

**TOWN OF CROMWELL - BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2008  
CROMWELL TOWN HALL 7:30 p.m.  
Room 224/225**

**MINUTES AND RECORD OF VOTE**

PRESENT: Chairman Michael Gengler, Loraine Caruso, Edwin Maley Jr., Joe Corlis, John Flanders, Donna DiMauro, Alternate Jamie Kiefer

ABSENT: Alternate Jack Henehan

ALSO PRESENT: Finance Director Marianne Sylvester

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Michael Gengler called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm

B. SEAT ALTERNATES –None

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the agenda. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. Regular Meeting, March 27, 2008-Tabled

E. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Peter Keithan of 24 Iron Gate Lane expressed concern with paying more money and would like it looked at carefully.

F. REPORT OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN -None

G. BUDGET REPORT

Finance Director Sylvester expressed concern for the overage in overtime budgets. Ms Sylvester hopes that these costs will be able to be absorbed with accounts with surplus such as labor attorney fees and medical and dental insurance. Ms. Sylvester mentioned that on the revenue side it is tight but close to where anticipated.

H. REPORT OF THE TAX COLLECTOR

Tax Collector Sharon Ramsey provided the Board with a report. It was noted that 100% collection was reached on current taxes.

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion and decisions on the 2008-2009 Board of Selectmen's proposed budget, including Debt Service.

Budget Line #3-Registrars of Voters

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to approve Line Item 3 Registrars of Voters for \$59,192.

Mary Amenta expressed concern with the budget cut with the State recommendation of 110% of elector ballots. There was some discussion of election costs.

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to increase the Election Day line item by \$1,000. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Main Motion carried to approve Line Item 3 Registrars of Voters for amended amount of \$60,162. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

#### Budget Line #37-Health Department

Health Director, Wes Bell explained the reduction of the part-time doctor. Mr. Bell reviewed the mosquito control program.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to approve Line Item 37 Health Department for \$152,358. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

#### Budget Line #42-Recreation Department

Recreation Director, Sue Schein stated that in the past 4 months she has seen an increase in their programs and with the economy she expects it to continue. Mr. Maley asked about programming overlap with Youth Services. Ms Schein explained her activities and their differences. Mr. Flanders asked if there was a danger of turning away people from programs. Ms Schein explained that they do their best not to.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to approve Line Item 42 Recreation Department for \$333,134. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

#### Budget Line 12- Comm. Support. Disabled

There was some discussion about the wages and departmental supplies.

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to move \$500 from departmental supplies and place in wages and \$25 in wages to departmental supplies. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

It was discovered this was correct. The funds were for a brochure for what is available for the community.

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to rescind previous motion to move \$500 from departmental supplies and place in wages and \$25 in wages to departmental supplies. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to approve Line Item 12 Comm. Support. Disabled for \$525. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line 43-Library

Library Director Eileen Branciforte mentioned that she has seen an increase in programs as well.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 42 Library for \$514,756. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Budget Line 2-Town Clerk

It was noted that land revenues are currently lower for this fiscal year.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 2 Town Clerk for \$210,871. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

Budget Line 25-Treasurer's Office

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 25 Treasurer's Office for \$300. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

Budget Line 23-Tax Collector

Mr. Maley, Jr. asked about the part-time position cuts and Tax Collector Sharon Ramsey explained that a volunteer has filled the courier position.

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve Line Item 23 Tax Collector for \$180,229. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

Budget Line 24-Assessor's Office

Mr. Flanders asked about the Vision Appraisal website. Tax Assessor Shawna O'Neil explained its uses and comparisons to the GIS web site. The Board discussed its benefit and other options.

First Selectman Jeremy Shingleton arrived at 8:27pm.

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to restore line item for Vision Appraisal web service for \$4200. (Flanders, Gengler, In Favor) (Corlis, Maley, Jr., Caruso, DiMauro, Against) *Motion Failed*.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 24 Assessor's Office for \$177,344. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Budget Line 9-Bd of Assess.Appeals

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 9 Bd of Assess.Appeals for \$1,300. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Budget Line 5- Economic Development

Craig Stevenson reviewed the development budget and various line items.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 5 Economic Development for \$71,900. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line 17- Insurance Expense

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve Line Item 17 Insurance Expense for \$354,169. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line 44-Employee Benefits

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by John Flanders to approve Line Item 44 Employee Benefits for \$2,656,051.

Human Resource Director Tom Roohr explained about the 7% increase with health insurance. First Selectman Shingleton explained that health savings plans are being looked at but currently they are locked in due to the collective bargaining unit.

**Motion** was made Donna DiMauro, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to reduce Blue Cross/Blue Shield line item by \$2,500. All in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Mr. Maley discussed his concern for wages and union contracts. First Selectman Shingleton remarked about his plan for pay for performance wage increases.

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by John Flanders to reduce Wage Adjustment line item by \$15,000. (Maley, Jr., Flanders, Gengler, Corlis, Caruso, In Favor) (DiMauro, Opposed) *Motion Passes.*

Main Motion carried to approve Line Item 44 Employee Benefits for amended amount of \$2,638,551. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

Budget Line 17- Insurance Expense

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by John Flanders to reconsider Line Item 17 Insurance Expense. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to reduce Worker's Compensation line item by \$5,719. All in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

**Motion** was made Donna DiMauro, **seconded** by John Flanders to reduce Package Policy line item by \$5,500. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

**Motion** was made Donna DiMauro, **seconded** by John Flanders to approve Line Item 17 Insurance Expense for \$342,950. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line 6-Board of Finance

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve Line Item 6 Board of Finance for \$23,140.

