

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



BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Monthly Meeting
May 9, 2017
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Alliance

Board Members Present: Joe Rodorigo, Joe Dowdell, Tom Pratt, Marc Bronn, and Jim Huk

Not Present: Brian Ploss

Others Present: First Selectman Chris Bielik; Selectman Peter Betkoski; Tom Broesler, Finance Manager; Resident State Trooper Humberto Henriques; Police Lt. Eddie Rodriguez; Doug Bousquet; Mary Ellen Fernandes; Susan Cable; Gerald Smith; and Luke Marshall, Citizens News

Chairman J. Rodorigo called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

2. Dept. Head / Chairperson Comment

J. Rodorigo asked if there were any Dept. Head or Chairs present to make a comment and there were no one present to comment at this time.

3. Public Comment

Doug Bousquet, Cedar Circle, noted that he was a part of the hiring of Eddie Rodriguez and his resume was impeccable. D. Bousquet also noted how valuable that E. Rodriguez is to the town and the Board needs to try to keep him in this town.

Gerald Smith, Lasky Road, asked if comments could be made during the agenda item on the discussion of the Resident State Trooper and J. Rodorigo indicated that comments would be allowed during the discussion at that time.

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

4. Discussion with Resident State Trooper

J. Huk indicated that this is not a discussion of Eddie Rodriguez and wanted to clarify that, as long as he has been on the Board, the budget has one line for State Trooper and now the budget is being changed to have a line item for Supervisory Fees that the State is making the town pay. The question has been made to the distinction of the role between the Police Lt. and the role of the Trooper. J. Huk indicated that this is a discussion about that role.

J. Roderigo invited the public to make their comments at this time.

Gerald Smith, Lasky Road, indicated that he is speaking to the position, noting that the challenge is coming from removing the position of the Police Lt. G. Smith mentioned that the Police Lt. handles a lot more than the Trooper. G. Smith referenced the challenging time he had with the State Police when he was the First Selectman. G. Smith noted that the State will decide what trooper is the one who will become the town's Resident State Trooper and it's the Police Lt. who handles the issues. The town needs someone who can handle the public, handle personnel, and who can bridge the gap between the Board of Selectmen and the State Police. G. Smith indicated that the position is a valuable position and is an administration that is needed.

Susan Cable, Past First Selectman, noted that 12 other towns copied the way that Beacon Falls works with the State Trooper as an example. S. Cable understands the difficulty in doing a budget but the bottom line is that this position is advantageous for our community.

Chris Bielik, Rice Lane Ext. and current First Selectman / ex officio member of the Board of Finance, indicated that the position is a necessary position in a town under the Resident State Trooper program. C. Bielik noted that he was at a meeting with CCM and they had the latest legislative update, indicating that the Governor's proposal calls for 100% payment by the towns for the Resident Trooper program and includes the Supervisory stipend. The House budget and the Senate budget proposals do not include the 100% fee and the Supervisory fee. The submissions call for it to be level set at the current 85% with no Supervisory stipend.

C. Bielik also mentioned that he emailed a copy of the legal opinion by the Town Attorney earlier this afternoon and offered a hard copy if needed. J. Roderigo asked for a hard copy.

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

J. Roderigo indicated that there seemed to be a redundancy of duties and asked Resident State Trooper Henriques what are his duties. Trooper Henriques indicated that out of the three towns, Beacon Falls is reaping the most benefit since he is the only one working

during the day. Trooper Henriques noted that, under supervisory responsibilities, he reviews the aftermath of the nighttime officers, does a post-review of the case load from the evening shifts. Last month, he ran 97 calls for service himself, including arrests.

J. Roderigo asked if the Police Lt. did not exist, what would the Resident Trooper do. Trooper Henriques indicated that the town would need to restructure, reorganize, and possibly need a 2nd Resident Trooper. J. Huk asked why is he the only person here during the day with all the part time officer the town has. J. Roderigo noted that there are 11 part timers and 3 full timers. Trooper Henriques indicated that he has asked and there are contractual obligations, but doesn't know the answer. Trooper Henriques indicated that he does the patrol schedule, as well as doing more than his fellow troopers in Bethany and Prospect. Trooper Henriques indicated that Lt. Rodriguez is responsible for vehicle maintenance, keeping everyone certified and up-to-date with training, calibrations of the laser radar detectors, daily operations of the cars, things breaking, etc. J. Huk asked for the percentage of patrol and percentage of administration. Trooper Henriques stated that it changes daily since he is the only patrol figure during the day.

