

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



BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Regular Monthly Meeting
October 8, 2013
MINUTES
(Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Jim Huk called the meeting to order at 7:30

Members present: Joe Dowdell, Robert Doiron Brian Ploss

Members absent: Marc Bronn, Jack Levine

Others present: First Selectman Gerard Smith, Selectman Chris Bielik, Town Treasurer Mike Krenesky, Town Clerk Len Greene and one member of the public

2. Approval of Minutes – September 10, 2013 - tabled

Motion to accept the September 10, 2013 regular monthly meeting minutes: Huk/Dowdell; no discussion; all aye. R. Doiron abstained as he was not at the September 10, 2013 meeting.

3. Comments from the Public

Gary Komarowsky, 15 Second St: expressed his sincere appreciation for the work done by the Board of Finance on this year's budget. He urged the BOF to consider funding land acquisition in the next budget cycle especially for the downtown area. He commented that for downtown revitalization and to attract more businesses into town especially on Main Street, there should be downtown property available. The town will need money to buy any land. He noted that it would take several budget cycles to garner enough money to purchase any land.

4. Treasurer's Report - Mike Krenesky

Reports were distributed to members for review.

J. Huk thanked M. Krenesky for providing a visual report using graphs. J. Huk asked about any risk of the general fund balance getting too low, to 900k, as tax collection catches up with spending. J. Huk asked if there was a balance that would represent a significant risk to the town. M. Krenesky said that it was dependent on the time of year and bills that are due. He also said that it might be possible to get a more detailed analysis around the balances within a month but it would require more work in Excel.

M. Krenesky noted that to pay the primary bills (utilities and payroll) the town keeps two payroll cycles in reserve.

5. Tax Collector's Report - from Ursula Henry

The August tax collector's report was received 6 days after the September Board of Finance meeting, in hard copy only.

Motion to request the tax collector submit the monthly tax collector's report digitally to the Board of Finance on the Friday before their monthly meeting: Huk/Dowdell; no discussion; all aye.

Motion to request the tax collector develop a projection of tax collection rate relative to the prior year: Huk/Dowdell; no discussion; all aye.

a. Delinquent taxes

J. Huk asked First Selectman G. Smith the status of delinquent taxes.

G. Smith noted the list of delinquent taxes would have to be scrubbed to get an accurate total because some of the information was too old going back 15 years. He added that some car taxes were uncollectable and some of the businesses were no longer in business and that some of those taxes were uncollectible.

G. Smith informed the Board of Finance that the finance department will prepare and send out demand letters to everyone on the delinquent tax list. They will be letters giving a 30 day notice to pay the outstanding taxes or arrange a payment plan to the town. After the 30 days, the sheriff will then contact the property owner. The finance department was trying to identify an easy way to create this letter, possibly using a mail merge. J. Huk offered his assistance in preparing this.

R. Doiron commented that a list of uncollectable taxes was given to the Board of Finance many years ago and the BOF had to formally accept it.

G. Smith will ask the tax collector's office if such a list was available.

J. Huk asked if there was a town ordinance or policy that mandates delinquent taxes. No one present was aware of one.

6. Town Clerk's Report – from Len Greene, Sr.
Reports were distributed to members for review.

L. Greene – ACS computer program, 4 new computers, server, printer & scanner were installed. The town received a check for \$22,204.80 for overpayment from ACS which will go into the general fund.

7. Finance Manager's Report – Manny Gomes not present at meeting

a. Status of general fund

10.45% balance probably does not reflect the worst case scenario as the balance is high due to recently collected taxes. The most important number would be what the balance would be in a month like July, which is typically the lowest balance.

b. Explanation of line 10-39-1415 of Regional Council of Gov'ts bill - tabled

c. Update on finance software

M. Krenesky commented that the software was still being installed.

G Smith commented that it was installed but still being configured.

d. Update on audit

G. Smith commented that the auditors have been at the town hall gathering information.

e. Board Clerk's Invoice: Motion to accept clerk's invoice requesting payment for the September 10, 2013 meeting and associated administrative work and pay the bill as submitted: Doiron/Dowdell; all aye.

