

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF FINANCE
P.O. BOX 308
SOMERS, CT 06071**

**BOARD OF FINANCE MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 22, 2010
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM – 7:00 pm**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

George Warner called the regular meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 7:05 pm. Members: Thomas Mazzoli, Michael Parker, and Marilyn Pronovost were present and constituted a quorum. Also present First Selectman, Lisa Pellegrini and Town CFO, Kim Marcotte. Bill Boutwell, Tim Potrikus, and John Taylor from the Board of Education were also in attendance.

II. BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATE:

Mr. Warner asked Mr. Boutwell and Mr. Potrikus if they had an update for the BOF. Mr. Potrikus distributed copies of the BOE's Long Range Plan and an attached narrative from Dr. Suffredini, Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Potrikus took members through the Executive Summary, pointing out the following key items:

- The BOE Budget is expected to remain relatively stable, with additional staff considerations in 2013/2014 for a proposed full-day kindergarten.
- Anticipated general expense increases of approximately 3%, and insurance increases of 10%.
- Capital Improvements forecast – assets used in conjunction with district curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Special Projects forecast – repairs and modifications to infrastructure and facilities.

Ms. Pronovost asked if the kindergarten was mandated. Mr. Potrikus responded no, they were considering this for the school district.

Mr. Parker, viewing the Capital Improvement & Special Projects forecasts, said it would be important for the BOE to start budgeting for maintenance items as part of normal operational budgets, rather than waiting until they become Capital Improvement or Special Projects. Mr. Potrikus agreed.

Mr. Warner asked how the \$206,600 cost of full-day kindergarten would be broken out. Mr. Potrikus responded, most of the cost is staffing and chairs. He added that a portion of the cost to run the all-day kindergarten might come through attrition.

Ms. Pronovost asked the cost impact with a reduction in population. Mr. Potrikus stated that the BOE's 5 Year Plan was based on current population figures. He informed the BOF that they have a Long Range Planning Team in place, which will be meeting to further review Capital Improvements and Special Projects. His biggest concern, he stated, were school roofs and facility repairs.

III. SELECTMAN UPDATE:

First Selectman, Lisa Pellegrini distributed copies of her memo, dated 11/22/10. Topics included:

- **Brownfield Grant.** Ms. Pellegrini informed members the Town received a \$5,000 Grant from the DECD for the completion of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment at 19 Field Road.

- **Town Hall Computer Systems.** Ms. Pellegrini stated the transfer is on-going and much has been accomplished.
- **Equipment Requests.** Ms. Pellegrini stated her interest in purchasing a six-ton deck over trailer for \$4,000. She stated the need for such a trailer to move pipe, drainage structures, rental equipment, etc. The Town currently either pays to move such large items, rent a trailer, or use the landscape trailer. She pointed out this model would represent a cost savings of \$2,500 and that funds are available for the purchase.

Her second equipment request was for a new field groomer, with a price of \$16,839. She added Grant funding is available, and she would like to apply for funding, which would bring the Town's cost down to \$3,367.80. The Town would need to pay the full price up front, and then submit the invoice for reimbursement. Mr. Parker asked where the funds for the trailer would come from. Ms. Pellegrini responded monies are available from the Highway Fund.

Ms. Pronovost noted that the BOE also listed a field groomer, at a cost of \$20,000. She asked Ms. Pellegrini if this was something the Town and BOE could share. Ms. Pellegrini said she was uncertain about usage in some time periods; it probably would not pose a problem in the summer. She added she will be meeting with the Parks department, and will discuss it with them. Ms. Pronovost asked for specifics about the Grant. Ms. Pellegrini explained that if the Town buys equipment which meets certain air quality standards, the State will reimburse 80%. She pointed out the deadline for the Grant application of 12/10/2010, so she needs to proceed quickly. She finished with a direct request for both purchases.