C. Bielik mentioned that the town used to have 2 Resident State Trooper and was later changed to reduce down to one and the decision was made to have an Administrative Lt. to help bridge the gap. S. Cable noted that there were more officers as well. C. Bielik noted that in the past, Corporal Blakeman and the Resident State Trooper were working on the day shift and that left 2 additional, full time officers for the evening/overnight shifts and the fill-in was the part time officers. There were numerous open shifts during the evening and the overnight shifts since we were doubling up. C. Bielik noted that this way was inefficient. When Corporal Blakeman retired, the work shifts were realigned. C. Bielik indicated that there are 3 shifts – evening shift from 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM; tactical shift from 6:00 PM to 2:00 AM; and overnight shift from 12:00 AM to 8:00 AM.

M. Bronn mentioned that Trooper Henriques would have to substituted with a full timer if Trooper Henriques went to Administrative and a full-time officer would cost the town approximately \$100,000. J. Huk mentioned that the pay rate for a Corporal pay rate would be less than the Resident Trooper and has been used in the past. C. Bielik indicated that the Corporal pay rate is more than the Police Lt., and there is no pay rate for a Sargent. C. Bielik also indicated that there is flexibility in the Lt. position gives greater coverage if the part timers get extended on a shift from their full-time job. The Police Lt. fills the open shifts to allow the town not to have as many vacancies.

T. Pratt mentioned the liability and risk of removing a position who certifies our patrol personnel and town employees. J. Huk noted that no other town does it this way, they have a Corporal or a Sargent and asked what makes Beacon Falls different. Lt. Rodriguez indicated that the difference with Beacon Falls is that a Corporal is the same position as a Lt. and the Lt. position is management so when he became a Lt., E. Rodrigues was no longer a union member. Any Corporal and Sargent in any police department in the State of Connecticut has to be in the union.

J. Roderigo mentioned that three years ago, pay raises were given to part timers and opened the doors to hire as many officers as necessary to avoid holes in the schedules. J. Roderigo also mentioned that more money was budgeted for as well add hours and questioned how

many shifts have to go empty before something happens. C. Bielik indicated that new officers were brought on several years ago, but one officer left to start his own business and earning more money, another officer was injured. C. Bielik also noted that we have attempted to hire a number of officers but lost them to Prospect due to the pay rate.

Trooper Henriques noted that two officers should be run at all time based on the size of the town. C. Bielik also noted that the issue that the town has is that additional full-time officers would need to be hired because the contract that the town has with the bargained unit specifically prohibits, unless a very, very limited occasion, for the town to put part-time officers on day shift duties during the week.

J. Huk indicated that based on the money, there are still gaps in the schedule and there are lack of incentives to bring people in town. J. Huk indicated that there needs to be a strategic plan. C. Bielik asked if the Resident Trooper crafts the schedule for the week by himself or is it a collaboration of the Police Lt. and the Resident Trooper. Lt. Rodriguez indicated that he approves all the time off, vacations, and passes it along to the Resident Trooper. Lt. Rodriguez provided a copy of the Police Lt. responsibilities to the Members which include responsible for the Police Dept. personnel; certified training and in-service training; firearms certification training; dept. budget; dept. personnel corrective discipline; dept. overtime approval; dept. purchase approval; responsible for police dept. infrastructure; responsible for all dept. equipment; grievances; payroll; workmen's compensation; finger prints; pistol permit application process.

