

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
11 RYE STREET
BROAD BROOK, CONNECTICUT 06016**

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

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

Members Present: Joseph Pellegrini (Chairman), Jerilyn Corso, Cindy Herms, Robert Little, Robert Maynard, and Sharon Tripp.
Members Absent: All members were present.
Alternate Present:
Alternate Absent: Paulette Broder and Gil Hayes.
Others: **Town Treasurer:** Kim Lord; **Selectmen:** Jason Bowsza, Dale Nelson, Jim Richards, and Steve Dearborn; **East Windsor Public Schools:** Dr. Theresa Kane, Superintendent; **Board of Education:** Chris Mickey, Chairman; Kathy Bilodeau, Bill Raber, Cathy Simonelli, and other BOE members.
Guests: **Members of the East Windsor Condominium Association:** Andy Heath, Claude Cloutier, and others.
Press: Gail Montany, Journal Inquirer.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Pellegrini called the Meeting to Order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Time and Place of Meeting:

Room D-2/Administrative Conference Room, East Windsor High School, 76 South Main Street/Route 5, East Windsor, CT.

III. Public Participation:

Andy Heath, 15 Steeplechase Road, representing the East Windsor Condominium Association: Mr. Heath recalled that at last night's meeting the Board of Finance (BOF) voted to retain the original budgeted amount for the fire hydrants but reduced the street light reimbursement to \$10 for continued discussion. Mr. Heath indicated the condominium association appreciated the action on the fire hydrants but it should be no surprise to the Board that they would be disappointed in the amount allocated on the street lights. Since the Board of Selectmen added this new line to the budget the condominium association thought they were making progress to a fair and equitable resolution but because of what happened last night they would like to withdraw their request (for both line items) from the budget. Mr. Heath felt there seems to be some

negative perceptions within the BOF and the condominium association wants to go back and reposition themselves. Mr. Heath wanted to thank Selectmen Menard, Nelson and Bowsza for their efforts on what they feel is a fair and equitable taxation. Mr. Heath suggested they plan to regroup; they are not going away. They will be involved in this year's budget referendum.

Claude Cloutier, 3 Steeplechase Road (also a member of the condominium association):

Mr. Cloutier reported he is here to point out and discuss two items: 1) although everyone may not agree with him he felt government is here to provide education for children, set speed limits, etc. He felt that people should be charged for the bus and education of their children because it's a service all homeowners pay. Mr. Cloutier felt there seems to be a certain amount of hypocrisy in using two standards. 2) People spoke (last night) of PUDs vs. condos, and no solicitation within those complexes; Mr. Cloutier suggested some people may have those same signs/restrictions for their businesses. Mr. Cloutier felt that was immaterial. He also noted someone last night was concerned with being taxed for the fire district and they considered it a double taxation – that's how the condo people feel. Mr. Cloutier submitted information regarding how the Town "dictated" what they would have for fire hydrants, the size of their streets, etc.; he suggested it didn't say they would pay for that. Mr. Cloutier questioned if they were legally obligated to pay for that? Chairman Pellegrini clarified that this was an opportunity for public comment rather than back and forth discussion. Mr. Cloutier wanted to end his comments with the rotary's four-way test: 1) Is it the truth? 2) Is it fair to all? 3) Will it build good will and better friendship? 4) Is it beneficial to all? Mr. Cloutier suggested that's all they are looking for.

Steve Dearborn, 144 East Road: Mr. Dearborn opened his comments by suggesting Chairman Pellegrini does a hell of a job running a meeting. Mr. Dearborn continued that people won't like him when he gets done; he doesn't like what's being done to him. He noted the first guy spoke of (Denise) Menard, (Dale) Nelson, and (Jason) Bowsza but he didn't say that he (Steve Dearborn) was one of the people who voted for the \$10,000 that keeps the issue open for discussion. Mr. Dearborn suggested he may stumble a little here because he's new to the game, and believe him - it's as a game. As a Selectman he sees it as his obligation to have people come up and talk to him, and not to sit in the bathroom. He talks to the people of East Windsor; he voted for the \$10,000 to keep the discussion open. He didn't promise them anything. He said from the start there are things in the charter that will allow these people to take it to vote. Mr. Dearborn suggested he is here because he isn't happy. Mr. Dearborn noted he attended the meeting last night because someone came to him to ask if the Board of Selectmen voted for \$10,000 for the fire hydrants and the lights? He reported they voted to keep the discussion open. After the last executive session he asked these birds what they voted for, and that wasn't a pretty discussion. They voted for \$10 to keep the issue open to talk to these guys. Mr. Dearborn suggested he saw for himself by being on the Board. He suggested \$10 isn't a lot of money; everyone has a \$10 bill in their pocket; from what he understands if the \$10 is left there and it gets approved by the public it opens the door to the vault. Someone can make a motion and someone can second it for an appropriation. Mr. Dearborn reported he will not vote yes; at that point he knows the other two will vote yes and we

know who will break the tie and to him that's buying votes. Mr. Dearborn suggested he knows these guys; they are good people; he would hope they will do it the right way, the way he just described – not through the back door. The \$10 is a small amount but it's corruption in this small town of East Windsor. There are ways in the charter to get what they want. Mr. Dearborn indicated he was glad they pulled it tonight because it will get dirty. When the time comes we all know the budget won't go over 2%; it's the legend of East Windsor; things will get cut and he hopes this will get cut. He is for keeping it open but not this way.

