

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



BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Budget Workshop
April 25, 2017
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Alliance

Board Members Present: Joe Rodorigo, Tom Pratt, Marc Bronn (left at 8:45 PM), and Jim Huk

Not Present: Joe Dowdell and Brian Ploss

Others Present: First Selectman Chris Bielik (arrived at 7:06 PM); T. Broesler, Finance Manager; Mary Ann Holloway, Tax Collector

Chairman J. Rodorigo called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

J. Rodorigo noted that every member of the Board of Finance and every member of the Board of Selectmen was informed of this meeting. J. Rodorigo also noted that voting will not take place tonight since it is not on the agenda. J. Rodorigo indicated that by the end of tonight, a recommendation draft project will be the outcome, for draft purposes only.

J. Rodorigo indicated that a letter was sent to the Board of Education, which was posted on Facebook. J. Rodorigo also indicated that he spoke with Superintendent Mike Yamin on Monday. J. Rodorigo noted that the calculation for Special Education is out of the Governor's budget. The Legislation met today and said that it should be in the budget. The Board of Education is moving forward with their budget as it stands for a vote on the first Monday in May. J. Rodorigo noted that the amount to Beacon Falls is \$1,000,000 and the way the budget works for Region 16 is that a block number is appropriated. That number is approximately \$41,000,000, and once it is appropriated, it could be spent however the Board of Education wants.

Since the Special Education money is a "floating" number, it should not be billed to the Town of Beacon Falls. J. Rodorigo noted that M. Yamin indicated that the budget is going through the way it is proposed.

2. Public Comment

J. Rodorigo asked three times and there were no public comments made at this time.

3. Dept. Head/Chairperson Comment

Mary Anne Holloway, Tax Collector, was wondering if the attorney review the possible change in the Tax Collector's position. C. Bielik indicated that Town Attorney reviewed the possible change and is not ready to give a legal opinion since he is not completely finished. C. Bielik noted that the Special Act of 1949 was cited noting that it established all the elected positions in the Town of Beacon Falls and this act is still valid. C. Bielik indicated that the Town is unable make any changes in the position without a Legislative Act. During a session, one of the Legislators must introduce a piece of Legislation to affect that change and it is not possible during the current Legislation session. It needed to be introduced during the first week of January.

C. Bielik indicated that based on this information, it does not look as if it would be possible to remove the Tax Collector position for the November 2017 election. C. Bielik also indicated that by having the question of removing the Tax Collector from an elected position and making it a "hired" position as a referendum question on the November 2017 ballot, then it can be presented to one of the Legislators for their introduction in the January 2018 session.

4. Budget Workshop - Discussion

The Members reviewed the First Selectman section of the proposed budget. It was noted that the Grant Writer is a new line item/new expense but is offset on the revenue side. It was also noted that the Human Resources Specialist is a new line item/new expense. This position was a recommendation by the Risk Assessment Committee.

The Members reviewed the Town Hall section of the proposed budget. It was noted that all the clerks for all the Boards & Commissions was combined into line item as well as the expenses for all the Boards & Commissions. The rate is set by the Board of Selectmen. It was also noted that the Utilities – Heat, Water, & Electricity line item was decreased to \$24,000 after a brief discussion. The Education line item was discussed and the increase is due to the continuing education requirements for the Building Inspector.

The Members reviewed the Town Clerk section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Tax Collector section of the proposed budget. It was noted that the Wages- Tax Collector was decreased to \$12,000.

The Members reviewed the Treasurer section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Building Inspector section of the proposed budget. It was noted that the Wages – Building Inspector was decreased to \$27,300.

The Members reviewed the Employee Benefits section of the proposed budget. It was noted that Wage Salary Adjustments was increased to \$43,000. It was also noted that Medical Insurance was decreased to \$324,500. It was also noted that Workers Compensation still needs to be confirmed.

The Members reviewed the Board of Assessors section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Board of Assessment Appeals section of the proposed budget. It was noted that Wages – Bd. of Appeals was decreased to \$1,800. J. Rodorigo mentioned that it is statutory to what is paid.