5. 2017-2018 Budget – Discussion and Possible Action

J. Rodorigo indicated that the Members have the current budget and provided copies for anyone in attendance. J. Rodorigo noted that currently, the Grand List went down 5.12% and in order to make up the Grand List, the mil rate has to be raised 1.8 mils. When the Region 16 was passed at .7 mil increase, the starting point for the mil rate is 35.4 and there is approximately \$400,000 in new Debt Services, bring it to 36.4 mils. With this budget and the Cap List, the mil rate goes to 37.15 / 37.2. J. Rodorigo added that what historically has been done is to take the projected fund balance (unassigned fund balance for the current fiscal year), the surplus equals \$600,000; spend \$200,000 on Cap. Projects; and \$400,000 in unassigned funds balance for emergencies. This year, the unassigned fund balance projection is only \$575,000 being the lowest number we've even dealt with. The State hasn't given the revenue numbers and we may see adjusts of \$200,000-\$300,000 to the revenues.

M. Bronn went to the Police section of the proposed budget. M. Bronn wants to keep the Police Lt. in the budget at \$50,000 as indicated in the proposal and there was no one opposed to this.

M. Bronn noted that the Members have previously discussed raising the First Selectman's salary and questioned about increased by \$12,000 to \$60,000. J. Rodorigo noted that this is a difficult budget year and would be a hard sell.

After a brief discussion, the Members decreased Engineering & Consultants from \$40,000 to \$35,000.

After a brief discussion, the Members decreased Snow Removal Materials from \$80,000 to \$75,000.

After a brief discussion, the Members decreased Equipment Rental from \$6,000 to \$5,000.

After a brief discussion, the Members decreased Vehicle Maintenance from \$40,000 to \$35,000.

J. Rodorigo wanted to note for the record that Parks & Rec is dear to his heart and pains him to reduce the line items since there is more work that needs to be done that the town can afford but it's the position the town is in today.

After a brief discussion, the Members decreased Contingency from \$100,000 to \$75,000.

J. Rodorigo noted that the town is committed to the first three items on the Cap. List based on long-term lease agreements – PW Truck Lease for \$21,000; Power Lift Stretcher Lease for \$4,750; and New Power Lift Stretcher Lease for \$5,500. Per T. Broesler, the amount for the P/W Equipment Trade-in for F-550 & Bond Funding should be \$63,000.

After a brief discussion, the Members removed the SCAG Turf Tiger II for \$13,500; the Portable Radios for \$25,000.

J. Rodorigo noted that the removal of the oil tanks for the Fire Station 2 – Workout Room cannot be moved to LoCIP. Only the Workout Room is available for LoCIP and the Board needs the number for removing the oil tanks. After a brief discussion, the Members decided to keep this item on the Cap. list.

After a recalculation of the Cap. list, the total amount was reduced to \$191,500 that needs to be funded.

After a brief discussion, the Union is having a meeting on Thursday in regards to voting on one of the two medical insurance plans. The Members decreased Medical Insurance from \$324,500 to \$312,000.

After a brief discussion, the Region 16 Surplus is remaining the same at \$175,000 and Prior Year Taxes is remaining the same at \$300,000.

After a quick recalculation, the mil rate was estimated at 36.99. This is just for informational purposes only per J. Huk. J. Rodorigo suggested moving some or all of the Cap. out of fund balance, of which \$31,000 is contractual obligations.

After a brief discussion, the Member discussed decreasing Electricity by \$5,000 due to the Solar Plant going live. J. Rodorigo suggested taking the Phone System upgrades for \$29,000; the Security upgrades for \$43,000; the Library Computers for \$2,750; and the Place/Upgrade Computers for \$4,500, the total is \$79,250 from the Cap. list and use the unassigned fund balance to help the mil rate.

After a brief discussion, J. Rodorigo asked for a motion to move \$80,000 from the unassigned fund balance.

Motion to move \$80,000 from the unassigned fund balance to offset the Cap. list items as previously stated: **Huk/Pratt**; discussion was by M. Bronn asking what is the town budget 2016-2017 projected surplus is \$586,000 approximately and the town will be over the 9.25; four ayes by J. Rodorigo, J. Huk, J. Dowdell, and T. Pratt and one nay by M. Bronn.

