

TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Steve Krasinski, at 7:12pm. Members present were George Warner, Michael Parker, Tom Mazzoli, Marilyn Provonost and Steve Krasinski. Also present were Board of Education representative Tim Potrikus, School Business Manager Bill Boutwell, Selectman David Pinney and Finance Director Greg Simmons.

II. BOARD OF SELECTMEN UPDATE

Selectman Pinney said that the Sunset Drive water main project was put out for funding at a Town meeting with assurance from the State that there would be money to reimburse the Town. The State had approved \$241,000, but the request for this money is not on the agenda for the State Bond Committee meeting. John Kissell and Penny Bacchiacci are trying to get this on the agenda. However, if the funds are not approved for bonding the project will stop. The DEP will continue to pay for the filtration systems that are in place in the meantime. The Town does have the funds for the engineering work, which is nearly completed. The Town funded the engineering work contingent on receiving an approval of the State Bond Commission funds. There will be no federal monies from the Clean Water Act for this project.

There are some bids in for the Kibbe Fuller boiler. There may be energy efficiency grant funds available for the project.

The Trappe property conservation easement has been finalized.

Selectman Pinney said that there are concerns about the old ambulance, which is eleven years old. Replacement with a demo model would cost about \$145,000, a regular model would cost between \$180,000 to \$190,000. The new ambulance is in the last year of five-year lease payments. Selectman Pinney suggested that another ambulance could be funded by using what is currently being spent for the lease payment and with monies from the Ambulance Fund. The old ambulance would be sold.

The BOF pointed out that Somers' population has not increased significantly and the Town had managed with only one ambulance in the past. The Town used to keep their ambulances for 20-22 years. The BOF asked Selectman Pinney to get an estimate on the cost to bring the old ambulance up to tip-top shape.

A discussion ensued regarding the necessity of a second ambulance and other possible options, including backup from other Towns or from A.S.M.

Selectman Pinney asked if the BOF wanted the Ambulance Department and the Fire Chief to defend this as a necessary course of action. The BOF said they would like this but first the BOS should review the request and make a decision on it.

III. BOARD OF EDUCATION UP DATE

Mr. Boutwell informed the BOF that the BOE will be submitting a claim for about \$500,000 in excess student costs to the State. The BOE has been notified that the State will be covering 70% of these costs,

so the Town will need to fund the remaining 30% or roughly \$150,000. Next year the funding is expected to drop to 60%.

It was pointed out that last month the BOE informed the BOF of a \$50,000 potential problem and this additional problem will add up to a \$200,000 shortfall.

The BOF asked regarding the Slader's air quality issue. Mr. Boutwell said that the project is not done because they are still waiting for the final specs. The BOF suggested that the room be closed down because of safety hazard concerns.

For Capital Planning for the next two years the BOE will be needing new computers and carpet tile replacements which will cost \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year over the next five years. The BOE did not get funded for computers this year and would like to get back into the replacement cycle for them and ancillary technology equipment and mobile labs.

The BOE is looking for guidance from the BOF on roof replacements for two of the Elementary Schools and the High School. The High School work has been estimated at between \$590,000 to \$1,500,000 and will be due in the next 4 to 5 years. The work will be eligible for State reimbursement at 50-60% when the roofs are 20 years old.

IV. MINUTES APPROVAL – September 28, 2009 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Parker; seconded by Mr. Mazzoli and unanimously voted to accept the minutes of the September 28, 2009 regular meeting as written.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was sent to the BOF from Tom Manning regarding changing the times of the BOF meetings so they do not conflict with the BOE meetings. The BOF members took a minute to read the letter.

It was pointed out that the meetings have already been set for this calendar year but it was agreed that after December the meeting could be readjusted. It was agreed to table the issue until the next calendar is set.

Renata Bower addressed the BOF to say that it would be nice not to have to choose which meeting to attend, BOF or BOE. She also pointed out that this would allow for the Boards to share information at their meetings.

The audit report was presented to the Board of Finance this morning with an unqualified "clean" opinion and contained no material weaknesses or questioned costs. Materials are available for the members of the board unable to attend this morning's meeting.

VI. BILLS, TRANSFERS AND APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. Simmons notified the BOF that the \$18,000 transfer for the replacement screener has not been approved by the BOS, however he suggested that the BOF could approve it contingent upon the approval of the BOS at their next meeting.

The necessity of the screener at this time was questioned. Selectman Pinney explained that there is a used machine available now that has been \$40,000 and was negotiated down to \$18,000. His concern is that someone else will buy it if the Town does not act quickly.

Mr. Parker stated that the Town does not build highways from scratch so he thought the machine's application to highway maintenance would be negligible. Mr. Pinney expressed his frustration at the BOF's inclination to micro-manage and offered that he could have Mikulski explain the need for the screener to the BOF.

Mr. Parker explained that the volunteer members of the BOF rely on the Town's government officials to tell them the facts and the truth. Mr. Krasinski added that road maintenance is expected to include asphaltting the road and putting chip seal on the road. He added that it appears that the money for screener seems that it will be taken from these necessary highway operations. He added that he heard from another Selectman that there was not enough money to do chip sealing.

Selectman Pinney explained that the Highway Department also rebuilds catch basins, repairs the roadsides after flooding and repairs catch basins. All of these activities would be aided by having a screener available.

The BOF asked how much time there was to make the decision. Selectman Pinney said tonight unless the BOF is willing to have a special meeting in one week.

A motion was made by Mr. Warner; seconded by Mr. Mazzoli and unanimously voted to approve the following transfer:

<i>Dept.</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Amount</i>
		10/26/2009 #7	
Library	Building Maintenance	Water/Sewer	\$2,450.00

A motion was made by Mr. Parker; seconded by Mr. Mazzoli to approve a transfer of \$18,000 from Road Maintenance to capital Equipment to purchase a replacement screener.

Voting for: Marilyn Provonost Opposed: Mike Parker, George Warner, Steve Krasinski

Abstaining: Tom Mazzoli

The motion was defeated.

The BOF discussed with Selectman Pinney that the BOS should meet and approve the screener request and then the BOF can schedule a special meeting to hear this request again.

VIII. OTHER - None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Warner; seconded by Mr. Mazzoli and unanimously voted to adjourn the October 26, 2009 meeting of the Board of Finance at 8:11pm.