

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

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 10, 2017, immediately following Public Hearing.

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

Regular Members Present: Jerilyn Corso (Chairman) Cindy Herms, Kathy Pippin; Jim Richards, Steve Smith, and Bill Syme,

Regular Members Absent: All Regular Members present.

Alternates Present: Paulette Broder.

Alternate Absent: Danelle Godek

Others: **Interim Town Treasurer:** Gayle Carolus; **Deputy First Selectman:** Richard P. Pippin, Jr. **Selectmen:** Jason Bowsza, Dale Nelson; various members of Town Staff or Department Heads were present in the audience

Press: Anthony Branciforte, Journal Inquirer

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Corso called the Meeting to Order at 7:33 p.m. The Board stood for the Pledge of Allegiance during the Board of Finance Budget Public Hearing.

2. Time and Place of Meeting:

Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the East Windsor Town Hall (11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT.)

3. Appointment of Alternates:

Chairman Corso noted all members are present this evening; it will not be necessary to appoint an Alternate member for this meeting.

4. Approval of Agenda:

MOTION: To APPROVE the Agenda of the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance for May 10, 2017 as presented.

Syme moved/Richards seconded/**DISCUSSION:** None

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Herms/Pippin/Richards/Smith/Syme)

5. Approval of Minutes/Regular Meeting, April 19, 2017:

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MOTION: To APPROVE the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance dated April 19, 2017 as presented.

Syme moved/Richards seconded/DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Herms/Pippin/Richards/Smith/Syme)

6. Public Participation:

No one requested to speak.

7. New Business/a. Discussion and Action: 2017-2018 Budget – set budget amount for referendum on 5/23/17:

Chairman Corso opened discussion on this item of business.

MOTION: To INCREASE the budget by 2% across the board from \$37,017,091 for last year by \$740,341.82 which is a 2% increase from last year.

Smith moved/Richards seconded/

DISCUSSION: Chairman Corso acknowledged Mr. Smith's motion but advised the Board that changes have occurred on the revenue side of the budget which should be considered; with Mr. Smith's motion on the floor the revenue changes can't be discussed.

Mr. Smith CALLED THE QUESTION.

VOTE: In Favor of calling the question: Herms/Richards/Smith

Opposed: Pippin/Syme

VOTE on the motion: In Favor: Richards/Smith

Opposed: Herms/Pippin/Syme

Abstained: No one

Chairman Corso then referenced information provided by Interim Treasurer Carolus regarding changes to the Revenue side of the budget. . Chairman Corso reported the Assessor's Office has reported the Grand List, which had been at \$969,094,665, has decreased to \$968,921,775 – a reduction of \$172,890 - because of the result of tax appeals to the Town. With regard to the General Fund Revenue summary, Interim Treasurer Carolus also submitted a comparison sheet of the actions taken, or being contemplated, for various towns as they try to resolve and adopt their budgets. Some towns have factored in a cost for teachers' pensions, other towns haven't. Some are deferring budget votes until August or September.

Chairman Corso reviewed recent potential changes to State Revenue for East Windsor that this Board should consider. :

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- TAR; originally had \$240,808; the Board could consider returning that figure to \$267,266 which would keep it at a level anticipated prior to the reduction.
- Pequot; originally had \$45,593; anticipated to be reduced to \$41,034.
- PILOT; originally had \$57,816; anticipated to be reduced to \$52,024.
- Adult Education: originally had \$15,871; anticipated to be reduced to \$15,604.
- Municipal Revenue Sharing: it has been recommended not to split this anticipated revenue into the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) and Special Education Grant, as it's doubtful that State proposal will occur. The ECS is anticipated to be \$5,135,600.

Chairman Corso suggested the Board could consider the State Revenue went up to \$5,795,571 from \$5,559,548, which is a difference of \$500,530.

MOTION: To APPROVE the Revenue part of the budget to the adjusted amount as presented (up to \$5,795,571 from \$5,559,548 for a difference of \$500,530).

Syme moved/Pippin seconded/*DISCUSSION:* None

VOTE: In Favor: Herms/Pippin/Syme

Opposed: No one

Abstained: Richards/Smith

Chairman Corso also noted that because so much discussion has involved the Police Department budget she has been approached by Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart who want people to understand they want to do their part in this budget process. They have suggested three lines which could be considered for reductions:

- Vehicle maintenance – originally approved at \$32,466; suggested reduction to \$30,000.
- Uniforms – They suggested they are coming closer to this year's expenditures; perhaps they won't need all of the \$13,000 increase.
- Overtime – variable – this line has been increased \$5,337 over the last year; perhaps return that to last year's level.

Regarding the concerns raised during the Public Hearing for the salary levels within the Police Department, Chairman Corso noted the salaries are contractual and can't be reduced or eliminated by the Board of Finance (BOF).

Discussion continued regarding the concessions being discussed amount to \$14,000+/- . Mr. Smith cited the levels of debt being considered on the State level vs. the \$14,000 reduction being considered currently by the Board. He reiterated his proposal for proposing a budget based on a 2% increase across the board, which is what the voters really want. Discussion then turned to the reasoning for the referendum failures; Mrs. Herms felt people voted against the budget because they felt the Board of Education wasn't getting a fair increase; she felt the BOF needs to put out a budget that represents

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what the Town needs, and she felt the 2% increase can't maintain the schools or the structure of the town. Mrs. Herms felt next year the BOF will be making major cuts to departments and services. Mr. Smith cited the voting history of three referendum failures which returns the budget to 2% over the previous year. Mr. Richards felt there was a lot of misinformation circulating regarding the budget numbers. He felt the BOF put forth a realistic budget based on the needs of the departments. Discussion continued for some time.

Following up on Mr. Anderson's request that the Broad Brook Library be funded for at least \$1 to retain budget history, it was noted that that line item can be returned to the budget at any time by making a budget request as was done this year.

Chairman Corso queried the Board regarding the proposed reductions in the Police Department budget?

MOTION: To DECREASE the Police Department budget by \$14,364.

Richards moved/Smith seconded/*DISCUSSION:* None.

VOTE: In Favor: Herms/Pippin/Richards/Smith/Syme
Opposed: No one
Abstained: No one

MOTION: To APPROVE AND SEND TO REFERENDUM a budget of \$37,922,654 for an increase of 2.45% with a mill rate of 31.77.

Richards moved/Pippin seconded/

DISCUSSION: Mr. Smith felt the proposed amount was still too much; he suggested a reduction of \$20,000 in the Planning budget for the EDC consultant; also the \$5,000 for the Warehouse Point study wasn't used. Mr. Richards opposed Mr. Smith's proposed reduction; Mr. Richards questioned if Mr. Smith was amending his motion? Mr. Syme recalled that the Board had reviewed the budget department by department and put forth a budget that would take the Town where it needed to go. Mr. Syme cited the need to fund the Broad Brook Fire Department for the additional position; he also noted the Board took \$475,000 from the Fund balance to offset the losses from the State. Mr. Syme cited he understands the need to get to 2% but he also wants to fund what the departments need. He felt the Board has put forth a bare bones budge, but the Board of Education; would like the \$100,000 returned to their budget. Discussion continued regarding the public's perception of what's being funded in the budget, and the effect of that perception on their vote.

VOTE: In Favor: Pippin/Richards/Syme
Opposed: Herms/Smith
Abstained: No one

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12. Adjournment:

MOTION: To **ADJOURN** this Meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Richards moved/Smith seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted:_____

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Finance