

February 16, 2011

The Board of Finance held a special meeting on this date at the Stonington Police department meeting room. Members present were: Glenn Frishman, Chairman; Andrew Rines, Secretary; Bryan Bentz, Sandy Grimes, John O'Brien and Dudley Wheeler. Also present First Selectman Ed Haberek, Maryanna Stevens, Director of Finance; Vincent Pacileo, Director of Administrative Services; Darren Stewart, Chief of Police; Jerry Desmond, Captain, Susette Tibus, Police Commission Chairperson; Gisela Harma, Tax Collector; Marsha Standish, Assessor; Town of Stonington employees and residents and Barbara Dexter, Senior Accountant/Clerk.

Mr. Frishman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Previous Minutes

Mr. Grimes made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 7th meeting (with a wording elimination in Paragraph 1) and the February 9th meeting. Mr. Rines seconded the motion and voting was unanimous.

Additional Appropriations

CT Sales Tax Audit Invoice

Maryanna Stevens, Director of Finance, explained the results of the State of CT audit on sales tax. The Town owes the State \$262,113 in sales tax which includes fines and penalties through March 31, 2011. Mr. Frishman asked for clarification on the Town's position on the audit. Ms. Stevens explained the Town is continuing the appeal process and the payment would be made under protest. If the Town wins the appeal process the State will refund the money to the Town. Mr. Haberek and the Board of Finance discussed the State Audit with Ms. Stevens and concluded with the need for a Town meeting during the second week of March. Mr. Rines made a motion to approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$262,113 for the payment of the sales tax audit bill and to forward it to the Board of Selectmen for a Town meeting. The payment is being made under protest. Mr. Wheeler seconded the motion and voting was unanimous pending approval at the Town meeting.

Additional Appropriations and Bid Waiver

Police – Animal Control Vehicle

Chief of Police, Darren Stewart, provided estimates to replace the Animal Control truck. Three prices were obtained: Plaza Ford \$21,789, Valenti \$20,215 (available in 3 days) and Crowley \$20,044. Chief Stewart requested to waive the bid process for the purchase of the Animal Control vehicle. Mr. Frishman agreed to accept Valenti and acknowledged the purchase would support a local vendor. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$20,000 to #4022011-88003 for the purchase of the animal control vehicle. Mr. Bentz seconded the motion and voting was unanimous.

Bid Waivers

Police – Handgun Replacement

Chief Stewart requested a bid waiver for the purchase of handguns for the police department. Lieutenant Keith Beebe explained Amchar would pay the Town \$400 each for used guns. The cost of new guns would cost \$460 each. Amchar would save the Town money and is also being used by the Towns of Westerly and Groton. Leather holsters and ammo pouches would be supplied by Witmer Public Safety Group. The Chief said the budget for handgun replacement was \$30,000. The estimated cost for handgun replacement and leather gear was \$13,000. The Board of Finance agreed that due to the savings the police department could purchase rifles. Mr. Frishman congratulated Lieutenant Beebe on negotiating such a good deal. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to approve the bid waiver. Mr. Rines seconded the motion and voting was unanimous.

Budget Hearings FY 2011-2012

Mr. Haberek presented the First Selectman's General Government budget in the amount of \$22,692,822 which is a .29% increase from last year's budget.

First Selectman's Office

Mr. Haberek went over changes and highlights of his budget

- Westerly Pawcatuck Joint Development Task Force, National League of Cities, ICLEI – new items in budget.
- Elections – reviewed increases in budget – discussion ensued about State mandates not funded by the State that must be paid by the Town.

Mr. Grimes and Mr. Rines thanked Mr. Haberek and said he did a good job on his budget.

Administrative Services

Mr. Haberek introduced Vincent Pacileo, the new Director of Administrative Services and went over changes and highlights of Admin Services budget.

- Administration – level funding
- Information Systems – this budget falls under the Admin Services budget this year. Previously under the First Selectman's office. Reductions in new IT Managers salary. Roger Kizer was introduced as the IT Manager.
- Human Resources – Flat budget. Health Insurance minimal increase.
- Health Officer, Sanitation & EMS – the merger of the new health district is on hold for another year. Need 6 towns to make a health district worthwhile. Discussion by Board of Finance and First Selectman regarding health district and the First selectman's basis for funding of ambulance corps and libraries.
- Risk Management – moved to Finance department. Director of Finance will be responsible for Risk Management.

Finance Office

Ms. Stevens, Director of Finance, reviewed the Finance budget

- Finance Office – new line item – Dunbar Armored moved from First Selectman's Professional & Technical. Increases due to contractual agreements.
- Assessor's Office – Marsha Standish, Assessor, stated there would be a full Revaluation this year - \$35 / \$45 per parcel. Estimate = \$450,000. Funded for in CIP budget.
- Tax Collector - Tax Collector, Gisela Harma, said the collection rate was on pace with last year and at 99% collection rate.
- Risk Management – moved from Administrative Services budget – Property & Liability Insurance – 2nd year of lock in on rates.

Debt Service

Ms. Stevens stated Debt service budget is down due to the maturity of the Clean Water Bond. The Board and Ms. Stevens discussed upcoming debt service in future years.

Planning and Land Use

Members of the Planning department were available for questions on the budget. Mr. Frishman asked what FEMA CRS Community Outreach was for. This item is for mailing for flood outreach to residents.

Mr. Haberek briefed the Board of Finance on the Governor's proposed budget

CIP

- Mr. Frishman asked Joe Bragaw, Director of Public Works, the status of Lantern Hill Bridge. A discussion ensued and Ledyard's involvement was also discussed. Mr. Bragaw was told Ledyard was putting the repairs to Lantern Hill Bridge in their budget also.
- Mr. Frishman asked why the Police cars were classified a "C" rating in CIP. The C classification was discussed with the Police department staff attending. The Board of Finance voted on changing the Classification from a C to an A.
Yes - change to A – Mr. Frishman, Mr. Bentz and Mr. Rines
No - keep at C – Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Grimes
- Police Radar Units and Police Boat were also discussed. A new boat will cost \$65,000 – \$80,000. The current boat is old and was donated many years ago.
- Mr. Haberek started discussion about the Public Works CIP budget requests. The Stillman Bridge safety was discussed. It would cost 2 million dollars to replace the bridge rather than repair.
- Mr. Bragaw handed out a Public Works CIP Request spreadsheet along with a GIS photo. Discussions on road and bridge repairs and the complaints by residents for action on these repairs. Some of the repairs will be shared by other Towns and some repairs will be funded by Federal grants.
- Mr. Frishman asked for an explanation of the 7 year lease purchase – Mr. Bragaw said this was for 2 large Highway trucks. A need to replace trucks due to old age and repairs necessary to keep the trucks running. Five trucks were down during the last snowstorm. The new trucks are required to provide services to the residents.
- Mr. Frishman asked Mr. Wheeler, liaison for Public Works, to make a recommendation to the Board of Finance.
- Drainage on Farmholme Road – residents are complaining.
- Drainage on Meadow Avenue – Gracelyn Guyol, from Clean Up Stonington Harbor, said this has become a health issue because raw sewage is going into the Sound.

Correspondence

October 1, 2010 Net Grand List - Marsha Standish, Assessor, said the Grand List is up .564 %. Discussion about the value of a mill ensued. Mr. Frishman said the Tax Collector was doing a great job collecting the taxes.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Rines made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wheeler seconded the motion and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Signed,



Andrew W. Rines
Secretary