

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF FINANCE
MARCH 30, 2015
7:00 PM
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM**

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Jim Persano.

2. Members Present

In attendance were Chairman Jim Persano, Vice Chairman Steve Krasinski, Tom Mazzoli, Michael Parker, and Tim Geib. Also in the audience were CFO Michael Marinaccio, First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini, Dr. Maynard Suffredini, Bill Boutwell and Kathy Devlin.

3. FY 2016 Budget Discussion and recommendations

Board of Education Budget

Dr. Suffredini presented the Board of Education Budget. The largest growth in the BOE budget comes from contracted salary increases. Salaries are up \$400,000 from the previous year, but with retirements at the end of the current year, \$100,000 is being cut from salaries. Due to the change to a high-deductible insurance plan for all BOE employees, insurance rates are up only \$103,000 for the coming year. An increase in Special Education of \$83,000 was noted. This is due largely to the continuing need to bus children with special needs out of district so that they can receive the education needed. The Board of Education plans to add 3 new positions in the coming year; 1 FT Technology position to assist students and teachers with new technology, 1 PT Out of District Facilitator, and 1 PT Somers Elementary School Special Education Teacher. Magnet School tuition is on the rise, approximately \$67,000 next year over this year. Tim Geib asked what the salaries of the new positions would be.

Dr. Suffredini responded that the Tech position would be \$50,000/year, OODC would be approximately \$20,000/year, and the Special Education Teacher would be \$25 - \$30,000/year. Michael Parker asked how many students are in Special Education. Dr. Suffredini responded that there are about 77 students in special education amongst all 3 schools and about 1,475 students in total population with no reason to believe that number will change in the coming year.

Tim Geib asked how many meetings the OODC would be attending per year and how the process works currently. Dr. Suffredini responded that it would be 20-30 case meetings per year. Currently, they have an employee that has to miss work to travel out of town for days for these various meetings.

Steve Krasinski asked if any state funding would be available to help offset the increase in special education costs. Dr. Suffredini replied that there was no more state money available at this time, but if any grant monies came along, they would possibly help.

Steve Krasinski requested a list of people, positions, and salaries that were hired and also

that were let go during the current year and a list of the same for the new year. Jim Persano requested the current year transfers from Bill Boutwell. Bill stated that he would get an update to Mike Marinaccio to send on to the Board. Bill elaborated on a previously asked question by Steve Krasinski about special education. Bill noted that the ECS Grant is only 70 ó 80% funded and that the Board of Education picks up the remainder. Steve Krasinski requested a copy of the actual dollars spent in last year's budget from the Board of Education.

Town Budget

Mike Marinaccio updated the Board on the changes that were made per their request at the March 23, 2015 meeting. After the changes were made, the Town budget increases \$77,497 of .85%. The changes in revenues come from an increase in the amount transferred from WPCA and the Ambulance Fund. The Town is proposing the addition of 2 new positions in the coming year; 1 FT Fire Chief and 1 FT Parks employee. Steve Krasinski asked where the revenue from WPCA comes from. Mike Marinaccio replied that the General Fund pays the WPCA bills throughout the year, so the revenue is the reimbursement from WPCA Sewer Fund to cover the cost of expenses. Michael Parker asked what the cost of restructuring the Fire Department would be. Mike Marinaccio replied that there is no definite number, but the Town had budgeted a full year salary for a Fire Chief and additional monies for additional part-time help in the Fire Department. Jim Persano requested a projection into fiscal year 17, placing a 3% increase on both the Town and the Board of Education to see what the potential impact would be on the tax payers for that year.

Another meeting was then scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2015.

4. Budget Flyer, Content Finalization and Approval

Jim Persano requested that the format of the Annual Budget Flyer be reverted back to its old format and be presented for approval at the Monday April 6 meeting.

5. Adjournment

Tom Mazzoli moved to adjourn at 8:09 pm, seconded by Michael Parker. A unanimous decision followed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Wissinger

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING