

**TOWN OF CROMWELL  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
PUBLIC HEARING AND SPECIAL MEETING  
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2009  
CROMWELL TOWN HALL RM 224/225 7:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES AND RECORD OF VOTES**

Present: Michael Gengler, Ed Maley Jr.(arrival 7:30pm), John Flanders, Loraine Caruso, Joe Corlis, Jack Henehan, Alternate Jamie Kiefer, Alternate Julius Neto, Alternate Dan Kelly

Absent: Loraine Caurso

Chairman Gengler called the Public Hearing to order at 7:02pm and stated the notice of this hearing and last weeks hearing was published in the Hartford Courant.

Dick Newton of 1 Elm Road remarked on the bare bones budget and the sacrifices made by the Town Employees. Mr. Newton commented on the \$73,000 in cuts with insurance; and discussed the agreement with the white-collar workers for a 0% increase this year due to the economy and the delay in step increases. Mr. Newton suggested a reduction to the furloughs.

There were no further comments. Chairman Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:10pm.

Chairman Gengler called the Special Meeting to order at 7:11pm.

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to seat alternates Jamie Kiefer and Julius Neto. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Chairman Gengler mentioned that the meeting would adjourn at 10:30pm.

- A. Authorize transfer of \$140,000 from the General Fund fund balance to the CNR Fund, for an appropriation to purchase a replacement street sweeper.

Concern was expressed with fund balance and the appropriation until all budget issues were looked at. Mr. Shingleton explained that the sweeper has broken down several times and is very costly to repair. Mr. Hood said that monies spent are money thrown away. Mr. Flanders asked about the timing to obtain the equipment if the appropriation was approved. Mr. Hood said it would take a few months. The Board discussed what other options might be available. Mr. Shingleton said that it costs about \$800 per breakdown at this time, but there is also a safety concern. There was some discussion

regarding the appropriation and whether leasing is an option. The Board decided to wait on this item until more information could be gathered.

B. Discussion and decisions on the 2009-2010 Board of Selectman's proposed budget, including Debt Service.

Budget Line Item #3-Elections Department

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 3 Elections Department for \$56,710. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line Item #2-Town Clerk

Town Clerk Darlene DiProto commented that at the Public Hearing on April 2 that a comment was made that 100's of foreclosures were going on in Cromwell. Mrs. DiProto explained that in the past 5 years there have been 76 foreclosures. There have been 5 so far this year.

There was some discussion regarding the wage adjustment for the ½ Assistant Town Clerk position.

Mr. Maley Jr. arrived at 7:30pm and was seated and Ms Kiefer unseated.

**Motion** was made by Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Julius Neto to approve Line Item 2 Town Clerk for \$178,040. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line Item #19-Treasurer

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 19 Treasurer for \$300. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line Item #18 –Assessor's Office

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 18 Assessor's Office for \$172,311. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

The Tax Assessor, Shawna O'Neil discussed the Assessor Tech wages and mentioned that this position has a furlough.

The Board asked for the wage adjustment line and discussed the factors of the funds. The Finance Department provided the Board with the information.

Ms Kiefer asked about the part-time position increase. Mr. Shingleton discussed the need for a body in the office so Office Personal could be in the field.

Budget Line Item #8 – Bd of Assess. Appeals

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 8 Bd of Assess. Appeals for \$1300. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line Item #41 – Youth Services

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 41 Youth Services for \$97,796. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line Item #42 – Recreation

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 42 Recreation for \$339,912. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Mr. Maley Jr. asked if participation had increased. Sue Schein, Recreation Director, said that all numbers have gone up.

Mr. Shingleton commented that the fees charged for the programs should reflect the cost of running the programs. Ms Schein stated that she did not agree. Mr. Maley Jr. asked when the last adjustment to the fee schedule was done. Ms Schein said that it was 2 years ago; they have not done it lately due to the economy.

Budget Line Item #9 - Comm. Support Disabled

**Motion** was made by Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Ed Maley Jr., to approve Line Item 9 Comm. Support Disabled for \$525. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Budget Line Item #28 - Public Works Admin.

