

TOWN OF BEACON FALLS
BEACON FALLS, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF FINANCE

JOINT BOARD OF FINANCE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
2010/2011 BUDGET WORKSHOP

MINUTES

April 5, 2010

PRESENT

Selectmen S. Cable, D. Sorrentino and M. Krenesky, BOF Chairman W. Hopkinson, Vice Chairman G. Smith and BOF Members A. Choi, B. Ploss, L. Krepinevich and Finance Manager M. Gomes.

S. Cable called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

S. Cable noted that everyone received the budget that M. Gomes put together with all the changes. It does not include the school shift and a portion of the school budget increase. Beacon Falls will be carrying \$599,000 of the school budget due to the shift in population.

It was recommended that the fire truck, ambulance, air pack equipment and pay loader be bonded.

M. Gomes noted that there was essentially \$100,000 of fund balance in original package. He put \$300,000 in it to 5.8%

Re-val: - M. Gomes explained that they are guessing that the re-val will be about \$140,000 (bids are due in 1 week) We have \$80,000 in the current budget and we put \$60,000 in for 2010/2011. M. Gomes is comfortable with this number.

S. Cable noted that she spoke to the school business manager to make sure that the numbers were correct and he said that they will be having only one more workshop and does not anticipate any more cutting after this round.

W. Hopkinson noted that it seems like a huge swing in the population and is wondering if there was a mistake made last year. It was noted that the ECS should also shift since our percentage has switched.

The Part Time Activities Director was taken out of the budget.

W. Hopkinson wanted to let everyone know that if they objected to anything to please speak up.

S. Cable said that she hopes she can get our medical insurance down and she will know that next Tuesday. If it does not go down, then there are options that M. Gomes mentioned regarding other towns. S. Cable will not bring that up in this meeting as they will have to go before negotiations however she did mention the possibility of furlough days.

The \$30,000 allocated to Mathies Park has been reduced to \$10,000.

It was noted that the school brings on a 1.13 mil increase without any changes. Our budget and the school budget brings us to a 2.5 mil rate increase.

S. Cable noted that we may have to cut some of the support we give to sports. W. Hopkinson asked then where would our priorities be.

D. Sorrentino mentioned that with any more cuts, at what point will be able to run the town?

B. Ploss suggested that we bring the budget to the town and let them decided.

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The Public Works Director was discussed. It was noted that if you remove the Activities Director then you cannot add a Public Works Director. S. Cable's vote is to not add either. She suggested that if any wants to add these positions then they should go to the people to ask them. S. Cable noted that in this hard economy, she can't justify all the extra programs, something has to give.

M. Gomes mentioned the phone system that was needed to update the Town Hall. A. Choi asked if he could run half through this budget and the other half through next year's budget. The answer was yes.

A. Choi asked if there were any other items that they could do the same thing with. The same can be done with re-vals.

Whether or not we need an over-night police shift was discussed. S. Cable explained that crime has gone up and we cannot do without the overnight police shift.

The topic of garbage pick-up every other week was mentioned as a possibility.

M. Gomes pointed out that taxes are still coming in good and the current budget is on track.

M. Krenesky questioned whether we would need furloughs before the end of this fiscal year. M. Gomes said that he does not know about that. All will have to look at the final number and decide if they want to go forward with this mil rate.

S. Cable asked regarding the new police car, if we really need one. She noted that would make 3 new vehicles for the police.

A. Choi asked if there is any magic number that the Board of Finance is looking for. He noted that if you go through the budget and take off all the big ticket items (such as benefits which are not going to be cut) then everything else is peanuts. He suggested that we be realistic regarding time management and the budget at hand. It was noted that both boards have chipped away at the budget at all the other meetings and workshops. All that is left which would make a difference are the big ticket items.

M. Gomes explained that they put \$100,000 in the budget and put another \$100,000 in fund balance. One of the biggest items is a repair job to the sewer plant for \$114,000.

G. Smith noted that he is in agreement with A. Choi that the budget is what it is and anything else would just be nickels and dimes and also be doing a disservice to the town.

S. Cable noted that the town is doing better than a lot of towns around us and that she has received a lot of grant money.

A. Choi respectfully suggested that if they haven't done so already, they should be looking at the big ticket items; can any of those be put off, phased, deferred or even back-ended into the end of the year whereas if the budget runs favorably then it becomes a legitimate expense at the end of the term.

S. Cable noted that was a good suggestion and asked M. Gomes to look at anything that could be put off until the end of the next fiscal year or phase any items (re-val is phased in and the phone system is over two budgets). M. Gomes will go through the revenues again and if he can make any adjustments he will certainly do that.

A. Choi asked if there is any way to follow up on the change of the school allocation. S. Cable will look into it. W. Hopkinson re-iterated that it is such a large "swing" she wonders if the numbers were correct last year.

G. Smith suggested that when we present the budget, it is shown as what it is and what we need with the hard cuts standing by. Let the town decide how they want to effectively cut their taxes such as police overtime and town road, i.e., chip sealing. Maybe trash pick-up should be every other week - S. Cable will ask the question.

In summary, we will go to a public hearing and present it as an operating budget with the school in there as well. This budget is at bare bones and if we have to cut, this is where we will cut and the town will have to decide; for instance, there is an additional \$36,000 for the library. Other items would include the fire-works, lights at the fields, family day, turn off street lights. S. Cable

mentioned that we pay for the police coverage for the carnival (as kind of a give back to volunteerism) and other events.

B. Ploss suggested that the selectmen put together a list of items that can be removed based on the response from the town.

A bullet list of all the cuts that will have to be made should be accompanied by a bullet list of all the grants we receive to help run the town.

The next budget workshop is scheduled for April 13th immediately following the Regular Board of Finance meeting.

G. Smith asked if we would be discussing salaries. S. Cable responded by saying that this is not the time to increase salaries however she asked if anyone wanted to add anything regarding the selectmen salaries. M. Krenesky stated that this conversation continues to be delayed. He noted that we continue to run a large corporation with part-time employees. S. Cable suggested that once this budget passes, then they should begin laying out what is needed in a 5 year plan. The town people should be educated. S. Cable noted that what keeps the community running is having good people running each department. These are all workshops that people should be looking into.

In summary it's a .9 increase in mil rate for the town alone. That includes taking \$40K from park and rec, increasing phones \$12.5K, adding in \$200,000 for waste water treatment in fund balance, adding in \$6,900 for police car lease and \$9000 for a catch basin.

L. Krepinevich would like trash pick-up every other week to be looked into.

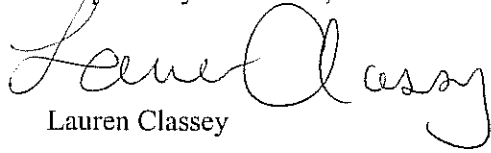
W. Hopkinson will try and put together some type of presentation and someone can put together the lists of possible cuts and grants.

G. Smith wanted to know how many houses are tied into the sewers today. S. Cable will get an answer for him.

B. Ploss asked if they could have that number in advance.

B. Ploss motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 PM. A. Choi 2nd the meeting. All voted aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lauren Classey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Lauren Classey

Clerk for the Board of Finance

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