

**Beacon Falls Board of Finance**  
**10 Maple Ave.**  
**Beacon Falls, CT 06403**



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting**  
**December 11, 2012**  
**MINUTES**  
**(Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)**

**1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Marc Bronn called the meeting to order at 7:33

Members present: Jim Huk, Joe Dowdell, Jack Levine, Brian Ploss

Members absent: Robert Doiron

Others present: First Selectman Gerard Smith, Selectman Dave D'Amico, Selectman Chris Bielik, Town Treasurer Mike Krenesky, Financial Manager Manny Gomes, Assistant Librarian Susan Dowdell, Former First Selectman Susan Cable, Registrar Kathy Grace, and about 6 other townspeople

**2. Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2012**

Motion to accept the November 13, 2012 Regular Monthly meeting minutes: Levine/Ploss; all aye. Joe Dowdell abstained as he was not at the November 13, 2012 meeting.

**3. Comments from the Public -**

Mary Ann Holloway – Dolly Drive – as a former Board of Finance chairman, she asked why the Board of Finance changed their agenda format between the October and November meetings specifically why changing the report from Board of Selectmen to First Selectman Report.

Jack Levine explained why that change was made. At previous meetings, with the selectmen sitting at the same meeting table as the Board of Finance members, it looked like all the selectmen were part of the Board of Finance. J. Levine considers the Board of Finance an independent board and should conduct business in an independent way. After the public comment portion of the Board of Finance agenda, the meeting continued just as the Board of Selectmen's meeting would. The First Selectman is an ex officio member, by law, of all boards and commissions. J. Levine continued that the Board of Finance voted unanimously to change the format of the BOF meeting.

M. Holloway asked if all the selectmen are involved in providing this report and when do the other selectmen see the report.

Chairman Marc Bronn explained that this was an oral report, not written.

M. Holloway stated that Beacon Falls has a town meeting form of government, and with only a First Selectman report, it seemed as if the other selectmen are not involved in the Board of Finance meetings. She raised a concern that the other selectman would not be able to comment on the First Selectman's report.

Joe Dowdell said he researched, for his own benefit, how Board of Finance meeting agendas are formatted in about 10 other towns in the area compared to Beacon Falls.

Chris Bielik – Rice Lane Ext - pointed out that there was no official vote noted in the October 2012 meeting minutes to change the agenda format. However he acknowledged that the chairman can change the agenda at his discretion.

J. Levine reiterated that people outside the Board of Finance members and First Selectman are not allowed at the meeting table unless invited by the BOF.

C. Bielik asked that the record accurately show that there was no official vote to change the agenda.

J. Levine admitted he misspoke and that the Board of Finance did not formally vote to change future agendas; it was suggested after the October 2012 had adjourned.

Mary Ellen Fernandes – South Circle – said the Board of Finance wasn't acting as independent board if they had to look to other towns for input. She would like all three selectmen involved in the Board of Finance meetings because all three selectmen were elected.

Mike Krenesky – Maple Ave – spoke that as a former selectman, outside of Board of Selectmen meetings, he was a guest at other meetings and had no authority to speak unless invited. While a serving as a selectman, he had no expectation to speak if he attended Board of Finance meetings. He added that it was considered the norm not to include all the selectmen.

Kathy Grace – Cedar Circle - said she could not understand why all three selectman aren't included in the Board of Finance meeting and be part of the selectman's report. She expressed her concern that the Board of Finance was discounting all the people who voted for all three selectmen.

Ned Grace – Cedar Circle - commented that the Board of Finance has a right to do what has been done, but that it seemed to be a successful attempt to reign in the selectmen's discussions. He asked if comments from other selectman have been valued.

Chairman Marc Bronn stated that the selectmen's comments were intelligent and valued but that constant interjections were disrupting the flow Board of Finance meetings.

