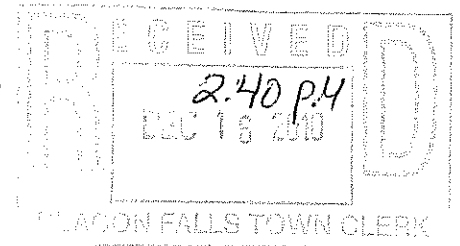


**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 14, 2010**



**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson W. Hopkinson called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: C. Bielik, R. Doiron, W. Hopkinson, L. Krepinevich, B. Ploss

Members Absent: G. Smith

Others Present: First Selectman S. Cable, Selectman D. Sorrentino, Selectman M. Krenesky, E. Groth, and Finance Manager M. Gomes (7:50 PM)

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**C. Bielik made a motion to nominate G. Smith as Chairperson of the Board of Finance. B. Ploss seconded the nomination. Call for other nominations and there were none. All ayes.**

**B. Ploss nominated W. Hopkinson as Vice Chairperson of the Board of Finance. L. Krepinevich seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. All ayes for the election of W. Hopkinson as Vice Chair.**

**B. Ploss nominated L. Krepinevich as Secretary of the Board of Finance. R. Doiron seconded the nomination. No other nominations. All ayes.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

W. Hopkinson read a list of the meeting minutes to be approved: 10/12/2010 Regular Meeting Minutes, 10/25/2010 Special Joint Bond Package Meeting, 10/26/2010 Special Public Meeting on Bond Package, 11/9/2010 Regular Meeting Minutes, 11/22/2010 Joint Bond Package Discussion, 11/29/2010 Special Board of Finance Bond Package Discussion, 11/29/2010 Joint Board of Finance/Fire Department Bond Package Discussion. **R. Doiron made a motion to approve all minutes as presented. L. Krepinevich seconded.**

B. Ploss proposed changes to the 11/29/2010 Board of Finance Special Meeting Minutes Bond Package Discussion, as noted per the attached page. Changes are in italics. **The motion to approve all minutes was amended to include the proposed changes to Page 1 of the 11/29/2010 Board of Finance Special Meeting Minutes. All ayes.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

The report was received and dated 12/14/2010. B. Doiron asked how the board would know if there was a discrepancy with these numbers. W. Hopkinson stated that the bank accounts are reconciled on a monthly basis by M. Gomes, and in comparing the ledger with the bank account balance, discrepancies would be visible.

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W. Hopkinson inquired if Region 16 has been paid recently and the Selectmen confirmed they have been paid.

**L. Krepinevich made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. R. Doiron seconded the motion. All ayes.**

**TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT**

W. Hopkinson noted a large deposit of \$77,000 in 2009 back taxes which were collected. B. Ploss inquired about motor vehicle taxes. M. Krenesky stated that the motor vehicle purge was completed seven months ago, prior to mid-year tax bills going out. Motor Vehicles requests that this be done once a year, so this purge was completed for 2010.

**C. Bielik made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report. B. Ploss seconded the motion. All ayes.**

**TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

D. Sorrentino noted that the Town Clerk's Report is included in the Financial Manager's report. This report is for October and it is the first time the Board of Finance is seeing this report.

B. Ploss asked the status of the Town Clerk Bank Account and it was confirmed that this account is in the name of the Town of Beacon Falls, with authorized signatures of Manny, Jack and Linda.

R. Doiron inquired about numbers on the last page of the report, which are not formatted as currency. M. Gomes entered the meeting.

W. Hopkinson asked about conveyance monies. M. Gomes explained that the report is a cash balance, and does not include checks which have not cleared. W. Hopkinson asked for a description on a \$1,600 check under expenses. M. Gomes stated this check was for monthly fees for K. Novak. W. Hopkinson asked how deposits are reconciled and stated that she would like to see the detail for the deposits to this account.

**C. Bielik made a motion to accept the Town Clerk's Report with the recommendation that future deposits be detailed, as the expenses are now detailed. L. Krepinevich seconded the motion. W. Hopkinson added a thank you to M. Gomes. All ayes.**

**FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT**

**A. BOARD'S CLERK INVOICES**

Invoices were submitted by clerk, Lauren Classey for the following amounts: 9/15/2010 bill for \$117.50, 10/10/2010 bill for \$255.00, November bill for \$162.50, a second November bill for \$178.50, third November bill for \$90.75. **B. Ploss made the motion to pay the invoices. L. Krepinevich seconded the motion. All ayes.**

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M. Gomes noted some corrections that he had made in this report of expenses and revenue. There was a correction moving a town employee from part-time to full-time. Code red was charged to the correct account.

There are no line items transfers this month. The computer support line item for Tax Collector was overspent. Quality Data is the software company and their service is shared between Tax Collector and Assessor for computer support. Computer support for Board of Finance is also over budget. One of the expenses involves printing the rate book, which needs to be budgeted. W. Hopkinson asked for M. Gomes to check on this item, as the Board of Finance begins the budget process.

