

April 8, 2013

The Board of Finance held a special meeting immediately following the Public Hearing on the budget in the Stonington High School Auditorium. Members present were Glenn Frishman, Chairman; John O'Brien, Secretary; Bryan Bentz; Sandy Grimes; June Strunk and Dudley Wheeler. Also present Maryanna Stevens, Director of Finance, and First Selectman Haberek, BOE and Town Hall staff and residents.

Mr. Frishman called the meeting to order at 8:36 p.m.

Budget Deliberations

Mr. Frishman asked the members if there were any particular items they would like to discuss.

Mrs. Strunk stated she would like to restore \$100,000 to the BOE budget. Mr. Wheeler was not in favor. Mr. Grimes was in favor but added he would like to keep the budget increase at .35, taking funds from other lines. Mr. Bentz also opposed but he added he was not strongly against a restoration of funds. Mr. O'Brien was in favor. Mr. Frishman was also in favor with the caveat that should the budget fail this would have to be revisited.

Mrs. Stevens reminded the Board of the restoration of \$59,999 from DPW Joe Bragaw leaving \$1.00 in the CIP line *Repair Drainage at Charles St. in Lords Point*.

The Board, with a vote of 4 to 2, restored \$100,000 to the BOE budget.

Mr. Frishman addressed the comments regarding the School Safety Pilot Program of \$48,000. Mr. Bentz is in support of the program. Mr. Grimes stated that no he would prefer to wait until after the budget process, after school is out, involve Board of Selectmen and after Towns are notified of any State mandates. Mr. Wheeler is in support of the program but asked if there were funds available in the current budget to transfer as he would prefer to move forward and not increase the 13-14 budget. Mrs. Strunk was not in favor addressing Mr. Grimes' concerns. Mr. O'Brien was in support of the program but feels there is time to wait for state recommendations but added this needs to be implemented during the summer. Mr. Wheeler asked if this could be added to the agenda of the next special meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 16, 2013. Mr. Frishman stated that he was in favor of the pilot program and the Board would wait until the 4/16/13 meeting to hear from the Finance Director if there were funds available in the current budget to transfer. Mrs. Stevens informed the members that this would require a transfer from CIP to the BOE Operating budget.

Mr. Frishman commented on the extensive comments regarding the lack of a Director of Planning. Is he aware Mr. Haberek has been overseeing the office but he believes it makes sense

to restore \$30,000 to the account to fill the position in January. Mr. O'Brien was not in favor. Mrs. Strunk and Mr. Grimes were not in favor because Mr. Haberek as CEO of the Town made the cut to the line and they have decided to defer to his judgment. Mr. Bentz supported the restoration of funds but he did not want to wait until January. The vote resulted in a tie no change was made.

Mr. Frishman addressed the \$100,000 Police Department Overtime request for the safety and security of students in the school district. After a brief discussion, members agreed to table this item to the April 16, 2013 Special meeting to discuss coupled with the School Safety Pilot Program.

Mr. Frishman addressed the request for additional funds for the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center. Mr. Wheeler was not in favor of additional funding. Mr. Grimes supported \$35,000. Mr. Bentz was not in favor. Mr. O'Brien stated he supported at least \$30,000, particularly for operations. Mrs. Strunk recused herself stating since the Senior Center has been open there has been a drain on the operating budget that is a problem with no endowment. Mr. Frishman agreed to the invaluable services provided by the PNC but was uncomfortable with \$35,000. Mr. O'Brien suggested \$20,000 and if there was a need in the future, it could be addressed again. Members supported this and **\$20,000 was added** to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center.

Members discussed the request for a restoration of funding to the Mystic & Noank Library. After discussion, a tie vote of Strunk, Grimes & O'Brien in favor of funding restoration and Frishman, Wheeler and Bentz against resulted in no change.

Members unanimously agreed to keep the Ambulance budget as is.

Mr. Frishman asked DPW Joe Bragaw about Leaf pickup. He stated that it was dramatically cut last year and the \$2500 remaining in the line is for emergencies, particularly for drains. No change was made.

Mr. Grimes stated that he would like to take more money from the Fund Balance to stay at a .35 increase in the budget. Mrs. Stevens stated that amount would be between \$60,000 to \$70,000. Mr. Wheeler was not in favor but with a vote of 5 to 1 for and **additional \$60,000 was taken from the Fund Balance.**

At this time Mr. Haberek wished to explain his reason for cutting funding to the Director of Planning position. He stated that he felt it best to cut an open position to maintain the current staff. The Board then discussed restoring \$30,000 to the position to begin the hiring process taking an additional \$30,000 from the Fund Balance. All members were in favor of restoring \$30,000 to the Director of Planning line. Mr. Bentz and Mr. Wheeler were not in favor of using additional funds from the Fund Balance to restore the Director of Planning but with a final vote of 4 to 2 in favor, an additional \$30,000 was taken from the Fund Balance.

Mrs. Strunk stated that she would like to delete the Sexual Assault Crises Center line of \$400.00. Mr. Haberek stated that this agency has provided services for several Stonington residents. With a unanimous vote the \$400.00 was deleted from the Outside Agencies.

Motion made by Mr. Frishman to set the mil rate at 19.88 with expenditures totaling \$57,937,663 and to forward to the Board of Selectmen to set the call for Town Meeting for the 2013-2014 budget. Seconded by Mr. O'Brien Voting was unanimous.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. O'Brien made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Grimes seconded and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



John O'Brien

Secretary

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