**Main Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 28 Public Works Admin for \$167,188.

Ms Kiefer asked about departmental expenses. Mr. Hood thought it might cover training and cell phones.

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by John Flanders to reduce Departmental Expenses Line Item by \$2000. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Mr. Shingleton discussed reviewing all cell plans.

**Main Motion** carried to approve Line Item 28 Public Works Admin. for an amended amount of \$165,188.

Budget Line Item #29 – Sol. Waste/Recyc. Cntr

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 29 Sol. Waste/Recyc Cntr for \$700,461.

Mr. Maley asked if the tipping fees were set. Mr. Hood confirmed they were. There was some discussion on recycling.

Ms Kiefer asked about part-time wages and there was some discussion.

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Julius Neto to reduce Part-time wages Line Item by \$260. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Ms Kiefer asked about the capital items. There was some discussion on the snowplow for the truck.

It was determined that the locked in prices on fuel had not been adjusted.

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley, Jr., **seconded** by John Flanders to reduce Gas & Diesel Line Item by \$725. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Mr. Flanders asked about the Condo contract. Ms Sylvester believed that churches, Covenant Village, and others might be included in that. This is to be looked at further to see if the formula is still accurate.

Mr. Flanders proposed the pursuit of the Town soliciting a better garbage contract for the residents.

**Main Motion** was carried to approve Line Item 29-Sol. Waste/Recyc Cntr for an amended amount of \$699,476.

Line Item #30 – Highway Department

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Julius Neto to approve Line Item 30 Highway Department for \$1,108,481.

Mr. Maley Jr. asked about the overtime numbers. Mr. Hood explained about reworking operations.

The Board had several questions regarding the curb machines. Mr. Hood expressed the need for better curbing and increased productivity. Mr. Richie Waters also reinforced the need. The Board felt these items should be in the CNR budget.

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to reduce Capital Equipment Line by \$16,500.

Mr. Neto asked about the costs, particularly if they didn't have the machine. The Board discussed the costs of the machines.

Mr. Waters expressed concern with the roads and asked that monies be retained for the equipment to fix them. The Board discussed CNR procedures.

Mr. Flanders modified the reduction in the Capital Equipment Line to \$16,499.

**Motion** was approved to reduce the Capital Equipment Line by \$16,499. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

There was some discussion regarding small equipment. Mr. Hood explained his need to replace small equipment.

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Jack Henehan to reduce Small Equipment Line by \$1000. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

This was a total reduction of \$17,499.

**Main Motion** was carried to approve Line Item 30 Highway Department for an amended amount of \$1,090,982.

Chairman Gengler called a recess at 9:00pm.

Chairman Gengler began the meeting at 9:15pm.

#### Line Item #30VM – Vehicle Maintenance

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by John Flanders to approve Line Item 30VM Vehicle Maintenance for \$258,158. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

The Board asked about the Contract Services Line Item. Mr. Hood explained that 2 mechanics with high vacation time have a large fleet to maintain of aging vehicles as well as mandates for police services and senior bus. Often time routine services are done by other employees but sometimes some services need to be contracted out due to the workload.

Mr. Flanders asked about the Nitrogen filing station. Mr. Hood described the system and its ability to save on tires and fuel. Mr. Neto asked for more details in the savings. Mr. Hood said it produces a 35% reduction in wear and tear on the tires and a 5-15% reduction in fuel. The Board discussed when the return would come on this investment.

Ms Kiefer asked for clarification on Departmental Expenses and Materials. Mr. Shingleton said that this happened when they combined the departments.

Mr. Maley Jr. asked about the gallon usage for the Highway Department versus the Highway Vehicle Maintenance. There was some concern about the variables.

#### Line Item #31 – Building Maintenance

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 31 Building Maintenance for \$451,584. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Mr. Maley Jr. asked what the 12” bucket was for. Mr. Hood explained it was for the backhoe. Mr. Shingleton explained that the generator breaks every time the power goes out.

#### Line Item #32 – Parks & Grounds

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item #32 Parks & Grounds for \$251, 568. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

#### Line Item #33 – Pub. Wks. – Other Expense

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 33 Pub. Wks. – Other Expense for \$448,477.

Mr. Neto asked about Northeast Utilities and their charges. Mr. Hood said that he is reviewing the street lighting process. Mr. Shingleton discussed the monies received in the past by an audit company and that the items are being reviewed. The Board discussed the lighting budget.

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Ed Maley Jr. to reduce street lights by \$15, 015.

Ms Sylvester expressed concern with the trend of this year’s lighting and cautioned the Board of making such a steep cut.

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Ed Maley Jr. to reduce Street Lights Line item by \$6015. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

**Main Motion** was carried for Line Item 33 Pub. Wks. – Other Expense for an amended amount of \$442,462.

Line Item #12 – Legal Expense

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 12 Legal Expense for \$201,907. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Mr. Shingleton mentioned that the possibility of 2 contracts to negotiate.

Line Item #13 – Central Services

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Ed Maley Jr. to approve Line Item 13 Central Service for \$102,680. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Line Item #14 – Insurance Expense

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Julius Neto to approve Line Item 14 Insurance Expense for \$457,501.

Mr. Roohr explained that due to policy negotiations he has dropped the package policy line to \$138,214, a reduction of \$5119. Mr. Roohr discussed how recent past serious accidents and workman's compensation claims are now affecting the Town's rates.

Mr. Neto asked what the difference would be if the Town changed its deductibles. The Board asked that this be looked at.

**Motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Julius Neto to reduce the Package Policy Line by \$5119. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

The Board discussed the Heart & Hypertension Fund and that due to recent draws on it that it needs to be replenished.

**Main motion** carried to approve Line Item 14 Insurance Expense for an amended amount of \$452,382.

Line Item #15 – General Expense

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by John Flanders to approve Line Item 15 General Expense for \$76,661. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes*.

Mr. Flanders asked about the computer equipment expense. Ms Sylvester explained that it was for computer replacement, server replacement and consultant fee expenditures. Mr. Neto asked if leasing had been looked into. Chairman Gengler asked if the costs had been compared to the BOE and their leasing. Ms Sylvester explained the difference in the comparisons.

The Board discussed the Sidewalk Expense and holding off on funds for now. Mr. Shingleton remarked how he would like to move forward with several sidewalk projects and discussed the Streetscape project funding.

Line Item #16 – Finance Department

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Julius Neto to approve Line Item 16 Finance Department for \$305,628. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Line Item #44 – Employee Benefits

**Motion** was made by Julius Neto, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to approve Line Item 44 Employee Benefits for \$2,772,972.

Mr. Roohr discussed a reduction in the Dental Plan to \$97,932 for a decrease of \$3574 and a reduction in BC/BS to \$1,373,940 for a reduction of \$73,746.

Mr. Shingleton discussed the sacrifices of the Town Employees and asked for fairness between the BOE and the Town.

The Board discussed that it would take an additional \$350,000 in additional cuts to reduce the mil rate.

**Motion** was made by Ed Maley Jr., **seconded** by Jack Henehan to reduce Employee Benefits by \$77,320. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

The Board discussed that the furloughs have affected about \$75,000 to \$100,000. The Board discussed contracts and the potential for the future in employee expense and compared it to education.

The Board discussed fairness to Town employees who have made concessions, but the Board cannot control the BOE Line Items and expressed concern that they would not make the cuts in the appropriate places. The Board asked for the numbers to go back to the BOE and ask them to go back to their Unions.

**Main Motion** was carried to approve Line Item 44 Employee Benefits for an amended amount of \$2,695,652.

- C. Discussion and decisions on the 2009-2010 Board of Education's proposed budget. – No Action.
- D. Discussion on any 2009-2010 budget matter. – No Action.

It was stated that a total of \$108,938 in reductions were made so far.

**Motion** was made by Jack Henehan, **seconded** by Julius Neto to adjourn at 10:50pm. All were in Favor. *Motion Passes.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer L Donohue  
Finance Clerk