

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

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, April 17, 2013 at 7:33 p.m.

DRAFT DOCUMENT – *These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting*

Members Present: Jason Bowsza, Jerilyn Corso, Danelle Godeck, Kathleen Pippin, and Sharon Tripp.
Members Absent: Joseph Pellegrini
Alternate Present: Gilbert Hayes
Alternate Absent: Pauline Broder
Others: Catherine Cabral, Town Treasurer; Denise Menard, First Selectman; Dale Nelson, Selectman; Richard Pippin, Selectman; Joseph Sauerhoefer, Capital Improvement Committee; James Barton, Sr., Warehouse Point Fire District Commissioner; James Barton, Jr., Warehouse Point Fire Department Chief; Tony Diamonstriano, Warehouse Point Fire District Commissioner/Warehouse Point Fire Department Firefighter, and recording secretary candidates.
Press: No one present.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Bowsza called the Meeting to Order at 7:33 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT.

II. Time and Place of Meeting:

See Call to Order.

III. Appointment of Alternates:

Chairman Bowsza noted Regular Member Joseph Pellegrini was not present at the Call to Order this evening; an Alternate Member must be appointed as a voting member in his place.

MOTION: To **APPOINT** Gilbert Hayes as a voting member for this evening, or until Mr. Pellegrini's arrival.

Corso moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

IV. Added Agenda Items:

MOTION: To **ACCEPT** the Board of Finance Agenda as presented.

Tripp moved/Corso seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

V. Approval of Minutes:

○ ***Regular Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2013:***

MOTION: To **ACCEPT** the Board of Finance Minutes of Regular Meeting dated March 20, 2013 as presented.

DISCUSSION: None.

Godek moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

○ ***Regular Meeting Minutes of March 27, 2013:***

MOTION: To **ADD** Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting dated March 27, 2013, including Amendment A – letter from Albert Floyd, and Amendment B – letter from Grant Thornton, as an Added Agenda Item.

Hayes moved/Corso seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION: To **ADOPT** the Board of Finance Minutes of Regular Meeting dated March 27, 2013 as amended.

DISCUSSION: None

Tripp moved/Godek seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

○ ***Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 1, 2013:***

MOTION: To **ACCEPT** the Board of Finance Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 1, 2013 as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

Hayes moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

○ ***Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 2, 2013:***

MOTION: To **ACCEPT** the Board of Finance Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 2, 2013 as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

Hayes moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

○ ***Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2013:***

MOTION: To **ACCEPT** the Board of Finance Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2013 as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

Hayes moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

○ ***Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 8, 2013:***

MOTION: To **ACCEPT** the Board of Finance Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 1, 2013 as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

Hayes moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

VI. Public Participation:

No one requested to speak.

VII. Communications:

- Request for discussion by the Warehouse Point Fire District
- Management Letter from Grant Thornton

VIII. Monthly Reports:

a. Treasurer:

Ms. Cabral, Treasurer, submitted a written report dated April 10, 2013 which indicated the following revenue received for March, 2013:

- Revenue received in the amount of \$479,872; overall revenue received is at 91.85%
- State Revenue received for the fiscal year in the amount of \$3,742,743; State Revenue received in March 2013 in the amount of \$37,262.
- Local Revenue increased by \$26,111 including \$10,422 Town Clerk Fees; \$6967 from Building Permit Fees.
- General Fund Cash \$10,247,111; Webster General Fund Cash \$1,493,184
- Tax Collections net of refunds in the amount of \$416,498.

Assessor's Report:

Ms. Cabral provided the Board with a written memo from the Assessor which indicated the following:

- 48 accounts have been appealed to the Board of Assessment Appeals. They include 7 personal property and 41 real estate appeals.
- The Assessor has intensified advisement to senior and disabled taxpayers regarding the possible “sunset” of the renters benefit.

Tax Collector:

Ms. Cabral provided various reports submitted by the Tax Collector, which indicated the following:

- Net Cash Collection through March 2013 of \$27,108,331 vs. Budgeted Revenue of \$27,199,019.
- Tax Collection Rate for 2012 – 2013 of 99%

b. 2012-2013 Budget added appropriations/transfers:

Ms. Cabral reported there are no added appropriations or transfer requests for March 2013.

IX. Matters referred from the Board of Selectmen:

Nothing presented this evening.