The Members reviewed the Zoning Board of Appeals section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Board of Finance section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Finance Department section of the proposed budget. It was noted that Wages – temporary help was removed with the possibility of getting a college intern.

The Members reviewed the Economic Development Comm. section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Inland Wetlands Commission section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Conservation Commission section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Planning & Zoning Commission section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Water Pollution Control Authority section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Registrars of Voters section of the proposed budget. It was noted that Wages – Registrars (2) was corrected to \$26,400. J. Rodorigo reviewed the data for towns in CT between 5,000 and 7,500 people and the highest paid Registrar of Voters is Beacon Falls. J. Huk asked about the training and T. Broesler & J. Rodorigo indicated that it is state mandated for training to be done and the funds need to be in the line item.

The Members reviewed the Professional Fees section of the proposed budget. J. Rodorigo mentioned that in regards to Engineering & Consultants, there are no large-scaled projects coming up, we should require less Engineering, and the line item has not been spent. T. Broesler noted that Nafis & Young does a lot of their billing in June. After a brief

discussion, J. Rodorigo noted that Dave Prickett will be paid from this line item. It was noted that the Engineering & Consultants was decreased to \$40,000. The Members reviewed the Insurance section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Agency Membership section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Misc. Boards & Commissions section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Fire and EMS Services section of the proposed budget. C. Bielik mentioned that the Fire Dept. had costs associated to Engine 1 two years ago and major repairs to one of the ambulances this year. It was noted that the Vehicle Repairs – FD was decreased to \$18,000. J. Rodorigo asked for the Physicals/Health & Wellness to be reviewed for a better number. J. Rodorigo and T. Pratt will be reviewing the Departmental Supplies.

J. Rodorigo indicated that he reviewed the information from around the state regarding the Chief Stipend. There are 27 towns between 5,000 and 10,000 people. There are 2 towns between 5,000 and 7,500 people who pay their Fire Chief – East Granby pays \$3,600 in a stipend and Westbrook pays \$8,000 in a stipend – and 25 towns do not pay a stipend to the Fire Chief. J. Rodorigo indicated that he is not opposed to something in a further conversation and not opposed to discussing this further but \$20,000 is not realistic based on the data. J. Rodorigo indicated the Pay-per-Call needs to be reviewed.

The Members reviewed the Fire Marshal section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Emergency Management section of the proposed budget. T. Pratt asked about the Emergency Generator and where it is dedicated. T. Pratt noted that the Police Dept. is the only town building that does not have a generator. C. Bielik mentioned that it would be a Capital Project.

The Members reviewed the Safety Committee section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Water Hydrants section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Police section of the proposed budget. J. Rodorigo noted that Police Lt. needs to be discussed, indicating that it is a redundancy of service. The contract is the same for the Police Lt. and the Resident Trooper. J. Rodorigo reviewed the information for towns for between 5,000 and 7,500 people, Beacon Falls is the only town that has a Resident State Trooper program and an Administrative Lt. C. Bielik mentioned that it is not a redundancy since the Resident State Trooper works day shift only, not physically present for any evening or overnight shifts. The Police Lt. provides the supervisory function for the officers that the town has. C. Bielik also noted that the only time the Resident State Trooper is actually affectively supervising is at the beginning of the shift when someone comes on at 3:00 PM.

After a brief discussion, J. Rodorigo noted that a Police Lt. is no longer needed but money is needed for the Fire Marshall line item. After further discussion, J. Huk asked to have the Resident State Trooper invited to the next Board of Finance meeting.

J. Rodorigo indicated that the Risk Assessment Committee has tried to schedule a meeting for the past five months.

After a brief discussion, J. Rodorigo made a motion to defund the Police Lt. budget line item.

