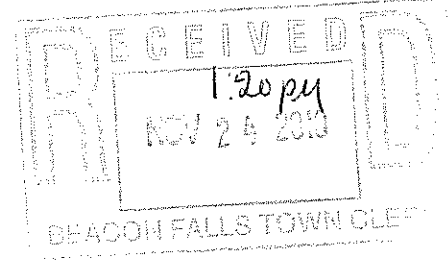


TOWN of BEACON FALLS
Connecticut

Board of Finance



**TOWN OF BEACON FALLS
JOINT BOARD OF FINANCE
BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING MINUTES
Bond Package Discussion
Monday, November 22, 2010**

CALL TO ORDER

S. Cable called the joint meeting to order at 8:00 P.M.

Present: BOF Chairman W. Hopkinson, Vice Chairman G. Smith, Board of Finance members L. Krepinevich, R. Doiron and C. Bielik

First Selectman S. Cable and Selectmen D. Sorrentino, M. Krenesky

Also present: Financial Manager M. Gomes and approximately 5 town residents and Fire Department representatives

S. Cable began the meeting explaining that the Selectmen didn't comment during the Regular BOF meeting held on November 9, 2010, because the BOS thought that after the BOF made their recommendations, the BOS could review them and then make their recommendations and pass the resolutions and then go back to the BOF. She noted that it was recently clarified by the Bond Attorney that the BOF has the final say regarding the bond package. S. Cable noted that they never had a situation where the bond package had so many items and in the past they usually came to some common ground. S. Cable also noted that there was some confusion on if the bond package would compound each year but that was not the case. S. Cable also noted that Selectmen D. Sorrentino was not present at the BOF meeting and she and M. Krenesky did not comment because they thought they would comment at their BOS meeting. S. Cable noted that she understands how much pressure there is on this bond package and what is mandated and what is not but she always thought that the people should have the opportunity to vote for or against each item. S. Cable noted that was her feeling from day one and all the minutes note that. S. Cable asked that the other Selectmen explain how the BOS came up with their decisions.

D. Sorrentino asked M. Gomes to go over the process that has to be followed for the Bond Package.

M. Gomes explained that the official resolutions will be written by the attorney. The attorney's will go to the BOF for them to vote on the resolutions. The package will then go to the BOS who will bring it to a Town Meeting which will adjourn to a referendum.

The BOF is the "gate keeper" of the package. M. Gomes noted that if the BOF says "no", then the resolutions will not go to the town meeting.

G. Smith clarified that based on the explanation of the legal process, that after the BOF voted at the last meeting, there was really no reason for a second meeting. He noted that a lot of time was wasted through this process. He noted that the BOF voted on what they felt comfortable with taking to the public therefore those recommendations could have gone directly to the attorneys for resolutions if the correct procedures were followed. He noted that by it going back to the BOS, then back to the BOF was time wasted. S. Cable noted that she had asked M. Gomes to get the specifics about the process because they were confusing. S. Cable noted that during the BOF meeting, there was not time for the Selectmen to comment and it was not a joint meeting, she noted that they did want to comment. M. Krenesky explained that no one present at this meeting tonight understood the bond package process. He noted that they both held unnecessary meetings. He noted that at the last BOS meeting, they should have made recommendations to the BOF and the BOF would vote for or against and this process would be over

A discussion continued regarding the process of the resolutions and how this came about. It was noted that it cost the town a lot of money on attorneys to have the resolutions drawn up and rather than send resolutions that would only be changed, a definite decision should be made on the exact resolutions prior to submitting them to the attorney.

W. Hopkinson noted that in her 5 years of sitting on the Board of Finance, a financial decision such as this has never been approached this way. She noted that it has always been done as a partnership between the BOS and BOF. She noted that the BOF spent a lot of time going through a painful process to come up with what they believed would be the best thing for the town (with a majority rule). She noted that the BOF was totally shocked to find out that the BOS were on completely different pages. She noted that she would have expected the BOS to give the BOF some kind of indication that they were going to vote much differently. She noted that in the past, both boards worked well together and does not know what went wrong this time.

L. Krepinevich spoke noting his total discontent with what took place regarding this process. He noted that he thought they wasted an entire evening going over each and every item. He pointed out that at least one of the 3 Selectmen were in the room the entire time without making one comment. He noted to find out that all 3 Selectmen voted unanimously to not take any of the BOF recommendations is very disconcerting and insulting. He would have thought that at least one of the Selectmen would have said they were not going to support where the BOF was going.

G. Smith and R. Doiron agreed with L. Krepinevich's statement.

D. Sorrentino noted that when they were going through the budget process, the plan was to pull all these items out of the budget because at that time, the general feeling was that they would put these items in a bond package and bring them forward. W. Hopkinson noted that was at the very beginning of the process. D. Sorrentino noted that within the last meeting or so was when it changed. He noted that he personally took into consideration each item and his gut was to "let the public decide on them".