Director of Finance Sylvester discussed with the Board that auditor fees have risen due to GASBE standards by \$3, 745. Ms Caruso asked for a letter of compromise to be written for \$1000.

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to increase Audit line item by \$3,745.

Motion was amended and approved to \$2, 475. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Main Motion carried to approve Line Item 6 Board of Finance for amended amount of \$25,615. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

Budget Line 22- Finance Department

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to approve Line Item 22 Finance Department for \$310,131. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Budget Line 45-Debt Service

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by John Flanders to approve Line Item 45 Debt Service for \$3,795,690. All were in Favor. (DiMauro was not in the room at the time) *Motion Passes*.

Chairman Gengler called a recess at 9:22 pm.

Chairman Gengler resumed the meeting at 9:45pm.

The Board of Finance Discussed that it was a total net reduction of \$20,344.

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to submit to the Town Meeting, \$13,021,375. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

2. Discussion and decisions on the 2008-2009 Board of Education's proposed budget.

Budget Line 46-Board of Education

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve Line Item 46 Board of Education for \$25,409,222.

Dr. Matt Bisceglia explained that negotiations with teachers have been good. The total medical benefit will be at 5% not 7%. Dr. Bisceglia explained the historic challenges of meeting children with specific needs such as autism. Dr. Bisceglia mentioned the challenges of unfunded mandates. Chairman Gengler asked about the questions forwarded to him from

Mr. Flanders regarding Mastery Test scores. Dr. Bisceglia provided a copy of an email with comments but did not have specific results they are still compiling the request.

Mr. Maley, Jr. commented that all members of the Board have various concerns but can't comment on specific line items. Mr. Maley, Jr. expressed the concern with the rate of increase of the budget. Chairman Gengler agreed with Mr. Maley, Jr. and stated that lots of other funds were also being provided to the school district.

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to reduce Line Item 46 by \$425,000. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

This figure amounts to 5.5% increase. Mr. Maley, Jr. expressed concern with cuts being made to extra curricular activities such as sports. Mr. Maley, Jr. offered Board of Finance as a resource for suggestions.

Main Motion carried to approve Line Item 46 Board of Education for amended amount of \$24,984,222 to go to Town Meeting. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*

Dr. Bisceglia commented that extra curricular is not necessarily the first to go and that the whole budget would be looked at.

3. Discussion on any 2008-2009 budget matter.

**Motion** was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to submit Total General Government for \$13,021,375 Debt Service for \$3,795,690, Board of Education for \$24,984,222 for a Total General Fund of \$41,801,287. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

J. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and action on Other Fund 2008-2009 budgets
  - i. Dog Fund: \$19,900

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the Dog Fund appropriation of \$19,900. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

- ii. Sidewalk Fund: \$50,000

First Selectman Shingleton explained that a sidewalk plan was being created. Mr. Flanders said that a plan had been created in the past.

**Motion** was made John Flanders **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the Sidewalk Fund appropriation of \$50,000. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

- iii. Sewer Usage Fund: \$1,426,362

It was noted that wages had been reduced by \$5,740. Ms Kiefer asked why vehicle equipment maintenance had increase so dramatically. Was it due to old equipment or more equipment being maintained?

**Motion** was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the Sewer Usage Fund appropriation of \$1,420,622. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

iv. Sewer Assessment Fund: \$323,205

**Motion** was made John Flanders **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the Sewer Assessment Fund appropriation of \$323,205. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

2. Approve Interdepartmental Transfer - \$500 to Board of Assessment Appeals Clerk from General Expense Ordinances.

First Selectman Shingleton mentioned that the Board had breakaway sessions and reconvened. The Board had been notified they were over budget.

**Motion** was made Loraine Caruso **seconded** by Donna DiMauro to approve the interdepartmental transfer of \$500 to Board of Assessment Appeals Clerk from General Expense Ordinances. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

3. Discussion and action on appropriation of \$12,000 in the Town Improvement Fund for Town signs.

First Selectman Shingleton explained the signs regarding the Travelers tournament and Riverport Park to promote the Town's heritage and waterfront. Ms Kiefer suggested a sign that supports town announcements. First Selectman Shingleton mentioned that if Traveler's contributed to the sign the funds would be returned to the Town Improvement Fund.

**Motion** was made John Flanders **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve appropriation of \$12,000 from the Town Improvement Fund for Town Signs. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

K. BOARD OF EDUCATION- LIASON REPORT  
Meeting time had been changed-No report.

L. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS-None

M. VICE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS-None

N. GOOD AND WELFARE

Ms Caruso mentioned that Mr. Maley, Jr. did a good job relating the views of the Board members, as well as a good approach to speaking for a majority of the Town.

O. ADJOURNMENT

**Motion** was made John Flanders **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to adjourn at 10:39pm. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer L. Donohue  
Finance Clerk