Motion to defund the Police Lt. position and have it off-budget, fund the Fire Marshall at a reasonable rate for 8 hours per pay period at the current rate of pay:

Rodorigo/Bronn;*discussion was by J. Huk noting that he was not prepared for discussion on this line item tonight and would like to discuss this topic at another time. J. Huk would like to do research and would like to see some facts. C. Bielik indicated that he does not dispute the fact that there are very few municipalities that have a Police Lt. like we do, and he supports and defends the position. T. Pratt asked if the 8 hours is the correct number and J. Rodorigo noted that he is using 8 hours per pay period as a placeholder; 2 ayes – J. Rodorigo and M. Bronn and 2 nays – T. Pratt and J. Huk. **Motion does not carry since it is tied.***

Motion to table the discussion of the Police Lt. until the next Board of Finance monthly meeting: **Huk/Bronn;***no discussion; all ayes.*

J. Rodorigo noted the scheduling problem and 20% of the Wages – Part Time Patrol could be fixed with the correct schedule. J. Rodorigo also noted that there needs to be a minimum shift requirement for the officers since we outfit them and train the ones who need training. C. Bielik mentioned that there is a minimum shift requirement and J. Rodorigo noted that it is not enforced. After a brief discussion, it was noted that the Wages – Part Time Patrol was decreased to \$100,000.

J. Rodorigo noted that Vehicle Maintenance should be decreased based on the fact that the Police Dept. has two new vehicles have been purchased. After a brief discussion, it was noted that Vehicle Maintenance was decreased to \$12,000.

The Members reviewed the Animal Control section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Public Safety section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Public Works section of the proposed budget. J. Rodorigo mentioned that R. Pruzinsky wants to change the Guard Rail/Line Painting line item since he wants to implement a Capital plan of guardrail replacement. After a brief discussion, it was noted that this may go under the Capital Projects rather than a line item.

The Members reviewed the Town Garage section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Community Welfare section of the proposed budget. C. Bielick noted that a line item for PH Care needs to be put back into the budget for \$500. This was previously funded and somehow was lost along the way.

The Members reviewed the Refuse section of the proposed budget. After a brief discussion, it was noted that Refuse Collection was decreased to \$234,000.

The Members reviewed the Wastewater Treatment section of the proposed budget. It was noted that Equipment Replacement was decreased to \$28,000. It was also noted that the Nitrogen Credits needs to be reviewed in order to have a real number.

The Members reviewed the Library section of the proposed budget. After a brief discussion, the Tech Librarian will not be funded. It was noted that Wages – Part Time was decreased to \$10,390. Based on the Tech Librarian not be funded, the Computer Support will need to be funded. It was noted that Computer Support was increased to \$4,375.

The Members reviewed the Parks & Recreation section of the proposed budget. J. Rodorigo mentioned that the Basketball league does not have fundraisers and the league needs to supply their own insurance since it does not come under CIRMA. The increase is based on the supplemental insurance.

The Members reviewed the Community Media Center section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Commission for Elderly section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Minibus Operations section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Senior Citizens Center section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Contingency section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Debt Service - Interest section of the proposed budget.

The Members reviewed the Capital Projects.

After calculating the changes, J. Rodorigo indicated that the operational increase of 6% of which \$313,000 is the Region. J. Rodorigo also noted that is if the State's number hold steady to what they are currently at. Beacon Falls' budget is going up by approximately \$900,000 of which \$400,000 is Debt Service to our Bond Issue. By J. Rodorigo noted that operationally, the budget is going up by \$350,000, which is not unrealistic.

J. Rodorigo indicated that better numbers are needed from the State and the budget still needs to be fine-tuned. A significant amount is due to Debt Services, mandated contracts, and the Region. J. Rodorigo also noted that everything needs to be reviewed based on the changes made today and recalculated.

5. Adjournment

J. Rodorigo reminded the Members that the regular monthly meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Assembly Room. J. Rodorigo asked to have the Resident State Trooper added to the agenda for the monthly meeting for May 9, 2017. The First Selectman will send an invitation to the Resident State Trooper to attend the next Board of Finance meeting.

With no further business to discuss tonight, J. Rodorigo asked for to motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:57 P.M.: **Huk/Pratt;** *no discussion;* all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Scirpo
Clerk, Board of Finance