



## THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

A Board of Finance Meeting for the Town of Woodbridge was held a Webex Meeting in Woodbridge, Connecticut on Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 6:00 pm

**BOF PRESENT:** Chairman, Matthew Giglietti; Susan Jacobs Tom Handler; Ellen Scalettar

**ALSO PRESENT:** First Selectman, Beth Heller; Attorney Gerald Weiner; Administrative Officer/Director of Finance, Anthony Genovese; Budget Analyst/Payroll & Benefits Administrator, Karen Crosby

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments Received

Since two members are not in attendance, the election of Chair and Vice Chair as well as the liaison appointments will take place at the October meeting.

### BUDGET TASK FORCE OPINION – TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney, Gerald Weiner, reported that the Town Charter provides almost exclusive jurisdiction over the budget to the Board of Finance. The Board of Selectmen sole role is to review the requests of the departments and provide the Board of Finance with their opinion of what the budget should be. The Board of Finance is responsible for the budget hearing, responsible for hearing comments of the hearing and adjust the budget as warranted. The Board of Finance sets the mill rate. Exclusive jurisdiction over the budget making process belongs to the Board of Finance. There is nothing in the Charter that prohibits meeting with the Board of Selectmen during the budget process. In discussions with other town attorneys it is the Board of Finance responsibility for the budget process and budget adoption as opposed to any other board or commission. Jerry stated that his is his interpretation of the Charter.

Ellen thanked Jerry for his guidance. Beth stated that the three members of the Board of Selectmen that are on the budget task force presented their recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen passed them on to the Board of Finance for further discussion. The Board of Selectmen did not adopt the recommendations

Attorney Weiner left the meeting after his report.

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**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER / DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT**

Tony reported a surplus of just over \$100,000 at the end of June 2020. This give the Town an unaudited unassigned fund balance of \$6,451,298 and represents 13% of the FY2020 expenditures.

**Revenues**

Taxes – primarily due to a drop in collections, including back taxes, taxes experienced a deficit of \$232,759. Tony reported that we have seen this collections come back over the summer.

Charge for Services – experienced a deficit of \$119,197. The deficit is primarily due to a shortfall in Recreation Fees of \$100,947 due to cancelled programs and transfer station fees of \$63,410. Deficits are offset by surpluses in building permits and conveyance fees.

Investment Income – due to a sharp decline in rates in March, investment income has a shortfall of \$70,879.

Intergovernmental Revenue – State grants experienced a surplus of \$138,895. This is primarily due to an additional \$100,397 in ECS grant revenue.

**Expenses**

Board of Selectmen – generated a surplus of \$18,768 primarily due to a vacant position.

Registrar of Voters – due to a delay in the primary to August 11<sup>th</sup>, the registrar of voters generated a surplus of \$25,907.

Board of Finance – experiences a surplus of \$88,417 due to funds remaining in Contingency.

Police – generated a surplus of \$44,742 due to vacant police officer positions.

Building Official – generated a surplus of \$34,092 due to the hiring of a part time building official.

Public Works – experienced a surplus of \$58,347 primarily due to vacant mechanic positions and a savings in overtime and material due to a light winter.

Human Services – experienced a surplus of \$63,714 due to a vacant senior center director position and the elimination of some part time staff.

Recreation – primarily due to the cancellation of spring programs, recreation experienced a surplus of \$108,183 mostly in part time wages. There is also corresponding revenue loss.

Library – due to the closing of the library, the department generated a surplus of \$80,113 mostly in part time wages.

Benefits – generated a surplus of \$30,266 due to a reduced workers compensation premium, healthcare savings due to vacant positions, and savings in FICA and Medicare from vacant positions and reduced part time labor. This surplus was reduced from previous months due to an increase in unemployment claims.

Woodbridge Board of Education – returned \$107,000

Tony stated that we did not budget funds for Corona Virus relief. We could be getting some funds from the Corona Virus.

**Audit Update**

The audit will start on September 28th and it will be virtual. Tony will need to upload everything for the auditors to review.

**FUNDING RQUESTS**

2020-04 Allocation.....\$5,500 (Line Item Transfer)

To: GATVOC/Technical 1135-00/55120  
From: Revenue/Misc. Grants 1-2-1100/42600  
For: Transfer grant funds to budget  
Vote: Giglietti/Handler (unanimous)

Tom Handler was not able to attend the last Board of Education meeting.

