

2023 MAR 21 A 8:38

Present: Chairman Glenn Patterson, John Sheehan, Ronald Fedor, Joe Fillipetti, David Peabody and Robert Tuneski

TEST: *David I. Campo*
TOWN CLERK

Absent: Kevin Petchark

Elected: First Selectman Robert Brule; Thomas Dembek, RTM

Staff: Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works; Alan Wilenski, Tax Collector; David Campo, Town Clerk; Paige Walton, Assessor; Bigi Ebbin, Registrar of Voters; Patricia Waters, Registrar of Voters; Joseph Mancini, Director of Operations Board of Education; Kimberly Allen, Director of Finance; Maryellen McConnell, Recording Secretary

1. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:

A quorum was established and the Budget Meeting of the Board of Finance was called to order at 7:25 pm on March 15, 2023.

2. Public Comment: No public comment

An opening statement regarding the budget process was made by Glenn Patterson, Chairman.

3. Standing Motion: A standing **motion** was made by Glenn Patterson and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor for John Sheehan and David Peabody to tentatively approve the budget requests for FY23/24 for the remainder of the budget meetings.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

4. Registrar of Voters:

The current number of voters in the Town of Waterford is 14,300, this is low at the moment due to canvassing. There was a pay increase for the Deputy Registrars due to them taking on more responsibilities. Our tabulator machines are fifteen years old, they do not expect to receive new ones until next year.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Registrar of Voters request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$79,488.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

5. Assessor:

The 2022 property revaluation has been completed. We have 118 appeals from the revaluation: 19 of those are commercial, 92 residential, 3 motor vehicle and 2 personal property. The number of elderly residents has not gone up. Training, the Assistant Assessor is on track to take the CMA test, which will be in October, 2023. The Assessor did go to Wichita last year for the power plant training. The Assessor's Office has moved to the online books, they are cheaper, user friendly then the old books that we would buy.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Assessor's budget request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$292,148.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

6. Board of Assessment Appeals:

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Board of Assessment Appeals budget request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$1,602.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

7. Tax Collector:

Next week starts the conference of the Tax Collector's Association, which has many training programs. OPM requires that we have 50 hours of continual training. Attending the conference will cover 12.5 hours of that training. There is also training on bankruptcy, that is a very technical and a great refresher courses. While COVID slowed down the bankruptcy process and courts are reopening, we have been able to do 7 out of 10 foreclosure actions. There are four more in the plans, and those should be completed by the end of FY23.

Tax collection has increased along with the online payments. As of Wednesday, March 15, 2023, the Town of Waterford has a collection rate of: 99.23% for real estate, 99.89% for personal property and 96.11% for motor vehicles. There is a 3 day delay for online payments for motor vehicles, so if a release is needed immediately, they need to come into the office and pay with cash.

Tax Collector (continued):

Advertising has dropped as the State is trying to do away with advertising in the local papers, since many towns no longer have a local paper. The cost of postage has gone up, but the amount mail that I receive has dropped. Most payments are online. New software for the Utility Department is being implemented, I have been working with them to accept payments at the tax office. We have been accepting payments here and then send them to the Utility Department for them to be processed.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve Tax Collector budget request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$217,865.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

8. Town Clerk:

I would like to thank my staff for all their hard work that has been done. Revenues are through the roof, and keeping up with the land records on a daily basis can be brutal with all the property sales. Land records that come into this office are completed on a daily basis. We have now started using E-Recordings, a new software and that is moving right along. The Deputy Town Clerk, Mary Kent, retired. Darleen Celotto is now the Deputy Town Clerk and a new administrative assistant has been hired.

Early voting will be a little crazy. However; on days when the Registrar of Voters are in, they will send them directly to them. We should have some grants for early voting, those should help with the extra hours we put in.

We are completely caught up copying all records onto microfilm. All of our backup is stored at Iron Mountain in New York.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Town Clerk budget request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$252,225.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

9. Representative Town Meeting:

David Campo, Town Clerk continues to volunteer to do the minutes for the RTM meetings. When David is not available the moderator has done the minutes or another representative.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Representative Town Meeting budget request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$18,903.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

10. Board of Selectmen:

This is my fourth budget, and again I am submitting a flat budget. I do have a new Administrative Assistant, Cindy left to take on a new position. The new assistant's position will funded at less money through line #10101-51110. Cindy will be part time to train the new person and also funded through the same line number.

John Sheehan asked again for a summary of professional fees, we keep asking for this and it is not received. The board also asked about the consultant that was hired for the I-95 corridor, First Selectman Brule stated that it was being introduced to the legislature for this session. The board questioned if KGR Consulting had ever done work with municipalities, First Selectman Brule stated that they have worked with the City of Boston, several school districts and several municipalities.

Training: there are about three courses the First Selectman takes every year through CCM. *Other supplies:* these are for folders, frames and certificates that the First Selectman's office gives out to people.

John Sheehan stated that this budget is very vague and has not enough backup. He also stated that as the First Selectman that his budget should be an example for all departments, and this is not it.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Board of Selectmen budget request for FY23/24 in the total amount of \$207,605.

Vote: 5-0-1

John Sheehan: No

Motion: Passed

11. Adjournment:

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Robert Tuneski to adjourn the Budget Meeting of the Board of Finance at 8:35 pm.

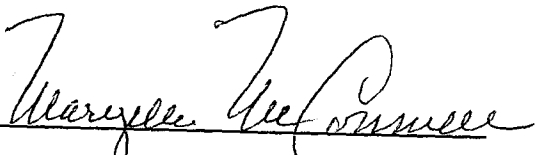
Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: Passed

Respectively Submitted,



John Sheehan, Clerk



Maryellen McConnell, Recording Secretary