After removing the items of the Phone System upgrades, the Security upgrades, the Library Computers, and the Place/Upgrade Computers as stated in the Cap. list, the recalculation brought the mil rate to an estimate of 36.80 mils.

Based on the discussions tonight's and changes, J. Rodorigo asked for a motion to send the proposed budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. The Pubic Hearing will be on Wednesday, May 24, 2017, starting at 7:00 PM, at Woodland Regional High School. The Town Meeting for vote on Wednesday, May 31, 2017, starting at 7:00 PM Woodland Regional High School.

Motion to send the Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 for the Town of Beacon Falls to Public Hearing for the amount of \$6,861,612 with the Public Hearing scheduled for Wednesday, May 24, 2017, 7:00 PM, at Woodland Regional High School: **Bronn/Pratt**; no discussion; all ayes.

Motion to develop a communication video for explaining the budget to be approved by all members first before going public: **Huk/Bronn**; no discussion; all ayes.

6. Approval of Minutes

J. Huk indicated there are revisions to the minutes from March 30, 2017 budget workshop and presented a copy to the clerk for revising the minutes. The revision is a reflection to the conversation with Mike Krenesky under the Community Media Center Building Committee section.

Motion to approve the minutes from the March 30, 2017 budget workshop with the revisions provided by J. Huk for tonight's meeting: **Huk/Pratt**; no discussion; all ayes.

7. Correspondence / Payment of Bills

a. Board of Finance Clerk's Invoice

Motion to approve and pay the clerk's invoicedated April 25, 2017 in the amount of \$87.50 as submitted for tonight's meeting: Pratt/Bronn;no discussion; all ayes.

b. Other Invoices

There were no other invoices submitted for tonight's meeting.

c. Other Correspondence

There were several pieces of correspondence submitted for tonight's meeting. One was a legal opinion from Atty. Stanek dated 05/09/2017 regarding Funding of the Administrative Police Lt. Another was an letter from Mike Krenesky dated 05/09/2017 regarding Bulky Waste and the 2017-2018 Budget.

8. Reports

a. Ambulance Service Report

The Ambulance Report was submitted and reviewed by the Members.

T. Pratt mentioned that he had the same problem as last month when trying to email the report to the members.

There were no questions or comments from the Members.

b. Town Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was distributed and reviewed by the Board.

There were no questions or comments from the Members.

c. Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk's Report was distributed and reviewed by the Board.

There were no questions or comments from the Members.

d. Tax Collector's Report

The Tax Collector's Report was distributed and reviewed by the Board.

There were no questions or comments from the Members.

e. Liaison Report

J. Roderigo indicated that he is going to skip discussion on this report for tonight.

9. Financial Manager's Report

The Finance Manager's Report was distributed and reviewed by the Board.

T. Broesler noted that revenues are at 100% and expenses are where they need to be.

J. Roderigo indicated that he is going to postpone discussion on the update on the bond issues until June's monthly meeting.

In regards to Capital Plan, J. Huk asked for T. Broesler to send him what he has so there is an agreement to what it looks like.

10. First Selectman's Report

a. Proposed Budget Transfer Requests

Motion to approve the budget transfer requests from Highways /Parks as follows:

- 1) From Line Item 10.90.71.1861, Recreation Program, in the amount of \$2,500.00 to Line Item 10.90.59.1713, Highway – Tree Work, in the amount of \$2,500.00.
- 2) From Line Item 10.90.59.1555, Equipment Rental, in the amount of \$3,000 to Line Item 10.90.59.1713, Highway – Tree Work, in the amount of \$3,000.
- 3) From Line Item 10.90.71.1130, Parks – Telephone, in the amount of \$1,100 to Line Item 10.90.71.1820, Sanitation Facilities, in the amount of \$1,100.

Huk/Pratt; no discussion; all ayes.

Motion to approve the budget transfer request from Mini Bus as follows:

1. From Line Item 10.90.77.1470, Mini Bus Gas Maintenance, in the amount of \$300.00 to Line Item 10.90.77.1055, Mini Bus Telephone Line, in the amount of \$300.00.

Pratt/Huk; no discussion; all ayes.

