

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



BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Public Hearing
May 12, 2016
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order/Pledge to the Flag

Chairman Joe Rodorigo called the Board of Finance Public Hearing to order at 7:01 PM.

Board of Finance Members Present: Joe Rodorigo, Joe Dowdell, Tom Pratt, Marc Bronn, and Brian Ploss.

Board of Finance Member Not Present: Jim Huk

Board of Selectmen Members Present: First Selectman Chris Bielik, Selectman Peter Betkoski (arrived at 7:20 PM), and Selectman Mike Krenesky

Others Present: Sue Dowdell; Tom Broesler; Helen Mis; Susan Cable; Martha Melville; Wanda Mulinski; Dom and Arlene Sorrentino; and Luke Marshall, Citizens News.

2. Municipal Budget for the Town of Beacon Falls, CT, for the Fiscal Year 2016/2017

J. Rodorigo started with a few highlights from the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2016/2017.

At 7:05 PM, J. Rodorigo opened the Public Hearing to comments, questions, concerns.

Susan Cable, Blackberry Hill, congratulated the Board for the budget, for the school district on being resourceful and cutting their expenses, and to the Tax Collector for coming up with plans in helping people in difficult times.

S. Cable noted Pg. 4, Budget Line Item for Community Media Center, where there is no money on that line item. S. Cable mentioned that there should be some money there in order to show that there are plans for the future, which is needed when applying for grants and funding. S. Cable also noted that, on Pg. 7, Budget Line Item for Membership/Marketing shows an amount of \$10,000. Her suggestion would be to change that to \$5,000 and have the other \$5,000 for an EDC Consultant.

Martha Melville, Burton Road, echoed the suggestions that S. Cable noted. M. Melville believes that there should be some money put into the budget for a building committee for a new library or community center.

Sue Dowdell, Wolfe Avenue, presented copies of two emails that she received from residents that support of the library project. S. Dowdell echoed what has already been said and wanted to call the Board's attention to a timeline. The library has been working on a strategic plan and distributed a schedule to the Boards. If the target opening date is in conjunction with the town's 150th anniversary of the town in June 2021, then there are certain timelines that would need to be met. S. Dowdell noted that in order to be eligible for the \$1,000,000 state aid grant, then preliminary drawings must be submitted by August 2017. Money would have to be in this coming fiscal year's budget in order for an architect to prepare the drawings.

J. Rodorigo responded to the EDC question by S. Cable first. He agrees with doing something and the number one thing that we can do for the development of Beacon Falls is to have a stable mil rate. J. Rodorigo indicated that he asked the EDC for their plan as to how they are going to acquire the information. The EDC did not request for someone and the Board of Finance cannot put money in that line item if they do not request for it.

J. Rodorigo responded to the Library question next. He noted that the process has been stalled for about 5 years and the Trustees of the Library have to vote to bring the question to the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen would discuss on putting a building committee together. J. Rodorigo indicated that he would like to see a clear vision on what the townspeople would like to see and this year would be good since it could be put on the ballot in this November's election. S. Dowdell indicated that you cannot give an estimate cost without having preliminary drawings done. J. Rodorigo indicated that the Bailey Report that he has gives an estimated cost. J. Dowdell asked how old is that report and J. Rodorigo indicated that it is 8 years old and needs to be updated. The report from 8 years ago gave an estimated cost of almost \$4,000,000. J. Rodorigo indicated that the Board needs to know if the public wants this project before funding the requested \$39,000.

S. Dowdell noted the survey from last year indicated that 90% of the people felt that it was important or very important. S. Dowdell asked for the step-by-step process that should be done. J. Rodorigo indicated that the Board of Trustees need to ask the Board of Selectmen to form a Building Committee.

C. Bielik indicated that a Building Committee should be a good cross section of representatives that could give expert opinions. C. Bielik will go back to the list from 5 years ago and see if anyone is still interested. C. Bielik indicated that the Building Committee would bring a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen as to the best use of the property for the town. After that recommendation is made, then the Board could go to the town.

C. Bielik noted that when the town voted to acquire the property on Wolfe Avenue in 2008, it was voted on to acquire the property for the building of a library or some other municipal use. C. Bielik noted that we need to better, current data. C. Bielik indicated that the Building Committee needs to come first prior to committing money to it. S. Dowdell asked what about money for a clerk. C. Bielik indicated that it is premature to commit the \$39,000 into the budget now.

J. Dowdell indicated that we cannot use a report that is 8 years old. J. Dowdell indicated that money for a clerk is not being funded for a Building Committee and we cannot keep taking money from Contingency. S. Cable indicated that the Building Committee is two-fold. It needs a Development Committee/Building Committee and you need to have some minimum amount of funds there. S Cable asked to why there is no money in the budget to take down the Lewis House. S. Cable noted that P & Z passed a vote to take down the house. C. Bielik indicated that there is a plan to allocate funding for that purpose.

J. Rodorigo asked if there were any further questions or comments pertaining to the budget and there were none at this time.

3. Adjournment

With no further questions or comments, J. Rodorigo asked for a motion to adjourn tonight's Public Hearing.

Motion to adjourn tonight's Board of Finance's Public Hearing at 7:26 P.M.:
Ploss/Pratt;no discussion; all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Scirpo
Clerk,Board of Finance