BOARD OF FINANCE

Special Budget Meeting

Monday, March 24, 2014

Middle School Library

**Approved Minutes**

**Present**: Mary Ann Dostaler, Ted Turner, Don Coolican, Alan Hurst, Dean Markham, David Monighetti and Lori Wilcox

**Other attendee(s):** Jeffery M. Jylkka, Director of Finance

**1-2. Chairman Turner called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.**

**3. Public Remarks –** 3 residents spoke in favor of additional staff at the Senior Center, and 1 resident asked the board for a 5 year plan and mentioned the deteriorating condition of the library’s rear parking lot.

**4. 2014-2015 Budget Discussion –** Chairman Turner stated that he would like to break down the discussions in the following order: Capital Budget, Board of Education Budget, Operating Budget and the 3 positions that were proposed in the Town Managers’ Budget.

Capital Budget discussion:

Mary Ann Dostaler stated that the Capital Budget as proposed is forward thinking and that the Capital Improvement Policy provides long term planning. Alan Hurst inquired about the 2 ½ yard loader; was it a replacement and why was it not bonded? Mr. Maniscalco stated that it was an addition to the existing one and that it was not bonded due to the fact that it was a serious priority and that the bonding process would be an extra step. Vice-Chairman Markham asked about the Officer Mounted cameras; is it coming out of Special Revenue or Capital? Mr. Maniscalco stated it was originally in the Special Safety Revenues fund but that the Capital Committee recommended it be included in the Capital Budget. Chairman Turner addressed the proposed $120,000 for Sears Park for Phase 2 of improvements to the park which would be funded this year. Mary Ann Dostaler asked why this amount was not proposed in the Town Managers’ proposed Capital plan but was put back in by the Capital Committee. Mr. Maniscalco felt there was only so much that could be put in Capital and that Phase 1 has just been completed. A brief discussion followed about the Phase 2 project. Don Coolican suggested bonding the loader and paying for the 4 police cameras with Special Funds in an effort to decrease Capital by $160,000. Chairman Turner and Dave Monighetti were in favor of the suggestion. Mary Ann Dostaler stated that she would be in favor of it as well as long as the Public Works director and the Finance director agree that it would not jeopardize anything. Vice-Chairman Markham asked if there was enough liquid funds to buy the equipment and to replenish the funds with bonding. Mr. Jylkka stated there was enough in Capital to pay for it and then go to bonding. They can pay cash and issue the debt to reimburst themselves through bonding.Mary Ann Dostaler stated that the bonding schedule currently has 2 items totaling $280,000 and that it would make sense to combine the price of the loader with the 2 pending bonds. Chairman Turner stated that they will vote on the suggested Capital Budget decrease at the next meeting. Mary Ann Dostaler suggested cutting the Sears Park Phase 2 from the budget since it was not part of the Town Managers’ original proposed plan. Chairman Turner stated he would like to fund something for Sears Park but would like to specify that it goes to the boat launch repair. Alan Hurst stated that he will attend the next Park & Rec meeting and will ask them for their opinion and will report it to the BOF at the April meeting. Chairman Turner discussed the BOE request for $20,000 in technology over the next 5 years. Vice-Chairman Markham referred to the BOE plan of implementing the technology and whether the $20,000 is part of that plan. The Superintendent provided a detailed explanation as to it being part of the plan.

Board of Education Budget discussion:

Chairman Turner stated that the BOE has proposed a 4.27 increase from last year. Vice-Chairman Markham stated that 73% of the budget is salary related and that it needs to be evaluated. Don Coolican stated that he would give the BOE a 2% increase or $560,000. David Monighetti commented on how little of the budget is discretionary and that they need to look at the budget because the public will not support the mill rate increase. He went on to voice his concern about the consequences of the progress in education if it were to be decreased significantly. Mary Ann Dostaler stated that the proposed budget was not extravagant and that she will not compromise on the amount and will not support the decrease to 2%. Alan Hurst stated that there was room in the budget to make cuts and suggested that the BOE return with a revised proposal that is a little less. Chairman Turner said he will review the budget again but his vote is above 2%.

Town Operating Budget discussion:

Chairman Turner began the discussion with the public comments about adding 2 PT positions for the Senior Center. Mr. Maniscalco stated that the 2 PT positions would total $30,000 with $3000 being funded in an attempt to test whether adding personnel would add safety. He went on to say that he has since discussed implementing policies and procedures with the director. Alan Hurst suggested increasing the 4 hours a week to 2 days a week for 4 hours each day in an effort to test the personnel and safety issues. Vice-Chairman Markham inquired about the ground maintenance coming out of Parks and Rec. Mr. Maniscalco stated that the organizational evaluation made the recommendation to move the ground maintenance functions to the Public Works Dept. Don Coolican recommended a decrease of $116,000 in the Town Managers’ Budget to bring it to 3%. Mary Ann Dostaler agreed with a decrease but could not support 3%.

Mr. Maniscalco explained the need and provided a job description for the proposed new positions: Police Captain, Benefits person and Foreman. Alan Hurst stated that he felt that the Benefits person should be taken out of the budget. Mary Ann Dostaler stated that the organizational assessment made recommendations that make sense and she commended the Town Manager for finding a way to add positions in the budget at net cost.

Mary Ann Dostaler asked the board if anyone would support moving the Middle Haddam Library from a department in the budget to be included in discretionary. Vice-Chairman Markham stated that he would oppose that suggestion and that he would add it as a line item in the budget. The members agreed to discuss this at the BOF April meeting.

**5. Adjournment –** David Monighetti made a motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m., seconded by Don Coolican. **Vote unanimous in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Castonguay

Recording Secretary