

BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING

May 20, 2008

MINUTES

Members Present: Fran Korn, Loraine Coe, Elmer Clark, Rosemarie Naples, Rob DeSimone and Jay Berardino (arr. 7:45)

Others Present: Laura Francis, Maryjane Malavasi, Laney Melvin, Bill Witecki, Dave Steele, Henry Coe, Charles Corley (*Town Times*)

1) Call to order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fran Korn at 7:30 PM in the 2nd floor conference room of Town Hall.

2) Fire Marshal Cell Phones:

Bill Witecki, Fire Marshal, requested a phone allowance for himself and David Steele. He stated that they do not hold regular office hours and have been using their personal cell phones. He requested the town share in the cost of their personal phones to eliminate the need to have another phone to carry. He suggested the town cover one-half of their bills.

Loraine Coe asked who was using the cell phone assigned to the Fire Marshal's Office. Mr. Witecki replied that Bob Morpurgo has retained that phone for use as Fire Inspector. Ms. Coe recommended that phone be allocated to the Fire Marshal. Mr. Witecki stated that all three positions needed cell phones to stay in communication.

Elmer Clark asked if additional funding was requested through the budget process. Mr. Witecki replied no.

Laura Francis reported that she is meeting with Verizon on Thursday to discuss a new plan for all town cell phones.

Fran Korn stated that he does not support supplementing personal cell phones since the town has no control over the contract. He said that the Board would try to do something for them, but tabled the decision until the next meeting to allow Ms. Francis to report back from her meeting.

3) Purchase of Property:

Laura Francis reported that the Selectmen voted to request \$395,000 plus closing costs for the purchase of property intended for use as a Community/Senior Center. She requested \$310,000 be transferred from Reserve and \$88,000 from Undesignated Fund Balance to a new fund #45 Community/Senior Center Project. She noted that the Selectmen are looking to purchase the property now, but that there are no immediate plans to build.

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| RECEIVED: 5-23-08 | TIME: 2:21 PM |
| Kim Garvis, Town Clerk | |
| OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK, DURHAM, CONNECTICUT | |

Elmer Clark asked how many acres the property has and if it had been appraised. Ms. Francis replied that the property consisted of 7 acres and had been appraised. He then asked what would happen if we don't build the center. Ms. Francis replied that the town would still own the property.

Rosemarie Naples asked how combining a community center with a senior center might affect grant opportunities. Ms. Francis responded that we would need to keep separate records, and that we have experience with this from the Town Hall Restoration project.

MOTION MADE BY ROSEMARIE NAPLES, SECONDED BY LORAIN COE, TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN CALL A TOWN MEETING TO APPROVE A TRANSFER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$310,000 FROM #9300 COMMUNITY/SENIOR CENTER RESERVE FUND AND \$88,000 FROM UNDESIGNATED FUND BALANCE TO FUND #45 COMMUNITY/SENIOR CENTER PROJECT FOR THE PURCHASE OF LAND AND ASSOCIATED CLOSING COSTS.

Jay Berardino stated that the goal should be clearly defined and achievable; without building plans and associated costs for the total project, it is difficult to make a decision on whether or not to purchase the property.

He asked if a Phase I Environmental Study had been done on the property, adding that it is necessary if we will be asking for the State to assist in the purchase of the property through grant funds. Ms. Francis thanked him for the suggestion and assured the board that she would have the study done. It was also noted that the Building Inspector and Town Engineer have approved the property for this use.

Ms. Francis stated that the town needs to purchase the property before plans can be drawn. She plans to present bonding options at the public hearing so that the townspeople can have an idea of what the total project might cost. Ms. Naples was concerned that options would be presented before we knew what the cost would be. Mr. Korn felt it was premature to talk about funding before the project is ready and before the Board of Finance had an opportunity to see what was being presented. Ms. Francis understood the concerns and agreed that the presentation should not include bonding.

VOTE ON MOTION: UNANIMOUS AYE.

4) 2007-2008 Elected Officials Salaries:

Laura Francis recommended that the increase to elected officials salaries should begin on July 1, 2008.

Elmer Clark suggested rejecting the original proposal from the Selectmen based on Ms. Francis' recommendation. Maryjane Malavasi clarified that the recommendation has come from the Compensation Review Board, not the Selectmen.

MOTION MADE BY LORAIN COE, SECONDED BY ROSEMARIE NAPLES, THAT THERE WILL BE NO RETROACTIVE PAY FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR THE 2007-2008 FISCAL YEAR; SALARY INCREASES WILL BEGIN ON JULY 1, 2008 AS VOTED ON AT THE ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

5) Minutes:

MOTION MADE BY ROSEMARIE NAPLES, SECONDED BY LORAIN COE, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 14, 2008 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY ELMER CLARK, SECONDED BY ROB DESIMONE, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2008 REGULAR MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY LORAIN COE, SECONDED BY ELMER CLARK, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 2008 SPECIAL MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

6) Invoices:

MOTION MADE BY ROSEMARIE NAPLES, SECONDED BY ROB DESIMONE, TO APPROVE AN INVOICE FROM THE POSTMASTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$553.13 FOR POSTAGE TO MAIL THE PROPOSED BUDGET TO RESIDENTS. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY ROSEMARIE NAPLES, SECONDED BY LORAIN COE, TO APPROVE AN INVOICE FROM SPEED PRINT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$638.88 FOR THE PRINTING OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY ROSEMARIE NAPLES, SECONDED BY LORAIN COE, TO APPROVE AN INVOICE FROM THE HARTFORD COURANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$47.52 FOR THE LEGAL NOTICE FOR THE AUDIT RFP. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY LORAIN COE, SECONDED BY ROB DESIMONE, TO AUTHORIZE UP TO \$500 BE SPENT FROM THE BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET #1000 FOR THE 1009M VERIFICATION PROJECT. UNANIMOUS AYE.

