

Board of Finance
Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 11, 2023
Town Hall Auditorium – 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Glenn Patterson, John Sheehan, Ronald Fedor, Robert Tuneski, Kevin Petchark, David Peabody

Absent: Joe Filippetti, Kimberly Allen, Director of Finance

Elected: Robert Brule, First Selectman; Jody Nazarchyk, Selectwoman; Abbas Daneshmandi, Treasurer; Thomas Dembek, RTM

Staff: Shea Moses, Office Coordinator

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ATTN: David Peabody
TOWN CLERK

1. Establishment of a quorum and call to order

A quorum was established and the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance was called to order at 7 p.m., January 11, 2023

2. Public Comment:

Todd Goodhind and John Mariano both made comments regarding to the pagers for Fire Services and the phone app that is being used. When the phone app goes off the actual calls are delayed and the notifications are not very loud so anyone can easily sleep through the alert. The pagers allow the listener to hear all radio communication related to the call.

3. **Approval and acceptance of minutes:**
Regular Meeting on December 7, 2022

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Robert Tuneski to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2022 Regular Meeting.

Vote: 5-0-1

Abstain: Kevin Petchark

Motion Passed.

4. To consider an act on a request from Michael Howley, Director of Fire Services, for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$25,000 to fund a new Capital Project for the replacement/upgrade of pagers for the volunteers and forward to the RTM as required.

There was a discussion between Michael Howley, Director of Fire Services and the Board of Finance regarding the need for new pagers. Mr. Howley explained that he agreed with the public comments from earlier at the meeting and that pagers are a great additional tool. This has been a discussion for 6 months around safety and potential liability issues using the cell phone app when driving. The phone app also sends all messages to firefighters where the pagers allow volunteers to screen out calls from other districts.

The department has tried repairing old pagers. However, they have reached their life expectancy and repair parts are no longer available. Ron Fedor asked about other apps that are out there and who was in charge of the research to make sure that the program was the best fit.

Director Howley stated he was in charge of the research and this technology was the best fitting as volunteers are able to choose what they want to listen to on the pager along with being able check hydrant status and locations using the cell phone app. The cell phone app also has the most updated GIS information.

Thomas Dembek, RTM also commented that the old pagers are no longer supported by the factory and that the new pager technology is a great system.

Motion by Robert Tuneski and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the additional appropriation in the amount of \$25,000 from the FY23 Contingency Account line # 10121-59010 for the replacement/upgrade of pagers for the volunteers.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

5. To consider and act on a request Michael Howley, Director of Fire Services, for an appropriation in amount of \$239,729 from Capital and Non-recurring designated line # 20522-57794 Line Description (i.e., Radio Communications) and forward to the RTM as required.

There was a discussion. John Sheehan had questions regarding the involvement of the Emergency Management Director (EMD) due to the information found in the request back up. Police Chief Marc Balestracci commented that a team made up of himself, Director Howley, EMD Steve Sinagra, and the Director of the Waterford Ambulance Service meet regularly about the best way to serve the Town. They had a meeting on 8/3/2022 about the public safety issues and problems involving communication. The first priority would be to replace the radios for Fire Service. John Sheehan had questions regarding the shift of radios to the statewide system and if the new radios would be compatible if purchased. Police Chief commented that they are still exploring sources and cost savings to find out what they need for the state system which is included in the backup. EMD Steve Sinagra stated that the radios would be compatible with the statewide system with potential overall cost savings on annual fees with the statewide system.

There was also a discussion on the funding set aside for this particular project. It was noted that \$748,000 was initially designated and that \$279,000 had been spent to date. Chairman Patterson asked if the upcoming capital plan would contain a funding request to continue this communication integration effort. Police Chief Balestracci explained that beyond the monies already set aside in 2016 for the radios, a need for additional funding is unknown pending completion of the review to join the state system.

There was also a discussion on what other towns are on board, making sure that nobody is left out. Chief Balestracci stated that New London is working with them side by side.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Robert Tuneski to approve an appropriation in the amount of \$239,729 from Capital and Non-recurring designated line #20522-57794 and forward to the RTM as required.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

6. To consider and act on a request from Jim Bartelli, director of Utilities, for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$500,000.00 to fund a new Capital Project for the Contract #1 Sewer Interceptor Easement Access and forward to the RTM as required.

Director Bartelli briefed the BOF on the history and scope of Contract #1 displaying photographs and maps on the screens in the meeting room. He noted that the Contract #1 project installed the mainline sewer interceptor collecting all the flows from the Towns of Waterford and East Lyme (includes the Old Lyme flow), traversing through wooded and wet soil areas, and feeding the flows to New London via the-Evergreen Pump Station. Access to the Evergreen Pump Station is through New London streets.

He noted that Contract #1 consists of 13,000 feet of 48 inch diameter concrete pipe having 300 manholes along the route. The project is proposed to provide access to these manholes as most are now inaccessible due to years of overgrowth and expansion of adjacent wetlands, precluding inspections of the interceptor. The project will allow inspecting the interceptor and performing any necessary repairs and maintenance.