Susan Cable - Blackberry Hill Rd – commented that meetings are run more efficiently when there's an agenda. She liked seeing the public comment twice on the Board of Finance agenda. She said there is a perception out there that the Board of Finance is a "rubber stamp" for the current Board of Selectmen. She hoped that the Board of Finance

will work with the Board of Selectmen and Beacon Falls Finance Manager to create the budget, and that it was important to represent the people.

J. Levine repeated that his recommendation to change the agenda included two opportunities for public comment in case further comments were needed. He stated that the Board of Finance is an independent board and respectively stated that he found it insulting to assume otherwise.

Chairman Marc Bronn thanked everyone for voicing their opinions.

4. **Treasurer's Report** – Mike Krenesky  
Reports were distributed to members for review.
5. **Tax Collector's Report** – Ursula Henry  
Reports were distributed to members for review.  
Kudos from Jack Levine for including the prior year collection data.
6. **Town Clerk's Report** – Len Greene, Sr.  
Reports were distributed to members for review.
7. **Finance Manager's Report** – Manny Gomes  
Reports were distributed to members for review.

Jack Levine asked Manny Gomes how the town was doing on collecting taxes. M. Gomes explained there was one deficit under the Town Clerk due to a change which occurred in May 2012. The town clerk had to then be run through payroll system. It will continue to show a deficit through the end of the year but the final result will be zero by the end of the year.

Audit comments: M. Gomes said issues were addressed last year as they were received.

J. Levine requested a monthly report of any outstanding town audit issues.

M. Gomes said for the current audit, the majority of work done was finished in about a week and that everything went smoothly. There was a snag with the financial software, but the problem was fixed. The consultant working on the employee benefits program calculation was slow and that was the only outstanding audit item. This process of a full evaluation started in June 2012 and every 3 years a full evaluation must be done.

M. Gomes stated that software RFPs were due on Friday December 14.

- a. Board Clerk's Invoice: Motion to accept clerk's invoice requesting payment for the November 13, 2012 meeting and associated administrative work and pay the bill as submitted: Levine/Dowdell; all aye.
- b. Update on addressing any town audit concerns
- c. RFP for a town auditor – to go out in January or February 2013

**8. First Selectman Report - none**

- a. Transfers – none

**9. Old Business**

- a. Report from Joe Dowdell on Region 16 budget process –

The last meeting ran from 5 PM until 4 AM.

Currently the teacher contract is still in the negotiation process.

He has no public input but has input privately. He acts as an observer the same as the Prospect Board of Finance representative.

He said the Region 16 Board of Education was close to an agreement with the teachers and that a new 3 year contract should be completed on 12/12/12.

**10. New Business**

- a. Budget preparation process and calendar

M. Gomes will gather budgets from departments to work on capital project numbers.

J. Levine suggested having one joint meeting between the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance to have the process explained of what's in the budget and why, and identify any concerns. He suggested concentrating on those areas, and out of fairness, letting each department advocate for their budget as cuts are made.

J. Huk compiled a list of assets and built a spreadsheet that he will share with the Boards of Finance and Selectmen. This list shows when to buy things to replace things as they approach their end of life. This was developed as a tool so the Board of Finance doesn't get blindsided by requests for capitol purchases. J. Levine reminded J. Huk that if it is sent to the Board of Finance members, it will become a public document. J. Levine suggested sending it to the Board of Selectmen to help plan out their budget and use as background info. J. Huk stated that this was a baseline for items.

M. Gomes added that he requested a 5 year capitol plan from each town department.

**ACTION:** Board of Finance clerk will forward the town asset spreadsheet compiled by Jim Huk to the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen.

**11. Correspondence –**

Received a letter from the State Commission of Education notifying that Region 16 negotiations would go into arbitration on December 14, 2012 at 0830 if an agreement was not reached by then, (the deadline to have a new contract in place).

CT Conference of Municipalities Candidate Bulletin, November 2012

**12. Comments from the Public - none**

**13. Adjournment**

The next special monthly meeting will be Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at 7:30 PM.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM: Bronn/Dowdell; all aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Melville  
Clerk for the Board of Finance