8. First Selectman's Report

J. Dowdell asked why the Senior Center Telephone line item used 50% of its budget in 3 months.

G. Smith explained that a phone line was pulled from town hall and moved to senior center, which now it has 2 phone lines one for senior center and one for the mini bus. The installation of the land line at the senior center created this expense.

G. Smith added that cell phones, land lines, fax and data lines are all lumped into one town telephone bill which can be separated later. Currently, the one line item became a catchall for all town phone services and would show a deficit until the line items are realigned.

a. Transfers: none

G. Smith suggested that when the FEMA grant application was due, to hire a professional grant writer for the fire truck grant. The grant writer's fee can be taken from the consultant's budget line item and this fee can be incorporated into the grant.

G. Smith noted that Doug Coulter was no longer the building inspector. The fire department roof replacement project is on hold because the contracted vendor was

not certain if they can provide the services within the bidded amount. Navis & Young was hired to inspect the roof to determine the requirements for this type of roof, which would help the vendor decide if they would provide the service within the bidded amount.

b. Update on Purchase Order policy

J. Huk asked for clarification that any expenditures over \$300 has to be approved by G. Smith, then it will go to Denise in the finance office to ensure the money was in the budget before she writes a check.

G. Smith commented that this system seemed to be working to avoid deficits.

B. Ploss suggested that the finance clerk warn the department head when 80% of their budget had been spent.

R. Doiron commented that this was unnecessary additional work for the finance clerk because the department heads get a monthly budget report and know what they have left in their budget.

c. Update on Wastewater Treatment Plant

G. Smith noted that the town applied for a DEEP grant for reimbursement.

G. Smith commented that at the last close out meeting for the Streetscape project, it was suggested to have a clerk of the works, a third party, on any project as well, to oversee the engineers working on the project to keep the job under control.

R. Doiron asked the status of the retaining wall work on route 42.

G. Smith said it was currently in the middle of a crew change. The new wall will be a façade to cover the existing wall and should be completed by the end of the year.

9. Unfinished Business

a. Status of Town Clerk Compensation

Town Clerk Len Greene said he got a legal opinion on the town clerk compensation change and that because the town clerk is a 4-year term and Beacon Falls has a town meeting form of government, any changes to compensation can be made at anytime during the town clerk's term as it would be put to a vote at a town meeting to change the ordinance.

L. Greene suggested making the Town Clerk a salaried position or have the town cover the lost revenue incurred. He said he checked with other towns using the fee-based system for their Town Clerk and those towns have the Board of Selectmen cover the difference by splitting the recording fee.

J. Huk suggested letting the current process continue of the full amount of a fee going to the town then transfer the money to the town clerk salary line item.

R. Doiron suggested setting a policy for compensation or else wait until the end of the budget year to transfer money to compensate the town clerk.

Motion to compensate the town clerk via repayment of \$10 per recording fee with the excess transferred to the town's general fund for FY 2013-14: Huk/Dowdell; no discussion; all aye.

L. Greene will inform the Board of Finance at their next meeting what the shortfall amount is.

10. New Business

a. 2014 Meeting Schedule – distributed to members, clerk will file with Beacon Falls Town Clerk

Motion to approve the 2014 Board of Finance meeting schedule: Doiron/Dowdell; no discussion; all aye.

b. 3-5 year Capital Plan

Motion to have Jim Huk work with the First Selectman's office and the town business manager to create a 3-5 year business plan and to have it in place by the next budget cycle: Huk/Doiron; no discussion; all aye.

11. Correspondence

- letter from Joe Pavlik about the collection of delinquent taxes

12. Comments from the Public - none

13. Adjournment

The next regular monthly meeting will be Tuesday, November 12, 2013 at 7:30 PM.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 PM: Dowdell/Doiron; all aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Melville
Board of Finance, Clerk