Mr. Mazzoli said yes, on the trailer, and suggested speaking to the BOE on sharing the field groomer. Mr. Parker felt both funding decisions were within the BOS authority.

- **Projects – roof repair on the State Police Building.** Ms. Pellegrini informed the BOF that they recently had to replace the roof on one side of the State Police building. The total cost was \$4,525.88. Mr. Mazzoli was disappointed in the cost outlay. He asked about any discussions of a proposed Safety Complex, housing both the Fire & Police departments. He questioned the need of a new roof, if this were under consideration. Ms. Pellegrini stated the roof would have required fixing, and a move, if any, would take time. She added that she has discussed the Safety Complex with the new Chief, and he appears open to the issue. The discussions are on-going, as they review the logistics and separate needs of each department, of such a plan.

Ms. Pellegrini added that in a meeting with Chief Scheissl, she was informed of an issue with the Fire department's radio frequencies, and his request to purchase a dedicated frequency for the Town. The Fire department has 2 frequencies, 1 from the DPW and not owned by the Town, 2nd is also used by other fire departments. Ms. Pronovost asked about any blackout problems. Ms. Pellegrini stated the DPW frequency had blackouts, and the shared frequency is spotty. She finished, stating that by purchasing a new frequency, there shouldn't be any blackouts.

- **Phone System.** Ms. Pellegrini stated she is still meeting with.
- **Budget Rumors.** Ms. Pellegrini informed members of Gov. Rell's interim budget which calls for \$500 million in Municipal Aid reductions. She added that she will be meeting with Senator Kissel in December to discuss Town Aid and PILOT funding.

IV. REVENUE/EXPENDITURE 5 YEAR PROJECTION:

Ms. Marcotte distributed draft copies of Revenue/Expenditure 5 Year Plan to members. She pointed out that the BOE expenditures currently represent approximately 68% of the total general fund budget. Debt Service consumes just under 10% of the budget with the transfer to the Capital Improvement Projects Fund being just over 1%. Town expenditures are at 21% of the total general fund budget.

Mr. Parker questioned the impact on Reserves. He added he would like to see, based on these budget assumptions, what the Fund Balance would be. Ms. Marcotte agreed to include the Reserves as a line item. Mr. Warner asked about any Mill Rate increase effect.

Mr. Mazzoli, re-reading the BOE 5 Year Plan, stated that Dr. Suffredini's salaries cost appears high. Mr. Parker added that the BOE needs to know they have a very slim chance of any increase in the BOE budget next year. Mr. Mazzoli said he has already presented that likelihood to them. Mr. Warner asked about Education grants going forward. Ms. Pellegrini stated her belief they would be reduced.

Mr. Parker said this information is a good start for the BOF. He restated his interest in adding Fund Balance and seeing an increased Mill Rate effect.

V. MINUTES APPROVAL (10/25/10):

Mr. Mazzoli asked the members for comments or corrections on 10/25/10 BOF Minutes. None were brought forth.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker to approve the 10/25/10 Minutes as written; seconded by Mr. Warner, and then unanimously voted as approved by the members.

VI. BILLS, TRANSFERS and APPROPRIATIONS:

Ms. Marcotte presented a transfer of \$1,000, for the Senior Newsletter.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker to approve the transfer; seconded by Mr. Warner, and then unanimously voted as approved by the members.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

VIII. OTHER:

Ms. Marcotte distributed a draft copy of the Annual Report - the Board of Finance text. She added that meeting dates for 2011 need to be filed by January 1, 2011. Mr. Parker suggested continuing the BOF standard of the 4th Monday of each month. Members agreed.

Ms. Pronovost objected to the text which stated "...to insure adequate funding for projects..." She suggested removing the word "adequate". The consensus agreed. Ms. Marcotte agreed to edit the document.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Mr. Warner to adjourn the November 22, 2010, Board of Finance Regular meeting at 8:10 pm; seconded by Mr. Parker, and unanimously voted as approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly E. Dombek, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.