X. Unfinished Business:

a. East Windsor Housing Authority Update:

First Selectman Menard reported she had recently received a letter from a representative for the East Windsor Housing Authority regarding past payment history. Continued discussion of this item will be transferred to the Board of Selectmen’s agenda.

XI. New Business:

a. Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Discussion:

Chairman Bowsza noted the Board has held 2 public hearings and 4 budget workshops to develop a budget which must be set to go to referendum on May 14, 2013 either as it is currently proposed, or with additional changes proposed by this Commission. Chairman Bowsza queried the Board for comments.

Ms. Godek suggested the summary Chairman Bowsza presented at last night’s public hearing outlined the various components of the proposed budget clearly and concisely. She felt the Board has taken into consideration many different issues when making their decision. Every taxpayer is getting needed services,

such as the additional fire personnel, ambulance services, road maintenance, etc. Ms. Godek suggested she understands how people feel about taxes, and the reduction of money coming in from the State, but she felt the 3.6% budget being proposed by the Board is what the Town needs to function. Ms. Godek felt the budget as proposed by the Board should be sent to referendum.

Mr. Hayes felt the budget as proposed allows the Town to move forward; continuing to keep the budget at a 2% increase doesn't allow the Town to grow as it should or to provide the services that are needed. Mr. Hayes felt the budget should be put out to referendum as proposed.

Discussion continued regarding possible options for getting the message out regarding what is being promoted in the proposed budget. Resources for public advisement included use of the Town website, press releases, and letters to local newspapers. It was noted that most of the proposed budget goes towards security items, such as the part-time fire personnel, ambulance services, school security, and emergency preparedness.

The Board also discussed revising the hours the polling places can be open. Chairman Bowsza referenced the State Statute which dictates the polling places must be open at least from 12 noon to 8:00 p.m. The Statute also allows the Town government to extend voting hours. Chairman Bowsza noted many residents have requested longer hours; he recalled that the total vote for last year's referendum was only 800 residents. Discussion continued.

MOTION: To put forth to a referendum on May 14, 2013 from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. a budget of \$35,417,536 which represents a 3.69% spending increase with a proposed mil rate of 30.3079.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Hayes suggested he agreed with Mr. Pellegrini's comments during a previous meeting that investing in the Town is a good thing.

Corso moved/Tripp seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

b. Auditor Election/Appointment 2013-2014:

The Board briefly discussed re-appointment of the current auditor for the fiscal year 2013-2014.

MOTION: To **APPOINT** Grant Thornton, LLC auditors for the 2013-2014 fiscal year due to contractual obligations.

DISCUSSION: None

Godek moved/Hayes seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

c. Warehouse Point Fire District Discussion (by request):

James Barton, Sr., Warehouse Point Fire District Commissioner; James Barton, Jr., Warehouse Point Fire Department Chief; and Tony Diamonstriano, Warehouse Point Fire District Commissioner/Warehouse Point Fire Department Firefighter joined the Board at the table.

Mr. Barton, Sr. reported that during budget discussions the Selectmen proposed establishing 2 part-time paid firefighting positions to cover the Warehouse Point Fire station and the Broad Brook Fire station during the day when volunteer members are not available. Also during budget discussions the budgeting process for the departments was shifted over to an East Windsor Fire Department budget line item which would process bill payment through Town staff rather than the separate departments. Mr. Barton, Sr. felt somehow the establishment of the firefighting positions was connected to the payment process, and he doesn't see the connection. Mr. Barton, Sr. went on to explain the current payment process for the Warehouse Point Fire District, and expressed his displeasure with the new process.

Discussion continued regarding the difference between the Warehouse Point Fire District, the Warehouse Point Fire Department, and the Broad Brook Fire Department. Lengthy discussion continued regarding the disadvantage of the proposed payment process for the Warehouse Point Fire District, while noting it may be advantageous to the Broad Brook Fire Department which is not part of a fire district. Mr. Barton, Sr. suggested the proposed process leaves the Warehouse Point Fire District unsure if there will be funding for maintaining the Warehouse Point Fire Department building for such items as snow plowing and paving the parking lot.

Lengthy discussion followed. Chairman Bowsza suggested Mr. Barton, Sr. revisit this issue with the Board of Selectmen as it is really a policy issue rather than a finance issue.

XII. Invoice Authorization:

Chairman Bowsza signed/approved payment of the advertisement for the recent Board of Finance public hearing.

XIII. Adjournment:

MOTION: To **ADJOURN** this Meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Godek moved/Corso seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted: _____
Peg Hoffman, Acting Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Finance