND NAPLES – AYE; CLARK-NAY. MOTION CARRIED.

**9) Minutes:**

MOTION MADE BY CLARK, SECONDED BY BERARDINO, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 4, MARCH 18, MARCH 22, MARCH 25, MARCH 29 AND APRIL 1, 2008. UNANIMOUS AYE.

**10) Other:**

Lorraine Coe asked if she should print and mail copies of the proposed budget to town residents. Jay Berardino suggested printing it in the *Town Times* instead, but Ms. Coe stated that would be more expensive. It was the consensus of the board to copy and mail the budget to residents.

Donya Viola asked about the 211% increase in one of the Library budgets for 2009. Fran Korn explained that there was an error in the current year amount, which incorrectly showed that percentage. It is being corrected before the copies are made for the budget meeting.

Donya Viola's also asked about other budget lines, including heating oil.

**11) Adjourn:**

MOTION MADE BY NAPLES, SECONDED BY BERARDINO, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:06 PM. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryjane Malavasi