

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 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, Alternates Jack Henehan, and Jamie Kiefer

ABSENT: Donna DiMauro

ALSO PRESENT: Finance Director Marianne Sylvester

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Michael Gengler called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm.

B. SEAT ALTERNATES

Motion was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to seat Jack Henehan. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the agenda. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. Regular Meeting, January 24, 2008

Motion was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by John Flanders to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2008 Regular Meeting. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.* (Mike Gengler abstained)

2. Special Meeting, February 14, 2008

Motion was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2008 Special Meeting. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

3. Regular Meeting, February 28, 2008 – cancelled

E. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Al Diaz, a Cromwell Resident, stated to the Board that he believed they would do the right thing and he believed it is a fair budget for the economic times.

Peter Keithan of Iron Gate Ln and a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission expressed some concerns with the budget and would like to see some additional cuts.

Al Waters of 86 South Street commented that lots of hard work went into the budget and it is a fair and should be passed as it is. Mr. Waters made a request that when Boards present an increase in their budget that a monetary figure be placed next to the percentage. Chairman Gengler responded that they typically do mention the actual number. Mr. Waters asked that the Board look at no increase for the BOE except for contractual and energy costs due to the consistent percentage increase each year.

F. REPORT OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

Mr. Shingleton was delayed. Chairman Gengler moved to Item G.

G. BUDGET REPORT

Finance Director Sylvester expressed concern for the overage of \$35,000 in the Public Works and \$25,000 in the Police Department overtime budgets. Ms Sylvester hopes that these costs will be able to be absorbed with accounts with surplus. Ms. Sylvester mentioned that on the revenue side there is a shortfall in a few areas.

Chairman Gengler asked about the bonding issues. Ms Sylvester stated she is waiting on the rough draft from Bond Counsel and that by the end of April she expected the bond rating from Standard & Poor's with the issues by mid to late May. The first issue should be 6.8 million.

Ms Sylvester provided the Board with an Assessor report. The Grand List was totaled at 1.351 billion but has been reduced so far by about 2 million by the Board of Assessment Appeals and there are 68 more hearings to go. Ms Caruso asked if this amount had been expected for the appeals. Ms Caruso asked if they could have a report detailing the appeals. Chairman Gengler requested that a report be provided to the Board of Finance.

H. REPORT OF THE TAX COLLECTOR- Not available

I. OLD BUSINESS-None

J. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and preparation for Public Hearing regarding 2008-2000 proposed budget.

Chairman Gengler explained that the BOE provided April 8th and 16th as possible dates for the Public Hearing. The Board discussed the best possible times of availability for the Board members. (The First Selectman arrived at 8:00pm.)

Motion was made Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Edwin Maley, Jr. to schedule the Public Hearing for April 16, 2008 at the Cromwell Middle School. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

2. Set Public Hearing and deliberation dates for 2008-2009 budget.

The Board discussed various deliberation dates within the deadline of 10 days from the scheduled Public Hearing.

Motion was made Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by John Flanders schedule the Special Meetings for Budget deliberation for April 16th (immediately following the Public Hearing), April 23rd at 7:00pm, and April 24th at 7:30 pm. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Chairman Gengler asked the First Selectman and Finance Director to pay attention to changes in employee benefits prior to deliberation.

F. REPORT OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

Chairman Gengler recognized the report of the First Selectman at this time.

Mr. Shingleton provided the Board with a packet of his budget analysis. Mr. Shingleton reviewed his breakdown of controlled and uncontrolled costs and priorities on what could be cut. Mr. Shingleton felt that it was fair and consistent. Mr. Shingleton emphasizes the increases in energy costs and his continued effort to find alternative savings.

Chairman Gengler cautioned the First Selectman about alternative financing and the Charter and needing a non-appropriations clause. Ms Sylvester confirmed that they have looked at this and are sensitive to this issue.

Mr. Shingleton mentioned that he expects to see efficiencies within Public Works due to a restructuring of services and programs. He also hopes to fix some of the safety issues along Nooks Hill Rd that did not pass in the bonding by looking at other resources.

3. Authorize Chairman to request additional budget information.

Motion was made Edwin Maley, Jr., **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to authorize the Board of Finance Chairman to request additional budget information for the deliberation process. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

K. BOARD OF EDUCATION- LIASON REPORT

Mr. Corlis attended the BOE meeting and heard comments both for and against the budget proposal. Mr. Corlis mentioned that the Superintendent expressed his concern for the Budget proposal being cut from 7% to 5%. Mr. Corlis stated that he has spoken with the Facilities Director in the City of New Britain on March 21st and will continue to follow their progress with their new solar roof.

L. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Gengler mentioned that Mr. Corlis has been placed on the School Renovation Committee.

Chairman Gengler and Mr. Corlis will be attending an Alternative Energy Symposium on Monday at UCONN and they hope to meet with several lawmakers and explore options for Cromwell.

M. VICE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS-None

N. GOOD AND WELFARE

O. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to adjourn at 8:28 pm. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer L. Donohue
Finance Clerk