The director also commented that this would be the first set of funds and that there are going to be additional appropriation requests as the project continues. The WUC would most likely be needing \$500,000 for each year for 3 years to complete the project.

Chairman Glenn Patterson stated while he endorses the project he brought up 3 points raised in discussion at the Jan 9th Board of Selectman meeting:

1. It was noted that for FY22-23 there were approximately \$6,000,000 of additional appropriations requested and stated that by definition, the town was over budget for FY-22-23 by about 6%.
2. There is approximately \$10,000,000 provided by the taxpayers available in the unassigned fund balance of the General Fund and acknowledged that project like this one are an appropriate use of that money.
3. There is an importance to be methodical in the approach to spending the surplus amount of money for capital projects.

Chairman Patterson also talked about understanding that this is a worthy project but that additional appropriation for \$500,000 at the outset of the project was not proceeding in a methodical manner as part of an overall capital plan.

Motion by Chairman Patterson and seconded by Robert Tuneski to reduce the additional appropriation request to \$100,000, noting that the balance of the requested funding could be included as part of the FY24 capital plan.

Director Bartelli stated that \$100,000 would not be enough to get the planning and engineering for the project started.

Robert Tuneski added that he does not want to upset the timeframe as we are working with wet lands which require extensive preparation and planning.

John Sheehan proposed a friendly amendment to increase the proposed funding to \$250,000 which was accepted by Chairman Patterson and Mr. Tuneski.

Motion by Glenn Patterson and seconded by Robert Tuneski to approve an additional appropriation of \$250,000 to fund a new Capital Project for the Contract #1 Sewer Interceptor Easement Access with an amended motion.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

Amended Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$250,000 from the Unassigned balance of the General Fund to a project line to be created within the Capital Improvement Project Fund titled "Contract#1 Sewer Interceptor Easement Access" and forward to the RTM as required.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

7. To consider and act on a request from Tom Giard, Superintendent of Schools, for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$802,000.00 to fund a new Capital Project for Clark Lane Middle School Chiller Replacements and forward to the RTM as required.

There was a discussion with amongst the Board of Finance, Thomas Girard, (Superintendent), Jay Miner (Director of Facilities) and Joe Mancini (Director of Finance) regarding the issues of the Clark Lane Chiller status since the issue arose in June of 2022.

In June of 2022 50% of the chilled water source that is responsible for 70% of the air conditioning went down in terms of life expectancy. They had an engineer that came to look and give an assessment of the system in terms of the age and an inability to acquire parts. It needs repairs to items such as such as compressors, pumps, compressors, and electronics motherboards.

They will be going out to bid for the work to be done and noted that based on supply chain circumstances the chiller replacement will not take place until the spring of 2024. In the meantime, the system will be running at 50% capacity.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Kevin Petchark to approve an additional appropriation to fund a new Capital Project for Clark Lane Middle School Chiller Replacements.

Amended Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$802,000 from the Unassigned balance of the General Fund to a project line to be created within the Capital & Non Recurring Expenditure Fund titled "Clark Lane Middle School Chiller Replacements" forward to the RTM as required.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

8. To consider and act on a request from Kim Allen, Director of Finance, on behalf of the IT Department, for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$272,000.00 to fund a new Capital Project for Auditorium Meeting Room Upgrades and forward to the RTM as required.

IT Manager Jeff Robillard commented that the project has to do with the Auditorium to improve the furniture and technology equipment in the room. These issues were brought to his attention as the auditorium has some safety concerns with the wires and the overall look is not appealing.

This project would include new folded tables, tables that are mounted to the floor, new flooring which would hide any wires pertaining to electoral equipment including microphones. The tables would also have the ability to provide power for chargers, laptops, microphones and the new tablet device. This would also upgrade the televisions and also involves better definition and resolution of the projector screens as well as enough seating for all of the RTM members.

Ron Fedor expressed concerns about the cost for the upgrades. Mr. Robillard said that he could do some upgrades without others to decrease the cost. However, there is still an issue with pricing as the cost of supplies and labor have increased. He also mentioned a similar project in East Hartford that went to bid on just the furniture alone and it was easily over \$80,000.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Robert Tuneski to approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$272,000 from the Unassigned balance of the General Fund to a project line to be created within the Capital Improvement Project Fund titled "Auditorium Meeting Room Upgrades" and forward to the RTM as required.

Vote: 4-2-0 Against: Ronald Fedor and Glenn Patterson Motion Passed.