W. Hopkinson responded that one of the reasons the BOF did not vote to send everything to the public was because during the budget process, everyone heard a lot of complaints that the school budget was passed before the town's budget therefore there were a lot of items the BOF had to compensate for. She noted that the BOF is trying not to get into that situation again. Her thoughts are how could we get new equipment when so many other budget items were cut? She noted that the budget process last year absolutely affects the bond package process.

S. Cable noted that she didn't comment at the meeting but was surprised at the way the BOF voted after the public hearing seemed to be received so positive. She also noted that she did not know where the other two Selectmen stood until they had their BOS meeting and noted that she was also behind sending everything to the public for them to decide. Her comments in all the minutes reflect that.

D. Sorrentino wanted it clarified that the meeting that was held at the Fire House was an Informational Meeting and not a Public Hearing.

G. Smith wanted a statement clarified. He noted that it was said that the BOF didn't fully understand the impact of this budget. He noted that if he looks at the mil rate impact over 20 years, the budget cycle coming up and the impact of the BOS bond package proposal, it will add 1.39 mil to the budget. He noted that he was told it was a .80 impact and wanted to know what happened to that figure. He noted that they all operated under the impression that it was a 1.40 mil increase and then was told they were wrong. He asked that M. Gomes clarify the .80 or 1.4 mil rate.

It was clarified that the mil increase would be 1.40 for the first 5 years.

G. Smith noted that he does not think they should waste a lot of time at this meeting. He noted that the BOF has already told the BOS what they would support. He also noted that he has been spending time looking at roads and noticed that even the worst roads in Beacon Falls are far superior than any of the roads in Oxford. He noted that the road in Stamford, New Canaan, etc., are terrible also. He noted that sewers are included in the bond package with sewer assessments that don't even cover the cost of the sewers. He noted that he is now on the fence regarding including the roads in the bond package based on things he's heard from the public regarding their concerns about increases even if it's for health and safety. He noted that would bring the mil increase down to maybe .5 mil

increase. He went further to say that we could probably find the money for the SCBA's somewhere else as well and maybe we won't need a bond package.

S. Cable noted that she disagrees with not including the roads in the package. S. Cable noted that the goal of the BOS recommendations was not to make everyone angry. Her point was to get all together so they could all express where they were all at. She noted that this did not take place at the BOF meeting because it was not a joint meeting. A discussion continued. It was noted again that none of the BOS spoke up at the BOF meeting with what their thoughts were regarding the bond package.

W. Hopkinson noted that right now we need to decide on how not to waste money when we go to resolutions. It was determined that the BOF made their recommendations and those should be the only resolutions going to the attorney.

C. Bielik noted that he was a bit angry because they had gone into the BOF meeting under a false pretence in that the thought was that the BOF was to make recommendation to the BOS who would have the final say. As it turns out, the process is actually reversed. C. Bielik noted that as the BOF, they have already made their decision. They have arbitrated among themselves and made their recommendations. He noted that the BOF has so far done their job and at this point they are wasting their time to do anything nor does money need to be wasted writing resolutions that the BOF is not going to support.

M. Krenesky asked if the roads are going to be re-visited. M. Krenesky also noted that they BOS was told that the increase of the package would be .80 and based on that, bonding would be less expensive than lease purchase (the .80 is noted in the BOS minutes). With this in mind, M. Krenesky thought they should go forward with the entire bond package thereby saving taxpayers money in the long run.

A discussion continued regarding whether Region 16 budget will flat this year. The discussion continued as to what "flat" really means. Some think it will be flat, some do not.

An informal vote was taken by the BOF regarding re-visiting the roads in the bond package. G. Smith thought the roads should be re-visited. W. Hopkinson, R. Doiron, L. Krepinevich and C. Bielik all voted that the roads should not be re-visited and should be included in the bond package.

L. Krepinevich agrees that the road should be listed out for clarity. The roads will be listed as one project with the roads identified.

It was again determined that the BOF has already made their decision.

The resolutions as recommended by the bond package for \$6.4 million dollars will go forward to the attorneys. Petitioning was discussed. M. Gomes noted that you could petition the BOS to have a town meeting (with 200 signatures) but the Board of Finance

is still the gate keeper. The BOF noted that if 200 people signed a petition and 500 people showed up a town meeting, the BOF would certainly take the response into consideration as they would then be hearing direction from a good portion of the taxpayers.

The timing of the budget was discussed. If the money is borrowed in July, it will not affect the 2010/2011 budget.

W. Hopkinson motioned to adjourn the meeting. R. Doiron 2nd the meeting. All voted aye.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lauren Classey". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lauren Classey
Clerk for the Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen