

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
11 RYE STREET
EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06088**

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, March 20, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Members Present:	Jason Bowsza, Joseph Pellegrini, Kathleen Pippin, Jerilyn Corso, and Sharon Tripp
Members Absent:	Danelle E. Godeck
Alternates Present:	Gilbert Hayes
Alternate Absent:	Paulette Broder
Others:	Catherine Cabral, Denise Menard, Richard Pippin, Alan Baker, Teresa Kane, Chris Mickey, Bill Schultz, Cathy Simonelli, Kathy Bilodeau, Jim Barton, Tony D., Nichol DeSousa, Joseph Sauerhoefer, Carol Madore, and many, many others
Press:	None

I. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Bowsza called the Regular Meeting to Order at 7:30 p.m., in the East Windsor Town Hall.

II. Appointment of Alternates

Chairman Jason Bowsza indicated that all Board Member, Danelle E. Godeck will not be attending the meeting and an alternate as to be appointed as a voting member for this meeting.

It was **MOVED** (Tripp) and **SECONDED** (Pippin) and **PASSED** (U) that Mr. Gilbert Hayes be appointed as a voting member in place of Regular Member, Ms. Danelle E. Godeck.

III. Added Agenda Items

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Pippin) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance adds an agenda items, Section XI. New Business b. Discussion of Public Hearing Presentation of March 27, 2013.

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Tripp) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance adopts the Agenda as amended.

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Corso) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance move Agenda Item No. XI. New Business a. Presentations of Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 and b. Discussion of Public Hearing Presentation of March 27, 2013 to be done before continuing with IV. Approval of Minutes.

IX. New Business

a. Presentations of Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2013-2014

• Board of Selectmen

Ms. Denise Menard, First Selectwoman, addressed the Board. She had copies of the Power Point presentation she would be referring to during her discussion, which is similar to the presentation she gave to the Board of Finance a week ago. This is the same format which has been used in the past several years when presenting the budget to the public. She indicated the overall increase for the town government is 4.08% increase. The budget presented is a level services budget. The next slide in her presentation showed the departments requests. She gave a brief description of each category and indicating the percentages of increase or decrease, which were as follows:

- Town Government 0.44%
- Public Safety 2.12%
- Public Works 12.64%
- Sanitation & Waste Removal 0.73%
- Conservation of Health 20.54%
- Recreation 3.39%
- Insurance & Benefits 13.19%
- Miscellaneous 0.95%
- Capital Improvement Plan 114.44%
- Debt Service -11.10%

She began discussion the request of the CIP Committee for the budget. The CIP is requesting funding for projects totaling \$1,011,337.

The last slide which was discussed is the total of the proposed budget. She indicated the total proposed is \$14,554,996 or an increase of \$507,877 or 4.08% increase.

- **Board of Education**

Dr. Teresa Kane, Superintendent of Schools and Chairman Chris Mickey addressed the Board. They began their presentation by using a Power Point Presentation, copies of which were supplied to all Board Members and members of the audience. Mr. Mickey indicated the entire budget presentation for the Board of Education is available on the website.

In the beginning of the presentation, Mr. Mickey and Dr. Kane explained that the East Windsor School System is responsible for 1,257 students and 248 employees. A breakdown of the students and teachers per school, Board of Education Offices, full time personnel and part-time tutors, paraprofessionals, substitutes and others.

Chairman Chris Mickey began explaining the budget parameters from the Town. The Town has requested that the budget presented is a level service budget and the budget being presented reflects the needs and priorities of the district's children. Mr. Mickey showed a slide which was entitled "Budget Summary" the Town funded budget for FY 13 was \$20,173,350 and the requested budget for FY 14 is \$21,154,530, which is a 4.86% increase. The Breakdown is as follows 74% is salaries and benefits and 26% is expenses, such as, utilities, regular transportation, special education tuitions and programs, technology, textbooks, and educational supplies. The reasons of what drives the increase is the increase of magnet school tuitions, in addition, 17 more students attend magnet schools in FY 13; increase in special education tuitions prompted creation of cost effective in-house programming; increase in regular and special education transportation costs; contractual increase in salaries; increase in health insurance, pension, and social security; technology needs; and need for ADA compliant at middle school nurses' office. Steps were taken to keep the increase at a minimum, the following reductions have been made: Library Media specials at high school; foods teacher at high school, guidance counselor at middle school and a third grade teacher. Mr. Mickey gave to all Board Members a document entitled "Budget Guidelines for FY 2014" for the Board to review with his presentation which gives a detailed look at the budget of FY 2013 and FY 2014, expenses and revenue.

The Board Recessed at 8:22 p.m.

The Board Reconvened at 8:35 p.m.

b. Discussion of Public Hearing Presentation of March 27, 2013

Mr. Bowsza indicated that the Public Hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, March 27, 2013. Ms. Cabral indicated that the proposed budget must be recorded in the Town Clerk's Office by tomorrow afternoon. She gave a copy of the slides which were used during last year's presentation which explains the expenditures and revenues and try to explain the budget simply; not using confusing numbers, but bullet points. Mr. Bowsza explained this initial hearing is for the Board to receive

feedback from the taxpayers on what direction they want the budget to go. The second public hearing is scheduled before the referendum. It was suggested the presentation to include a brief introduction, Board of Education presented by Chairman Mickey, Town Government by First Selectwoman Denise Menard and revenues discussed by Chairman Bowsza. He indicated each presentation can be done in fifteen minutes or less. The public will be able to make statements to the Board, there will be a sheet for their names and addresses and there will be a limited three minutes to make their statement. Mr. Bowsza reminded the Board Members that this hearing is not to take questions, but to listen to the taxpayers and their suggestions. Copies of the slide presentation of the Board of Education and Town Government were given to the Board Members for their review.

A lengthy discussion was held. It was ultimately decided on using certain slides, dating and number the pages, posting the proposed mill rate increase, and showing expenditures and revenues.

A brief discussion was held and it was determined to have approximately 50 copies of the proposed budget for the public.

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Tripp) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance return back to order Agenda Item No. IV. Approval of Minutes.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting of February 20, 2013

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Hayes) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance approves the minutes of February 20, 2013 Regular Meeting, as presented.

IV. Public Participation

None.

V. Communications

Mr. Bowsza that he has received notice from the recording secretary that she will be leaving the position to take a new position in a law firm. He wished her well in her new endeavors.

Mr. Bowsza commented on a letter which was sent to Grant Thornton discussing the issues of the audit and not having the audit done in a timely fashion as to the publication of the Town Annual Report.

Ms. Cabral commented that she had a letter from the Tax Collector regarding the strict foreclosures which she would like to pursue; however, this matter can wait until after the budget process is completed.

A brief discussion was held regarding the strict foreclosure and the process of same.

Ms. Cabral gave to all Board Members items for their budget packets from the fire departments and the presentation of Webster Bank from CIP.

VI. Monthly Reports

a. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Catherine Cabral, Treasurer, addressed the Board of Finance. She gave to all the Board Members a memorandum dated March 14, 2013 for their review. Ms. Cabral indicated that as of February 28, 2013, the revenue received was \$1,220,925. Overall the revenues received for the month of February are at 90.43%. She indicated that the local revenue increased by \$16,417 this month of which \$9,211 is from the Town Clerk fees and \$3,353 is from Building Permit fees. The total general cash position as of February 28, 2013 is \$13,760,636. Webster General Fund cash as of February 28, 2013 is \$3,970,861. Tax Collections net of refunds for the month are \$823,378.

A brief discussion was held.

b. Assessor's Report

Ms. Madore was introduced to the Board by Chairman Bowsza to discuss her status report dated March 14, 2013. In that report, the Assessor attached the Grand List Numbers released on February 28, 2013, Top Ten Taxpayers, and the cost listing expenses for the revaluation. It should be noted that when a comparison is made, the taxable real estate is currently 35.8% commercial/industrial/apartments and 64.2% residential/vacant land/PA490.

She discussed the Board of Assessment Appeals, as indicated on taxpayer's notices of the value released relative to Real Estate and Personal Property, appeals may be submitted by her office by March 20, 2013. Approximately 41 appeals have been received.