M. Krenesky asked which line item Suzanne, the town Tech Support person, is paid out of. M. Gomes advised that she is also paid out of the computer support line item, when she is called in to assist a department. M. Krenesky noted the Registrar's office recently had an issue with their phone system and needed support as well.

R. Doiron asked about Bulky Waste Transfer and M. Gomes noted that this line item is over budget with bills pending. This line item was cut in half for the 2010-2011 budget year and the transfer station will be closed through the winter months. M. Gomes stated that the town will need to make a decision on whether to reopen the Transfer Station in the spring, during this budget year.

W. Hopkinson asked about the Fire Marshall Telephone line item which has reached exactly \$900. The expense is paid out of this line item first and then moved over to Police Department Telephone.

E. Groth inquired about the payroll distribution correction that M. Gomes made moving all employees to the full-time line item. W. Hopkinson clarified that this move did not represent an increase in hours for librarians. A part-time employee moved to full-time during the 2008-2009 budget year, and maintained a 30 hour work week.

Looking at revenue, W. Hopkinson inquired if Pequot grant money will come in. M. Gomes expects these monies soon and town aid should be the same, as budgeted. The ECS disbursement comes in November, late February/early March and 50% of the reimbursement comes in May. Other state grant money amounts are difficult to determine.

M. Gomes has been tracking tax collection and looking at projections; current and prior collections and hopes to use this information to project future collections. This way the town could establish a tax collection rate and base the budget on projected taxes, as most towns do.

R. Doiron asked about the Police Other Revenue line item, which is for extra duty. M. Gomes uses this revenue to pay overtime and officers from other towns that assist Beacon Falls.

W. Hopkinson inquired about the revenue line item for Recreation Area Permits of \$6500, which actually represents revenue from the Summer Program. The name of this line item should be changed to Recreation Summer Program. M. Gomes is tracking Parks & Recreation income and expenses for their programs, at the request of the Parks & Recreation Commission. W. Hopkinson noted that with this particular program, there is revenue collected in one budget year and expense in the next budget year. R. Doiron asked about increasing the cost of the summer program, and W. Hopkinson noted that the cost has

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increased recently. The Selectmen noted that the summer program was intended to have minimal cost to residents.

**R. Doiron made the motion to accept the Finance Manager's Report. C. Bielik seconded the motion. All ayes.**

M. Gomes commented with regard to the Bond Package, the Fire Department cost for the breathing apparatus may decrease to \$195,000, due to a \$135,000 grant that the Fire Department has received. More details and paperwork are needed before changing this resolution in the bond package. M. Gomes has asked for the necessary documentation. The remaining piece is \$60,000 and M. Gomes is looking at car rates and costs to lease a car, as an alternative to including it in the bond.

M. Gomes detailed issues which he is having with the accounting software. Checks which have been inputted correctly, have been found missing from the ledger. The software company has spent 30 hours trying to reconcile one entry for M. Gomes. W. Hopkinson noted that the software system should not allow one-sided entries to be processed, and M. Gomes confirmed that the system should never allow entries to be out of balance. There are 3 modules to the system, which operate separately and the software was not written by accountants.

W. Hopkinson stated the bottom line is that we have a software system, which does not have the control and edits in place which are necessary for what we are doing. The software was updated 3 years ago and problems have been occurring since then. M. Gomes will put together estimates for a new software system. A new system would also address new requirements for information on W-2s and 1099s.

C. Bielik asked for clarification confirming that M. Gomes is asking the town to acquire new software to replace what we have. W. Hopkinson noted that training would be needed. M. Gomes has knowledge of software that other small towns use and will look into costs for the Board of Finance.

Tax collections are working well under the new system. Meyers & Co. sent a letter to the Board of Finance, asking to be considered for the next audit.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

S. Cable stated that the referendum on the bond package will take place in February, as resolutions are needed and a public hearing must be held. W. Hopkinson noted that this will allow time to get information from the Fire Department on the air pack issue.

Letters have been sent to the departments requesting their budgets and the Board of Selectmen hope to have a draft available for the Board of Finance for their February meeting. A letter was sent to the unions regarding concessions and W. Hopkinson asked that the Board of Finance receive an update on this process.

S. Cable noted that it is difficult to complete a 5 year plan with projections. S. Cable noted that the grand list is not increasing and the town is due for a revaluation next fall.

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M. Krenesky noted that he will be working with M. Gomes to acquire a new phone system, which could result in significant savings. The new phone system would be automated with voicemail.

The Selectmen have not yet discussed the ambulance contract and the deadline must be confirmed.

M. Krenesky noted that board clerks have been using recording systems with microcassettes, which are outdated technology. Digital recorders may need to be purchased in the future.

S. Cable noted that the bridge work is near completion. There is some money left in the bond, which can be utilized in other areas. \$3 million in grant money was received, which saved considerable money on the bond. Regarding the current bond package, S. Cable noted there should be some latitude to allow for issues which arise as the projects move forward.

S. Cable will be looking at other area towns that are looking to replace a ladder truck. It is possible for towns to regionalize and obtain monies to share these expenses.