IV. Board of Finance Workshop Discussion:

Chairman Pellegrini announced the BOF's readiness to begin discussing the Board of Education budget. Chairman Mickey noted that there was a quorum of the Board of Education (BOE) members present as well. Later, during the presentation, Dr. Kane began speaking of additional costs for special education which came to light after submission of the BOE Budget to the Board of Finance. Three new special education students have moved into East Windsor; the cost of complying with their Individualized Education Plans will require a BOE Budget increase of \$425,000. The BOE is faced with a decision to vote on increasing the current FY 2015 proposed budget. Dr. Kane reported they have reviewed the issue with the attorney for the BOE, who has advised them they can take a vote to increase the budget request by posting that they are participating in the BOF Workshop. That was the reason for Chairman Mickey noting that the BOE had a quorum tonight.

The Board of Finance began review of the Board of Education Budget.

Dr. Kane reported this is a level services budget, with exception of the addition of the School Resource Officer. Salaries and benefits represent 75.6% of the budget, while expenses account for the remaining 24.4%. The union employees get their contractual percentage and step increases. Some of the lines look like they've increased but in 2013 the BOE had an influx of money at the end of the year (May) which allowed the BOE to purchase materials to be used this year.

The Board of Finance continued review of the various budget components.

At the conclusion of the review Dr. Kane indicated she needed to address the issue of special education students and the services provided. She noted special education is mandated by law; many of the services required are available out of the East Windsor school district. Part of the special education law is that when students move into East Windsor and have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) the new school district must honor that plan. Within the past couple of weeks East Windsor became aware that three new special education students have moved into town. The impact of the special education IEPs for these students is \$183,270 for FY 2014, and will be \$472,118 for FY 2015. The additional FY 2015 cost was not reflected in the budget before the BOF this evening as the arrival of the special education students was just disclosed.

Dr. Kane noted the BOE has posted their meeting as participation in the BOF Workshop, which will give the BOE the opportunity to consider increasing the FY 2015 BOE Budget.

Bill Schultz, member of the Board of Education: suggested people should contact their legislators regarding this mandate, and a proposal to require the district from which the student is transferring to fund the special education cost.

The Board of Education left the Board of Finance Meeting at 8:04 p.m. and retired to another room to conduct their meeting to consider a vote on the additional budget request.

The Board of Finance continued discussion of the Board of Selectmen's Budget while the Board of Education continued their meeting elsewhere in the building.

9445 & 9447 Capital Improvements:

MOTION: To decrease the Capital Improvement budget to 3% by a reduction of \$160,197 which makes the total CIP Budget \$1,045,291.

Corso moved/Herms seconded/

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous
(No one opposed/no abstentions)

LET THE RECORD SHOW the Board of Finance RECESSED at 8:23 p.m. and RECONVENED at 8:33 p.m.

2160 – Fire Protection - Condo Reimbursement: Water:

MOTION: To remove the line for the condominium reimbursement for fire protection from the line item budget.

Maynard moved/Little seconded/

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous
(No one opposed/no abstentions)

3185 – Street Lighting – Condo Reimbursement: Street Lights

MOTION: To reduce the condominium reimbursement for street lights to zero.

Maynard moved/Little seconded/

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous
(No one opposed/no abstentions)

The Board of Education returned to join the Board of Finance Meeting. BOE Chairman Mickey advised the Board of Finance that the Board of Education voted to increase their BOE FY 2015 budget by \$425,000 due in part to the information recently disclosed to them regarding the additional cost of three new special education students who have moved into town.

The Board of Education adjourned their Meeting at 9:10 p.m. and left the Board of Finance Meeting.

The BOF returned discussion to continued review of the BOS proposed Budget.

1195 Town Government/Employee Benefits:

MOTION: To change the (OPEB) fund to 70% for a funding balance of \$136,854.

Coors moved/Tripp seconded/

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous
(No one opposed/no abstentions)

MOTION: To take \$100,000 from the Fund balance as revenue for FY 2015

Maynard moved/Corso seconded (for purposes of discussion)

DISCUSSION: The Board members differed as to the appropriate amount of the Fund balance reduction, and the frequency of such an allocation.

Corso RESCINDED her second/Maynard RESCINDED his motion

MOTION: To appropriate \$200,000 from the Fund balance and use it as revenue for FY 2015.

Maynard moved/Little seconded/

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

(No one opposed/no abstentions)

V. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the Meeting at 9:53 p.m.

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

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