Homeowner's application for benefits letters have been sent out to current benefit holders in order that they may follow through with their required re-application. Letters have also been sent out to individuals who may be able to apply who are asked to check their income and contact the Department if there are any questions and/or concerns.

This year the office has been advised by OPM that the Renter's benefit may be phased out. If this is the case, then any new applications will not be allowed to apply. Since some of these applicants are mobile home and/or manufactured homeowners, Ms. Betsy Burns and Ms. Madore are preparing to notify the affected homeowners via a news release that they should apply for the benefit in the Assessor's Office. The filing period ends May 15, 2013.

A lengthy discussion was held.

c. Tax Collector's Report

Ms. Cabral gave a copy of the Tax Collector's reports to the Board Members for their review; the reports were entitled "Town of East Windsor Report of Tax Collector Monthly Collectible" and "Cumulative Report of Cash". Ms. Cabral indicated the Tax Collector has been doing a great job in collection of delinquent taxes which shows in the reports.

A brief discussion was held regarding the reports.

d. 2012-2013 Budget Added Appropriations/ Transfers

▪ **Selectmen (Transfer No. 22 and 23)**

Ms. Cabral indicated this is a transfer to cover unanticipated legal matters and four union contracts and communication expenses to cover new telephone equipment purchases due to outdated, broken telephones as well as long distance and rate increases.

A lengthy discussion was held.

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Hayes) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance approves the transfer of \$8,500.00 from Account No.: 1-01-10-1195-2-200-0000-0 (General Government Health/Life Ins.) to Account No.: 1-01-50-8430-5-542-0000-0 (Communications) and the transfer of \$30,000.00 from Account No.: Account No.: 1-01-10-1195-2-200-0000-0 (General Government Health/Life Ins.) to Account No.: 1-01-10-1015-3-350-0000-0 (Legal Fees) and refer to a Town Meeting.

VII. Matters referred from the Board of Selectmen

None.

VIII. Unfinished Business**a. EW Housing Authority Payment**

It was indicated that the last regular meeting of the Housing Authority was cancelled because it was unable to have a quorum. Ms. Menard explained that the Board has all members but there has been an issue with Mr. John Burnham and the Housing Authority has requested his resignation as a Constable and a member of the American Heritage River Commission. This has been accomplished, but the Housing Authority wants proof of same. Mr. Bowsza inquired if the funds have been received yet by the Town. Ms. Cabral indicated they have not. Ms. Menard commented that all of the pertinent paperwork has been given to the Housing Authority regarding the PILOT payments. Mr. Bowsza suggested writing a letter to the Housing Authority demanding payment by a certain date and if not, start the process of taxing the authority due to breach of contract. It was suggested to give the new Board ample time to review all of the documents before a letter is sent.

A motion was entertained by Mr. Hayes and seconded by Ms. Pippin to send a letter to the Housing Authority indicating that if the PILOT payment is not received by the Town, the Town has no other alternative than to start the process of sewer taxes to be paid by the Authority due to the breach of contract.

A discussion was held. Mr. Pellegrini was in disagreement with sending this letter and he would like the letter to have more detail and suggested that the Board of Finance Board Members should attend the Housing Authorities next meeting to discuss this issue. It was suggested the possibility of having the Town Attorney write a letter expressing the breach of contract and the effects thereof. A vote was taken.

In Favor: K. Pippin
Opposed: J. Pellegrini, S. Tripp, and J. Corso
Abstained: G. Hayes

Motion fails.

It was **MOVED** (Pellegrini) and **SECONDED** (Hayes) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance ask the First Selectwoman to inquire with the Town Attorney about the breach of contract issue and to draft a letter to all Board Members of the Housing Authority.

X. Invoice Authorization

One invoice was given to Mr. Bowsza for signature. The invoice was in the amount of \$2,775 from Webster Bank for account analysis of the financial accounts. Mr. Bowsza signed the invoice, no objections were heard.

XI. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Hayes) and **SECONDED** (Pippin) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance adjourns the March 20, 2013 Regular Meeting at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary