

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2011
CROMWELL TOWN HALL 7:00 P.M.
ROOM 224/5**

MINUTES AND RECORD OF VOTE

Present: Chairman Ed Maley, Jr, Michael Gengler, Jack Henehan, Loraine Caruso, Joe Corlis and Dan Kelly, Alternate.

Absent: Julius Neto

Also present: First Selectman John Flanders, Director of Finance Marianne Sylvester, members of Town Departments and the public.

1) Call to order:

Chairman Maley called the Special Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2) Seat Alternates:

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to seat Alternate Dan Kelly in place of Julius Neto. *Motion passed.*

3) Approval of previous meetings minutes:

- a) Regular Meeting, March 24, 2011
- b) Public Hearing, April 6, 2011
- c) Special Meeting, April 6, 2011
- d) Public Hearing April 11, 2011
- e) Special Meeting, April 11, 2011

A **motion** was made by Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve all five previous meetings and hearing minutes in one motion. *Motion passed.*

A **motion** was made by Dan Kelly, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to amend the April 6, Special Meeting minutes as follows: A motion was made by Julius Neto, seconded by Michael Gengler to

approve Line Item #3-Elections Dept for \$63,079. A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to eliminate Misc. Line Item for \$245, amending Line Item #3-Elections Dept to \$62,834. *Motion passed. Motion to amend passed.*

A **motion** was made by Dan Kelly, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2011 Regular Meeting, the April 6, 2011 Public Hearing, the *amended* minutes of April 6, 2011 Special Meeting, the April 11, 2011 Public Hearing and the April 11, 2011 Special Meeting. *Motion passed.*

- 4) Recommend to Town Meeting authorization of alternative financing for the Board of Education technology equipment purchase.

Mr. Flanders noted that this is the same 3 year lease purchase option that the Board of Education has been using for the past several years to acquire their computer technology.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Joe Corlis and it was **unanimously approved** to recommend to Town Meeting authorization of \$300,000 alternative financing for the Board of Education technology equipment purchase. *Motion passed.*

- 5) Approve 2010-11 interdepartmental budget transfers.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve two interdepartmental budget transfers 1) Public Works-Other: \$37,000 Tipping Fees to Gasoline & Other Fuels (Natural Gas) and 2) Building Maintenance: \$12,500 Contracted Services to a different Contracted Services. *Motion passed.*

- 6) Discussion and decisions on the 2011-2012 Board of Selectman's proposed budget, including Debt Service.

Budget Line Item #35- Police Department

A **motion** was made by Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #35-Police Department for \$2,826,206. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #36-Animal Control

Chairman Maley noted a small increase in overtime over the years; Chief Salvatore offered that it was offset by part-time wages. A discussion followed.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Dan Kelly and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #36-Animal Control for \$82,871. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #34-Emergency Management

Fred Curtin noted the budget is less than last year.

A **motion** was made by Michel Gengler, **seconded** by Joe Corlis and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #34-Emergency Management for \$9,200. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #24 Developmt Compliance

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Dan Kelly and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #24 Developmt Compliance for \$69,048. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #20-Planning+Zoning Comm

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #20-Planning+Zoning Comm for \$2,140. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #21-Zoning Bd of Appeals

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #21-Zoning Bd of Appeals for \$1,100. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #22-Inland Wetlands

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #22-Inland Wetlands for \$1,415. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #23-Developer/Planner

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Dan Kelly and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #23-Developer Planner for \$86,930. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #25-Conservation Comm

Craig Minor clarified for Mr. Kelly that they are budgeted for 6 people to attend the annual workshop, split between 2 departments' budgets, 3 registrations for each.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #25-Conservation Comm for \$1,070. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #1-First Selectman's Office

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Dan Kelly and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #1-First Selectman's Office for \$254,813. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #12-Legal Expense

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Dan Kelly and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #12-Legal Expense for \$172,073. *Motion passed.*

Mr. Flanders noted that 3 contracts were coming up in the upcoming year, hence the increase.

Budget Line Item # 13-Central Services

Ms. Sylvester noted a change from the past in that Computer Network Improvement in General Expense is now consolidated into Central Services. There was a discussion amongst Ms. Sylvester, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Flanders and Chairman Maley regarding the change.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item # 13-Central Services for \$138,800. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #14-Insurance Expense

Tom Roohr clarified some line items for Mr. Kelly and Chairman Maley.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #14-Insurance Expense for \$473,000. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #15-General Expense

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Dan Kelly and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #15-General Expense for \$40,150. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #16-Finance Department

Ms. Sylvester noted they are managing bank account fees; a short discussion followed.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Joe Corlis and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #16-Finance Department for \$332,882. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #44-Employee Benefits

Mr. Flanders advised the Board of reductions in two line items: Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Unemployment Comp.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Joe Corlis and it was **unanimously approved** to reduce Blue Cross/Blue Shield Line Item to \$1,430,525 and Line Item Unemployment Comp to \$20,000. *Motion Passed.*

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve the amended Line Item #44-Employee Benefits for \$3,010,737. *Motion passed.*

There was a discussion on HSA's prompted by Ms. Caruso.

Budget Line Item #45-Debt Service

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #45-Debt Service for \$3,851,074. *Motion passed.*

Mr. Flanders noted that this amount is less than last year.

At this time, Ms. Sylvester reminded the Board of the previously tabled Budget Line Item #7 -Charter Revision Committee. Chairman Maley suggested going out of order on the agenda.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to temporarily table this year's budget discussion until later in the meeting and move to 9) Approve supplemental appropriation of \$50,000 from General Fund fund balance for legal fees associated with charter revision. *Motion passed.*

9) Approve supplemental appropriation of \$50,000 from General Fund fund balance for legal fees associated with charter revision.

Chairman Maley gave a brief explanation and synopsis of events and timeline involving the Charter Revision Committee noting that he has already explained much of this to the Board. The committee now wants to go in a different direction, essentially creating a whole new form of government based on a Council Manager form of government, details of that to be determined. Before the change of direction, Chairman Maley had donated his legal services and did not charge the Town. Given the turnaround, he is not interested in continuing the donation of his legal services. Having

received opinions on the cost of re-writing the charter, he believes \$50,000 is a good start to begin the work.

Ms. Caruso acknowledged the time that Chairman Maley devoted to the initial process and commended Chairman Maley for the donation of his legal services to the Town up to this point, noting that he could have charged the Town for his services, but chose not to. Ms. Caruso expressed concern that the Board should know what the people wanted before incurring such an expense. Chairman Maley offered insights into the charter revision process, further explaining the process. Basically, once the charter is re-written; the people then vote it on, not before.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso for approval of discussion.

Each Board member participated in the lengthy discussion that followed involving the details of the charter revision process and the expense associated with it.

Mr. Gengler stated he was opposed to the appropriation based on past history and a lack of groundswell of support for a Town Manager form of government.

Mr. Corlis stated that he has been attending Board of Selectman meetings for 15 years and has no recollection of anyone discussing the desire for a change in Town government. He noted his concern that if the item keeps going back and forth, the cost will increase even further.

Chairman Maley acknowledged that four votes in favor were needed to appropriate.

Motion failed with no one in favor; Opposed: Loraine Caruso, Dan Kelly, Jack Henehan, Joe Corlis and Michael Gengler. Abstained: Chairman Maley.

A **motion** was made by Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to remove from the table the Discussion and decisions on the 2011-2012 Board of Selectman's proposed budget and return to the Board of Selectman's budget. *Motion passed.*

Budget Line Item #7- Charter Revis, Comm.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Line Item #7-Charter Revis, Comm. for \$500. *Motion passed.*

7) Discussion on any 2011-2012-budget matter.

No discussion, no action.

There was clarification and discussions on the figures compiling the total budget.

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve \$25,450,000 for Board of Education, \$3,851,074 for Debt Service and \$13,645,321 for General Government for a total to be submitted to a Town Meeting of \$42,946,395. *Motion passed.*

8) Discussion and action on Other Fund 2011-12 budgets:

1) Dog Fund: \$24,024

Chairman Maley questioned if the increased cost of gas was reasonable; Mr. Flanders said it was.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Dog Fund: \$24,024. *Motion passed.*

2) Sidewalk Fund: \$5,000

A **motion** was made by Michael Gengler, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Sidewalk Fund: \$5,000. *Motion passed.*

3) Sewer Usage Fund: \$1,442,062

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Sewer Usage Fund: \$1,442,062.

Rich Peck advised the Board that Line Item Medical is reduced to \$192,000, reducing Line Item Employee Benefits and Uniforms to \$258,495.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Michael Gengler and it was **unanimously approved** to approve the amended amount Sewer Usage Fund: \$1,428,487. *Motion passed.*

Mr. Peck discussed a future rate increase, expecting rates to double in about 5 years; they will be conducting an I&I (Inflow & Infiltration) Study.

4) Sewer Assessment: \$94,750

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve Sewer Assessment: \$94,750. *Motion passed.*

10) Budget Report:

Ms. Sylvester noted nothing unusual in the report; and is working with the departments to make sure there are no deficits. Chairman Maley noted the Town is doing well on revenue. Ms. Sylvester pointed out that Building Permits were only at 59% of budgeted amounts this far, but hopes a busy spring will put it back on target.

11) Report of the Tax Collector:

Chairman Maley noted that the report looked very good.

12) Board of Education-Liaison Report:

Mr. Corlis said that last Tuesday Mr. Mandeville gave a multi year loan discussion on technology equipment, noting that it was part of their 5 Year Strategic Plan. He also said there was no new information on the \$1.3 million the State wants back.

Mr. Gengler advised the Board to be sure to read the next Cromwell Chronicle because he did a press release regarding the solar panels.

13) Chairman's Comments:

Chairman Maley congratulated all in the budget process for a successful result so far, especially in the reduction of expenditures; he hopes the voters agree. He announced that next week's Regular meeting is cancelled having addressed those items this evening.

14) Vice Chairman's Comments:

Ms. Caruso stated she was very pleased with all of the Departments and the Board of Education; she was very happy about the wonderful process this year.

15) Good and Welfare:

Mr. Flanders noted that the draft was ready to go after the Cider Hill monies that were expended. He also advised the Board about the zero payment, zero interest loans that will be available to low to moderate-income households for home repairs. State money will be used; a brief discussion on the program followed. He also mentioned a supplemental appropriation of \$15,000 may be

requested in May to resolve an issue with North Road/Jennifer Lane. He gave a brief explanation of the issue and noted that the Town would use the money to give back the money it received from the developer.

16) Adjournment:

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Joe Corlis and it was **unanimously approved** to adjourn the Special Meeting at 8:41 p.m. *Motion Passed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ruggiero

Clerk, Board of Finance