**UPDATE ON POSSIBLE BOND ISSUE**

Tony stated that this is an FYI. The Board of Selectmen has been discussing the old firehouse and have settled on some uses for the building. Bays 1 and 2 for public use and bay 3 may be used for a fitness center. We would have to issue bonds for that project and the cost would be \$1.8M. There are two other projects that we are looking at. A roof at Beecher Road School and the Senior Center has been requesting some improvements to their space. So they are thinking about some renovations to the center. Rates are historically low. Matt stated that we should look at anything that may need to be bonded to take a look at them now.

Ellen asked if there has been any discussion about the Police Department. That project has been waiting in the wings. Tony stated that project hasn't been discussed and there is more work for the building including window replacement.

Tony will keep the board posted on this. Tony left the meeting at 6:22 pm

The Board of Finance voted (Giglietti/Jacobs) to postpone the election of chair and vice chair until the October meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Board of Finance voted (Giglietti/Scalettar) unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2020 meeting as presented.

The Board of Finance voted (Giglietti/Scalettar) unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2020 special meeting as presented.

### **FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT**

Beth reported on the following:

Board of Selectmen agreed to sign a long term lease with the Amity-Woodbridge Historical Society. The Town owns all the buildings and the Historical Society owns all of the collections. The Historical Society is completing all the code compliant items in order to rent the care taker's apartment. The Society decided to remove the deconstructed pieces of the Little Lucy one room school house from the Darling House. This must be done in order to provide access so that the planned structural assessment can be achieved.

Beth stated that many residents are anxious about the upcoming election. You may vote in person but the secretary of state will be mailing out applications for absentee ballots to all registered voters in the state. The applications will have barcodes on them in order to keep track of them. The Town Clerk's Office will be preparing the ballots. An Official State Ballot Box will be at Town Hall so applications and ballots can be deposited in the box. Transportation may be arranged through the senior center to deposit applications and ballots in the official ballot box.

Susan stated that the box does not say that applications may be left here, it only says ballots. She suggested that maybe a sticker can be put on the box stating that applications and ballots can be deposited.

Two flu shot clinics have been organized by Human Services. One will be a drive-thru and the other will be under the canopy at the library.

Two Eagle Scout projects were approved.

Board of Selectmen voted that the old fire house be exclusively used as public use. We have engaged David Stein from Silver Petrucelli to help us along with this project.

The Town plans to move forward with the Amity Transition Program to come in and use the upper level of the old fire house. This may be as soon as next September.

Beth reminded everyone out of respect for each other and to keep each other safe, please continue to wear masks and practice safe, social distancing. When we work together there is nothing that Woodbridge can't do.

Matt stated that the Designation of Liaisons should wait until the October meeting.

**LIAISON REPORTS**

Amity – Matt reported that he attended the Amity meeting on Monday and it was a rather testy meeting. Amity can request to hold 1% of prior year budget and put it into a Capital account for capital projects instead of go to bonding. They decided to do this for \$495,482. They do not have to go to the Towns for a vote on this. The project is for a roof replacement restoration is anticipated in FY22 when the 10 year warranty expires. The warranty is 10 years but the roof could last much longer. Matt asked if they were going to have a roofer take a look to see the condition of the roof. This failed 3-2 on the Finance Committee. Then they wanted to increase the health reserve from 25% to 30%. July and August showed a surplus in that account of \$400,000. Matt reminded them that this is taxpayer money. Matt stated that board members need to be advocates for the taxpayer.

Fire – Susan reported that the meeting was cancelled.

Library – Susan reported that the library is doing everything they can to have items available to residents. They have curbside pick-up. No one can go into the library to browse. They are watching the budget very carefully.

Police – Paul was not in attendance

Human Services – Tom Kenefick was not in attendance

Beth stated that there is a Safety Committee and they are working toward a soft opening. At first they were looking a January 2<sup>nd</sup>. They are now looking at how to allow access to departments. She stated that the Town employees are doing a great job in the planning.

Matt stated that to have a 13% Fund Balance at this time is a good thing. He hopes he is wrong, but he is sure there will be something that will come up that we will need additional funds.

WBOE – Tom Handler reported that there were a number of meetings around the opening of school. He didn't get to the Finance Committee meeting. Matt stated that the interim superintendent will be at Beecher until January. Matt stated that it will be tough to get a replacement as there are a lot of openings in the state.

Recreation – Ellen was unable to attend.

The Board of Finance voted (Giglietti/Jacobs) unanimously to adjourn at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen Crosby*

Karen Crosby  
Budget Analyst / Payroll & Benefits Administrator