

Beacon Falls Board of Finance
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403



BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Public Hearing
April 22, 2015
REVISED MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Board of Finance Members Present: Jack Levine, Joe Dowdell, Joe Rodorigo, Bob Doiron, Marc Bronn, and Brian Ploss

Board of Selectmen Members Present: First Selectman Chris Bielik, Selectman Peter Betkoski, and Selectman Dom Sorrentino

Tom Broesler, Finance Manager

Members of the Public Present: 14

Chairman Jack Levine called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00P.M.

2. Introductions / Process for Public Comments

J. Levine thanked the members of the public that attended the Public Hearing tonight. He informed everyone that a meeting of the Board of Finance will be held at the conclusion of the Public Hearing to finalize the 2015-2016 budget. J. Levine introduced himself, the members of the Board of Finance, the clerk for the Board of Finance, and the members of the Board of Selectmen.

J. Levine then explained the process for public comment. It was indicated that residents and taxpayers of Beacon Falls would be able to speak during the questions and comments part of the agenda. Anyone who wants to speak will need to state their name and address, and limit their questions and comments to 3 minutes. He asked to please refrain from personal attacks and to questions and comments to just the 2015-2016 budget.

J. Levine mentioned that he forgot to introduce Tom Broesler, the Finance Manager. Also, the clerk needed to read the call for tonight's Public Hearing. M. Scirpo read the call as stated in the legal notice published in the Waterbury Republican.

J. Levine indicated that the Board of Finance unanimously voted for the Selectmen's Proposed 2015-2016 Budget which has an increase of \$36,161. Every effort was made to take into consideration what is needed to run the town and to keep the taxes low. There were a couple of typographical errors in the budget that was in the Town Clerk's office and has been corrected in the documents handed out for tonight's Public Hearing.

3. Overview of the Selectmen's Proposed 2015-2016 Budget

J. Levine highlighted a few of the topics in the budget. The elected officials' salaries on pages 1 & 2 are up at an increase of \$18,485. It was felt by both Boards that the town officials were being underpaid. CCM's information was looked at and it was found that Beacon Falls is under what most towns are paying their officials. There is a net decrease in benefits with social security and medical insurance being lower, but with worker's compensation being higher. On page 10, the police department is showing an increase of \$16,879 for the Resident Trooper. This is due to the State having the municipalities paying for the pay and benefits that is currently paid by the State. The wages for the part-time patrol has been increased by \$23,552. This is due to the fact that the town would like to have 24/7 coverage. The extra duty wages of \$50,000 is being offset by the Fees Collected of \$50,000. This is in the budget in a new way since the auditors reported that many other towns use this method.

In regards to Highway Maintenance, snow removal materials have been underfunded and an increase of \$20,000 is proposed. The chip sealing program was decreased by \$30,000. The town aid road maintenance account does not have a budget for 2015-2016 nor did it have it for 2014-2015. The town plans to receive a state grant at some time in the future and the Board of Selectmen will conduct a Town Meeting when notified that funds are available to be spent on road work.

J. Levine indicated that C. Bielik will talk about the proposal for the bond for road repairs. C. Bielik indicated that there is a historical amount of funding received annually from the State for town road aid. The State gives the money to the town and historically, it is folded into the General Revenue section and used it to offset the rest of the regular budget. The roads in town need help and last week at a town meeting, there was \$500,000 appropriated to general roads repairs. C Bielik explained the plan of using the money from the State and from the surplus, and using the money to use a bond. It is an estimated amount of \$2,000,000.

J. Levine noted that the call for tonight's Public Hearing was not approved. He asked for a motion to approve the call as read by the clerk.

Motion to approve the call for tonight's Public Hearing as read by the clerk: Ned Grace/Richard Minnick; no discussion; all ayes, no nays, and no abstentions.

Voting was done by show of hands.

J. Levine continued with the waste water treatment plant on page 12. It was noted that the sludge processing is up \$10,000; nitrogen credits are up \$83,000; and equipment replacement costs are down \$57,000. Page 15 has a listing of special projects totaling \$76,000 that are including in the Proposed 2015-2016 Budget. There are additional special projects on page 18 that are not included in the Proposed 2015-2016 Budget. The additional special projects are planned to be recommended to the town at a town meeting with the intention of using a portion of the General Fund balance to pay for them.

J. Levine indicated that this budget is up by .6%, where last year it was up by .4%.

4. Questions and Comments

J. Levine asked if there was anyone who would like to speak, and to come to the microphone at the front of the auditorium.

Richard Minnick, 147 Cedar Lane, thanked everyone for putting together the budget. He would like to have the Board of Finance consider adding into the budget as suggested by the Board of Selectmen, the 7th person to the Public Works Department. R Minnick believes that there are justifications to have that 7th person. He began by indicating back 6 years ago, the Inland Wetlands Commission was given the authority to go ahead with a study to look at problems with storm water. There were problems with storm water on such roads as Burton Road, West Road, and Beacon Valley Road. The problems are still there. There were recommendations, drawings made, money was budgeted, and a work schedule was planned. It was not implemented because there were not enough crew members. Seasonal help could be hired to help but cannot be since there is not the 7th person in the department.

J. Levine indicated that R. Minnick's three minutes are up and he is welcomed to come back up at another time. There was no other member of the public that came forth to speak at this time. R. Minnick came back to the microphone to continue his comments.

R. Minnick spoke in regards to the detention basins. Two years ago, another study was done by the Inland Wetlands Commission. It was reviewed that there are 22 detention basins in this town that need to be maintained. That number does not include the ones that the region is responsible for maintaining. FEMA asked to review the program to maintaining the detention basins near the conclusion of the review. The minimum number of the detention basins in town has been maintained. The additional person would help in having the maintenance being done. Again, seasonal help would be able to help in this as well.

R. Minnick mentioned that recent legislation mandates the cleaning and inspection of the catch basins. The storm water coming out of them must be tested and reports submitted.

There are substantial fines that are proposed at the State Legislature. It will cost the town substantial money if this is not implemented. Also, Toby's Pond is being maintained mainly by volunteers. The town crew needs to keep the destination points in town maintained. People from out of town are visiting these places.

R. Minnick would like the Board of Finance to reconsider hiring the 7th person. He thanked the Boards for their time.

J. Levine asked three times if there were any more questions and/or comments and there were none. C. Bielik thanked everyone on the two Boards for their hard work in preparing the Proposed 2015-2016 Budget.

5. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, J. Levine asked for a motion to adjourn tonight's Public Hearing.

Motion to adjourn tonight's meeting at 7:30 P.M.: **Bob Doiron/Arlene Sorrentino; no discussion; all ayes, no nays, and no abstentions.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Scirpo
Clerk, Board of Finance