7) Tax Collector Suspense List:

Maryjane Malavasi stated that the Tax Collector has requested that the Suspense List be approved tonight so that it can be completed in this fiscal year. If the Board has reason to remove someone from the list, a motion to approve as amended would be in order.

MOTION MADE BY ELMER CLARK, SECONDED BY JAY BERARDINO, TO APPROVE THE TAX COLLECTOR SUSPENSE LIST, AS AMENDED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$11,320.83. UNANIMOUS AYE.

8) Board Secretarial Services:

Maryjane Malavasi suggested that the position be changed to Recording Secretary and paid the same rate as other similar positions. She reported that one of the previous candidates has contacted her to express interest in the position. The Board was interested in speaking with the candidate. Ms. Malavasi will ask her to attend the next meeting.

9) Additional Appropriations:

- a) Maryjane Malavasi reported on major repairs necessary to two fire apparatus. She recommended that authorization be given to pay the bills and to make an appropriation at year end if additional funding is needed. Approval was given.
- b) Maryjane Malavasi reported that the town has closed down an illegal rental property and in doing so has displaced the occupant. According to CT General Statutes, the town is required to provide that occupant with assistance. Jan Muraca is working with the occupant to find replacement housing. The Town has provided \$525 of assistance to date. Ms. Malavasi asked that she be given authorization to provide assistance up to the limits of the statute, and to have the board appropriate the funding when a final figure is determined. She confirmed that the town will be seeking restitution from the landlord, most likely through a lien on the property. The board granted approval for the assistance.

10) Finance Directors Report:

- a) Maryjane Malavasi reported that the Town has received two STEAP grants. One for \$56,000 for the extension of tie-ins from the new water distribution system along route 17 from Fowler Avenue south to Higganum Road; and one for \$13,200 for a Ground Water Under Direct Influence Study of the Durham Center Water System as required by the Department of Public Health.
- b) Maryjane Malavasi reported that the Board of Selectmen has agreed to sponsor a Farmers' Market on the town green. She will be setting up revenue and expense lines in the budget to track the funds. Revenue will be from vendor fees, and there will be small expenses related to advertising and signage. The board was concerned about insurance. When Ms. Francis returned to the meeting, she informed them that each vendor is required to produce insurance to the town based on our carrier's requirements.
- c) Maryjane Malavasi reported that 4 proposals for auditing services were received. Loraine Coe volunteered to be on the review committee.
- d) Fran Korn asked for an update on the hybrid vehicle purchase. Ms. Malavasi reported that the town has applied for grant funds and that the State contract for hybrid vehicle purchases is expected to be available in October.
- e) Fran Korn suggested that the board discuss energy conservation programs and alternate energy sources at the next meeting.

11) Additional Appropriations, continued:

- a) Laura Francis explained that additional sweeping services were necessary for winter sand pickup. She noted that a request for additional sweeping money in the chip seal budget was not funded, but was necessary.

Fran Korn noted that the board had approved money for a new sweeper, but the board was not informed that it was not going to be purchased until the request for contracted sweeping was made last year.

Ms. Francis explained where she was in the process of seeking consulting services for public works. She noted that two consultants might be necessary; one to review management and personnel issues and a second to review equipment and projects. She is also working on a return-to-work program that would allow employees that cannot perform all duties as detailed in their job description to return to work on light duty.

The board chose not honor the request for additional funding for sweeping. The additional expense will need to be covered by the bottom line of the Public Works budget.

- b) Laura Francis requested additional funding in the Seasonal Help line for projects through the rest of the fiscal year. She noted that additional seasonal help was used during the winter months which did leave enough funding for the spring. The board expressed deep concern over the management of this line.

MOTION MADE BY FRAN KORN, SECONDED BY LORAIN COE, TO TRANSFER \$1,000 FROM 3500-524 MAPLE AVENUE PROJECT, \$1,000 FROM 3500-527 TRI-MOUNTAIN ROAD PROJECT, AND \$6,440 FROM 6020 CONTINGENCY TO 3007 SEASONAL LABOR. VOTE: NAPLES, COE AND KORN-AYE; BERARDINO, CLARK AND DESIMONE-NAY. MOTION FAILED.

12) Other:

Laura Francis reported the \$24,000 change order due to a problem with pipe design will be split between the town, the engineering firm and the water company. A total of \$16,000 will be received to offset the overage from the Durham Center Water Improvement Project.

13) Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryjane Malavasi