

BOS



# Town of BEACON FALLS *Connecticut*

Board of Finance



## BEACON FALLS SPECIAL JOINT BOS/BOF BUDGET WORKSHOP May 10, 2011 MINUTES (Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)

First Selectman S. Cable called the Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00 P.M. with the Pledge to the flag.

**PRESENT:** First Selectman S. Cable, Selectman M. Krenesky and Selectman D. Sorrentino, BOF members, C. Bielik, W. Hopkinson, J. Dowdell, L. Krepinevich, and R. Doiron. B. Ploss arrived at 7:30.

The meeting began with S. Cable asking each member of both boards their opinions and thoughts on the 2011/2012 budget.

J. Dowdell mentioned that he still thinks they should look into selling the debt the town has in back taxes. S. Cable noted that she talked with other towns and will share the information she received on this subject later in the meeting.

L. Krepinevich commented on M. Krenesky's proposal re alleviating their responsibilities and hassles and offsetting some possible cuts.

R. Doiron noted that he doesn't see any way they can cut the budget more without seriously jeopardizing the Town of Beacon Falls. He believes we have already gone to far.

W. Hopkinson noted that the results of the votes were very close and with a 51 vote difference, there were a lot of people who supported the budget. She suggested that they do not cut too much and end of getting another "no" vote. She suggested that all review the budget for possible alternatives specifically on the revenue side. She noted that they might want to look at a sewer assessment fees.

C. Bielik agrees with the consensus of his fellow board members. He also noted that he doesn't want to cut trash. He also noted that he doesn't think they should try and cut the budget drastically. A discussion continued.

D. Sorrentino agrees with everything that was said and believes the budget is already at bare bones.

M. Krenesky noted that he thinks they should consider selling the tax liens and postpone the streetscape in order to pay off some debt which will lower the next 2 years of budgets plus it will help with the bond rating.

S. Cable reiterated that they should focus on the fact that it was a close vote. She noted that she addressed a lot of the issues that people were speaking about; bulky waste, town nurse and trash pickup. She noted that we know we are going to get some tax dollars back explaining that the Governor's plan A will bring in more revenues but plan B will be very bad for all municipalities.

M. Gomes spent some time explaining how all the grant monies work including the Pequot Grant noting that they are not getting the amount they used to get with the Pequot Grant and noted that the grants could be cut at any time. He noted that there are two other grants along with ECS that are worrisome.

Both Boards worked together discussing revenues. A lengthy discussion in a work shop manner continued. S. Cable suggested that they add in \$59,379 in revenue from the property tax relief but not the LOCIP. All agreed to put in the \$59,379.

W. Hopkinson asked if we could put in specific projects to get the LOCIP money - a discussion continued.

S. Cable noted that the town has 72 liens explaining that 38 of them are on foreclosed properties.

S. Cable explained how the process of selling liens works based on her discussion with other towns. She noted that it works for Cheshire because they have high property values but in cities like Waterbury, etc., they end up in court. It was noted that this process will not help this current budget but they can certainly let people know that they are looking into it.

S. Cable noted that she has a meeting with the Union Reps at 4:00 on 5/11 - In the BOS pre-meetings, they asked for the employees to give up their raise (and if they don't they are looking at up to 12 furlough days).

S. Cable also noted that they will try and negotiate the longevity pay which will put \$9,000 back in the budget and she explained the bonus check that those who do not need insurance get every June which has been paid out at \$18,000 last year. She noted that the employees that do have medical benefits do pay into it while the employees who get the bonus check, don't pay anything at all.

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S. Cable discussed insurance noting that it is not apples to apples like she originally thought however if they employees agree to change 2 things (Hospital and outpatient treatments) they can save some money.

A lengthy discussion continued on buy backs and that they need to be checked into for the exact amount.

S. Cable explained that they have decided to give the police part timers a phase in raise - instead of \$3.00 per hour, they will start with a \$2.00 per hour increase which will be a savings of \$8,256.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding sports programs and subsidies - they could make adjustments totaling a savings of \$7,300 but it was decided that they didn't want to take anything away from the kids.

S. Cable discussed the transfer station being open 4 times per year which will result in a \$9,000 savings and it was suggested that they charge \$30 for truck load and \$5 for car load.

S. Cable discussed the tax abatement noting that the \$500 abatement given to the seniors cost the town \$60,000 - if it were lowered to \$200 there would be a substantial savings however an ordinance would be needed to do so.

S. Cable noted that there are new owners of the trash pickup and they are willing to give us a \$2000 discount and possibly a better price per ton.

It was noted that they can't count on the full union concessions and therefore do not think they should include the full amount.

The discussion went back to sports subsidies and M. Krenesky noted that he's not comfortable cutting any sports subsidies suggesting that he would rather see them shut of the lights at night to save on electricity - it was noted that there is the Melbourne Trust for those who can't afford the sports subsidies. A lengthy discussion continued noting that they do need more information on the sports programs and how they are subsidized or paid for.

It was noted that if they hold off a bit on hiring someone for the Wastewater position will save some money.

At this point during the workshop, it was noted that they have reduced the budget by 1/10th.

It was noted that both boards should plan on meeting on 5/17 at 7:30 P.M. for further budget discussions and also the Streetscape project. L. Classey will post the agenda for this meeting.

It was noted that the voting method that will be used to vote on the budget will be decided at the 5/17 meeting.

**D. Sorrentino motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 P.M. M. Krenesky 2nd the motion.  
All voted aye.**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren Classey  
Clerk for the Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Workshop May 10, 2011

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