W. Hopkinson asked about the status of Pond Spring Village and the status of that development. The homeowners association for Pond Springs has reorganized as a condo association and is managing existing properties. Undeveloped property is owned by the bank. Chatfield Farms is also seeking new ownership.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. AMBULANCE CONTRACTS**

Discussion occurred about when the Ambulance contracts are due for renegotiation. B. Ploss reaffirmed his statements of the 11/29/2010 Special Board of Finance Meeting. He proposed taking \$40,000 in revenue which is collected from EMS, and set aside this money in an account for equipment replacement. W. Hopkinson stated that currently, the town takes a portion of EMS collections and this is part of the town's revenue and budget. The town then plays expenses for the EMS other than their administrative costs; including supplies, training, gear, etc. out of the town budget. B. Ploss is proposing that the town's general fund expenses for EMS average \$22,000 to \$25,000 annually, and their revenue averages \$60,000 per year, the remainder is \$40,000 annually. This \$40,000 could be set aside in an equipment replacement account which could accrue and be used to replace an ambulance after 5-6 years. A non-recurring expense line item did not passed in the last budget process.

M. Gomes asked what the EMS gross revenue is annually and this information would be found in the audit. S. Cable noted that the concept is good, but she wants the townspeople to feel confident calling EMS without fearing costs.

S. Cable clarified that the Ambulance Contract began on 11/18/2008, ran for one year and was extended for 2 years until 11/18/2011. S. Cable noted that town did not receive revenue from the EMS until after their first audit. W. Hopkinson concluded by stating that the Board of Finance wishes to review and make recommendations, when the contract negotiations move forward.

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**2. SEWER COMMISSION**

M. Gomes initiated a discussion regarding sewer assessments and sewer user fees. M. Gomes stated there are two ways to assess sewer costs by assessing the people who benefit. Front footed assessments are based on distance and the length of the sewer line or by parcel which evenly divides the project by the number of people who benefit. An example provided; if new sewer lines in an area cost \$300,000, and 30 parcels of land were affected, the one-time assessment would be \$10,000 each, regardless of whether the owner chose to hook-up to the sewer line. The town is now charging a flat fee for sewer hook-ups.

Sewer user fees are a separate matter. Beacon Falls does not currently have sewer user fees, which are based on the number of gallons which come out of the system. M. Gomes explained there are many restrictions as to how sewer user fees can be spent; for operations, maintenance and repairs. A separate commission and budget process would be needed to govern these fees, which represent another tax. Capital improvements to the Wastewater Plant would still come out of the General Fund, as they would not be considered OM&R.

E. Groth noted that all residents of Ansonia were recently charged for upgrades to their treatment plant. Usage is tied to the water bill. E. Groth considers this type of sewer user tax to be a fair tax. B. Ploss exited the meeting at 9:07 AM.

**OLD BUSINESS** - None.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

W. Hopkinson read a memo from the Board of Selectmen to all boards, which stated that there will be no raises for board clerks at this time.

There was also a letter from the First Selectman to Beacon Hose Co. regarding stretcher replacement, asking that Beacon Hose take their portion out of their EMS line item.

A letter from Board of Selectmen stating there will be no raises for part-time police officers. The request for raises came from Tony Cipriano.

A letter from Southwest Conservation District requesting \$1,500, which are the dues for the Inland Wetland Commission.

**B. Doiron made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM. C. Bielik seconded the motion. All ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz

**TOWN OF BEACON FALLS  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
BOND PACKAGE DISCUSSION  
Monday, November 29, 2010**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman of the Board of Finance W. Hopkinson called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Present: BOF Chairman W. Hopkinson, Vice Chairman G. Smith, Board of Finance members L. Krepinevich, B. Ploss, R. Doiron and C. Bielik

Also present were Selectmen D. Sorrentino and M. Krenesky

W. Hopkinson began the meeting stating that she called the meeting at the request of some members of the Board of Finance and gave the floor to those who wanted to speak.

B. Ploss began discussing his thoughts on the Fire Department Ambulance Fund. He noted that he has always felt very strongly that Fire Department should keep the Ambulance revenue collected from ambulance calls and put it in a fund towards the replacement of ambulances. A discussion continued regarding an example of funds such as the 80/20 split of revenue and the contractual agreement in place for the 80/20 split. B. Ploss noted that on average, the Town of Beacon Falls puts approximately \$20,000 into what would be classified as a general slush fund for the *fire department /EMT*. He suggested that we take \$20,000 off of the \$60,000 that they give to the town each year *and use that for the approximate \$20,000 we give them for general operations every year anyway. We then use the approx \$40,000 balance and put that towards a replacement fund for the ambulance* and then after four to 6 years, the Fire Department could start factoring it in for replacement of their vehicles. W. Hopkinson noted that the town would then lose some revenue. B. Ploss pointed out that at some point they should be able to, within reason, fund their own ambulance. *And that it is easier to make up the approx \$40,000 per year then fund a \$250,000 purchase in this economic climate.*