9. To consider an act on a request from Kim Allen, Director of Finance, on behalf of the IT Department for a FY23 Out of Series Transfer as follows:

Line No.	Org. Code	Object Code	Object Description	APPROVED Budget Amount	CURRENT Available Budget	ACCOUNT INCREASE	ACCOUNT DECREASE	REVISED Budget Amount
1	10147	51210	CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL	125,787.00	74,121.91		(20,273)	94,395
2	10147	52043	SERVICE CONTRACTS INFO	773,609.00	238,412.37	10,000		248,412
3	10147	54130	COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	99,909.00	68,819.83	10,273		79,093
4								0.00
5								0.00
6								0.00
7								0.00
8								0.00
9								0.00
10								0.00
								0.00
								0.00
TOTAL						20,273.00	(20,273.00)	

IT Manager, Jeff Robillard explained the \$20,273 from the personnel line saying their senior systems engineer resigned and the amount of time it took to put out a new job posting made the funding available in this FY. He did comment when asked that the position (Software Engineer) will be filled with an internal hire and that they are in the interview process to hire a tech.

The \$10,000 portion of the transfer would be put toward engineering time and the \$10,273 would be used for new back up to security appliance.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the decrease of line #10147-51210, Clerical and Technical in the amount of \$20,273 and increase line #10147-52043, Service Contracts Info, in the amount of \$10,000 and increase line #10147-54130, Computer Equipment in the amount of \$10,273

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

He did mention that with the decrease in other lines they would have to re-evaluate funds and they may not be able to get as many or the same rescue equipment. He also mentioned that he was unaware that he was capable of asking for an additional appropriation.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Robert Tuneski to approve the decrease of line #10147-51210, Clerical and Technical in the amount of \$20,273 and increase line #10147-52043, Service Contracts Info, in the amount of \$10,000 and increase line #10147-54130, Computer Equipment, in the amount of \$10,273.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

13. Selection of Board of Finance liaison to Town of Waterford Board and Commission for a term of one year.

Board of Education: Kevin Petchark

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by David Peabody to approve the Board of Education liaison.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

14. Old Business:

- a. Board review of proposed updates to BOF policy 1.02. "Submission of Agenda Items".

Robert Tuneski made a comment that having the revisions in Red was a great touch.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve updates to BOF policy 1.02. "Submission of agenda Items".

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

- b. Continued discussion around revising BOF Policy 1.01, Board of Finance Budget Guidelines to include Performance Metrics.

Due to the absence of Kim Allen, Director of Finance, this discussion has been postponed until the next Board of Finance Meeting that will be held on February 8, 2023.

15. New Business:

- a. Appointment of David Peabody to serve on the Ad Hoc Energy Task Force to fill vacancy left by the resignation Baird Welch-Collins.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Kevin Petchark to approve the Ad Hoc Energy Task Force appointment of David Peabody.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion Passed.

16. Liaison Reports: None

Robert Brule, First Selectman did announce that State troopers would be in Town on January 12, 2023, to allow the Police Department to attend a funeral.

He also announced that Paige Walton has returned to be our Full-Time Assessor and that things are going smoothly and we are happy to have her return.

17. Correspondence

- a. American Rescue Funds Quarterly Report 10/1/2022-12/31/2022.

There was a discussion on the report about the number of grants to Town Businesses. First Selectman Robert Brule said 8 grants are confirmed and completed. He also mentioned that they have 2 more years for the money to be spent.

- b. FY23 Capital Improvement Plan Quarterly Report.

John Sheehan had a question regarding the bids for the Town Hall Front Door. First Selectman, Rob Brule made a comment that there were no bids and that Public Works will complete the project. John Sheehan expressed concern about security issues when told the door will be non-metal/non-ballistic.

John Sheehan also made a comment regarding the deficit for the In-Line Wastewater Solid Grinders.

Utility Director, Jim Bartelli, explained that he met with Director of Finance, Kim Allen and reviewed all of the current lines and closed them. He commented that there was a purchase that was made prior to lines being closed, however, they did not receive the invoice until late which was a little over \$9,000. He will be talking with the Finance Director regarding how to resolve the issue.

John Sheehan also made a comment about whether or not the Force Main Air Release Valve project will be closed. Jim Bartelli, Director of Utility commented that they have been replaced but did not feel like this was a Capital project, it was more of an operational project.

- c. Virginia Bielucki, Town Accountant, Periodic Financial Statements FY23 dated December 12, 2022

John Sheehan made a comment regarding the Board of Finance being over budget likely because of Audit costs. He would like to know how this will be covered.

- d. Virginia Bielucki, Town Accountant, Status of General Fund Unassigned Balance dated December 13, 2022.
- e. Virginia Bielucki, Town Accountant, Status of Contingency FY23 dated December 12, 2022.
- f. Virginia Bielucki, Town Accountant, Status of Contingency FY23 dated December 13, 2022.

18. Adjournment

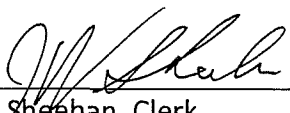
Motion by Robert Tuneski and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Vote: 6-0-0

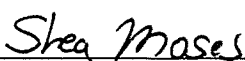
Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



John Sheehan, Clerk



Shea Moses, Office Coordinator