Motion to approve the budget transfer request from Probate Court as follows:

1. From Line Item 10.90.63.1690, Resident Relief, in the amount of \$80.47 to Line Item for Probate Court line, in the amount of \$80.47.

Bronn/Pratt; no discussion; all ayes.

Motion to approve the budget transfer request from Web Consultant as follows:

1. From Line Item 10.90.33.1290, Engineering & Consulting, in the amount of \$20.17 to Line Item for Web Consultant Line, in the amount of \$20.17.

Pratt/Bronn; no discussion; all ayes.

Motion to approve the budget transfer requests from Fire Dept. as follows:

1. From Line Item 10.90.44.1487, Air Packs, in the amount of \$350.00 and from Line Item 10.90.44.1060, Software & IT in the amount of \$650.00 to Line Item 10.90.44.1490, Physical Inoculations, in the amount of \$1,000.00.
2. From Line Item 10.90.83.1170, Contingency, in the amount of \$3,900.00 to Line Item for EMS Supplies in the amount of \$3,900.00

Huk/Pratt; no discussion; all ayes.

b. Update on Other Issues

J. Rodorigo asked for an update on the purchase of the property from O & G based on the Solar Power Plant. C. Bielik indicated that O & G has completed their test boring and the results were that there was no use for the material that were found. C. Bielik also indicated that the next step is to schedule a meeting within the next week or two with O & G. T. Pratt asked where the funds are going to come from and C. Bielik responded that they are looking into this, hoping for a \$0.00 with trade-for-service or volunteer work or in-house work with Public Works.

C. Bielik indicated that the Selectmen voted in favor of the Bond Resolutions last night during their meeting. The Board of Finance needs to approve the Bond Resolutions and a Special Town Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 17, 2017, starting at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Assembly Room. The three sections of the Resolution were voted on separately and read by J. Rodorigo into the minutes.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends that the Town of Beacon Falls appropriate \$34,009.00 for costs related to the acquisition of a Police Interceptor and related equipment, said appropriation to be funded from unexpended proceeds of the Town's \$4,350,000 General Obligation Bonds, Issue of 2016, originally allocated to the financing of a \$130,000 appropriation approved at Special Town Meeting held June 8, 2016 for costs related to the acquisition of two Ford Explorers and related equipment for use by the Beacon Falls Police Department.

Motion to approve the Resolution as stated above: **Bronn/Pratt;** *no discussion;* all ayes.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends that the Town of Beacon Falls appropriate \$14,493.00 for costs related to the acquisition of a F-550 and related equipment, said appropriation to be funded from unexpended proceeds of the Town's \$4,350,000 General Obligation Bonds, Issue of 2016, originally allocated to the financing of a \$130,000 appropriation approved at Special Town Meeting held June 8, 2016 for costs related to the acquisition of two Ford Explorers and related equipment for use by the Beacon Falls Police Department.

Motion to approve the Resolution as stated above: **Huk/Pratt;** *no discussion;* all ayes.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends that the Town of Beacon Falls appropriate \$11,002.00 for costs related to the acquisition of a F-550 and related equipment, said appropriation to be funded from unexpended proceeds of the Town's \$4,350,000 General Obligation Bonds, Issue of 2016, originally allocated to the financing of a \$110,000 appropriation approved at Special Town Meeting held June 8, 2016 for costs related to the acquisition of a Ford F-550 with plow, sander and related equipment for use by the Beacon Falls Public Works Department.

Motion to approve the Resolution as stated above: **Huk/Pratt;** *no discussion;* all ayes.

11. Old Business

There was no old business discussed at tonight's meeting.

12. Action Items

a. Policy to Review and Approve Grant Administration

J. Rodorigo noted that a Grant Writer is being budgeted for in the 2017-2018 proposed budget and that a policy & procedures manual will need to be developed prior to the hiring of a person for that position.

13. New Business

There was no new business discussed at tonight's meeting.

14. Adjournment

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

Motion to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:30 P.M.: **Huk/Bronn**; *no discussion*; all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Scirpo
Clerk, Board of Finance