

Town of Cromwell, CT
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2020
Town Hall Room 7:00 P.M. Room 224/225

Minutes and Record of Vote

Present: Chairman Julius Neto, Vice-Chairman Allan Spotts, Ed Maley Jr., Steve Wygonowski, Dan Kelly, and John Ireland

Also Present: Town Manager Anthony Salvatore, Finance Director Marianne Sylvester, and Tax Collector Doug Sienna

Not Present: Alternate Anne Hulick

Called To Order – Chairman Julius Neto called the Regular Meeting dated November 19, 2020 to order at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

Seat Alternates – No alternates were seated.

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Maley to approve the agenda dated November 19, 2020 as amended. *All in favor – Motion Passed.*

Approval of Minutes of Previous –

Regular Meeting, September 24, 2020 - A Motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Wygonowski to approve the minutes for the Regular Meeting dated September 24, 2020 as amended. *All in favor – Motion Passed.*

Corrections is the spelling of Steve Wygonowsky to Steve Wygonowski throughout the minutes of September 24, 2020 Regular Meeting.

Citizens Comments – None

Report of the Town Manager – Town Manager Anthony Salvatore reported on the status of projects:

- Started the landing on River Road project and talked about the specifics of the project. Not sure if it will be complete before the winter season starts. Encourages everyone to check it out. This came from the money obtained from the STEAP program.
- In regards the STEAP program the parking lot, lights, charging stations, etc. and as a result Cromwell received approximately \$96,000.
- Coles Road from Route 9 to the Shunpike is completed with additional paving on nearby streets.
- North Road construction. The road should be re-opened sometime the week ending 11/27/20.

- Highway Facility/Water Pollution Control is almost completed. Minor items still need to be completed and furniture also needed. Looking at the first or second week in December 2020 to start utilizing it.
- Town Hall is still closed to the public. Residents are seen by appointment only. Each department is making provisions to serve the residents of Cromwell with little inconveniences as possible. Tax Collector's office has a drop off box for residents to drop of their tax payments or credit payments are being accepted.
- May begin to use ZOOM more for meetings and virtual programs. Trying to work on the bugs regarding the hackers that may disrupt the session(s). Trying to work within the parameters that ZOOM is putting on the virtual session (need a monitor, time constraints, etc.). Wanting to utilize ZOOM so more individuals can have access to commission meetings.

Discussion took place on matters such as the ZOOM monitors and some of the particulars the restrictions and the use of this way to communicate with commission members and the residents. Mr. Neto offered to be one that is trained to benefit the Finance Board. At this time residents are instructed to submit in writing any matters they wish to share which will be read and be on record.

Additional conversation took place regarding the sharing our plans for the Highway facility with other towns so they can benefit and save costs. It was noted that we took ideas from other towns when designing our facility.

Also was asked on any updates on the status of the Red Lion. It was noted that they have paid their first half of their taxes. Hopefully, someone will reinvest in it. The property will be foreclosed on. The town will help whoever takes the property over.

Report of the Finance Director – Finance Director Marianne Sylvester reported that the budget reports in your packet are through November 13, 2020 (the report is YTD). The expenditures and revenues are on target and there are no areas of concern at this time.

Discussion on specific line items took place. Asking why some of the lines were either lower or higher than past years. Wanted to know if Covid had anything to do with the numbers. Town Clerk and Registrar's office increases were due to election costs. It was offset by funds received by the State to cover some of expenditures incurred. It was asked if the funds received were reflected in the reporting and it was noted that it was. Tax Collector's office received \$5,000 and the Registrar's office received with \$5,000 or \$2,500. Ms. Sylvester noted that more than the funds received were expended. A breakdown will be provided on the expenditures versus the grant funds received. Asked if there was a concern of being over. Ms. Sylvester does believe so but will provide more details on the figures. Additional conversation took place on other line items. Questioned the Board of Ed budget and it was noted that the Board of Ed reported to the Town Council as to how much was spent due to Covid. Approximately \$1,000,000 was spent due to Covid and expect to get to have it covered by the Education Program Refund. Finance Director will get clarification from Anne Burke to have details at the next meeting. The Covid expenditures will not go against the NBR and will not affect setting a new budget next year.

Report of The Tax Collector – Tax Collector Doug Sienna reported that the report provide is YTD. He noted that 56.08% has been collected for the current year and last year collected was 55.86%. Collections are slightly higher than last year at this time.

Asked if there were any delinquent Commercial accounts. Mr. Sienna reported that there are no delinquent commercial accounts older than 2011. There were tax sales which affected the numbers.

There will not be any delays for the 2nd half of property tax collections. Mr. Sienna explained how the number were comprised and provided a handout for detailed information.

Old Business – None

New Business –

1. **Discussion and action to transfer \$7,400 from the General Fund fund balance to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Fund and appropriate \$7,400 for the Connecticut DPH Immunization Grant. The grant will be 100% reimbursed.**

A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Wygonowski to approve the transfer of \$7,400 from the General Fund fund balance to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Fund. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

2. **Discussion and action to transfer \$6,898 from the General Fund fund balance to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Fund and appropriate \$6,898 for the Emergency Management Performance Grant. This grant will be 100% reimbursed.**

A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Wygonowski to transfer (\$6,897.40) from the General Fund fund balance to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Fund and appropriate (\$6,897.40) for the Emergency Management Performance Grant.

The motion was amended by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Wygonowski to change the amount of the transfer and appropriation to \$6,898. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

Town Manager noted that Items 1 and 2 are to prepare for the distribution of the vaccine. Refer to the memo and report included in your packets.

3. **Approval of the Board of Finance 2021 Regular Meeting Schedule.**

A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Wygonowski to approve the Board of Finance 2021 Regular Meeting Schedule. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

Board of Education-Liaison Report – Mr. Ireland listened to the Board of Ed meeting and was there if they had any questions. Mr. Ireland reported on the following:

- They are still waiting for tablets and laptops.
- Updated given on grants.
- Discussion on the school year schedule.

Mr. Neto had the same results from the meeting a month earlier. He is still waiting to tour the school in the Covid environment. The Board of Ed is continuing to send updates on the budget and how things are going during the pandemic. Most of the conversation was not concentrated on the budget but on staffing and the needs of the students during the pandemic. Concentrated on the operations of the school day. A request was sent to Dr. Macri for updates on the budget and a summary report on the Covid expenses. They are keeping Covid expenses separate from the general expenses (what is grant related, etc.). Ms. Sylvester stated that earlier this week they were told they would be getting \$31,000 from the States Corona Relief fund to cover expenditures from March 1 thru June 30, 2020. The other 75 % was all approved by FEMA. We just do not know how long it will be before the funds are actually received.

The total between FEMA and the State Covid Relief Funds is approximately \$120,000 which will go into the miscellaneous revenue and not the offsetting expenditures.

Chairman's Comments – Chairman Neto asked that everyone stays safe and healthy. Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Vice-Chairman's Comments – Vice-Chairman Spotts echoed Mr. Neto.

Good and Welfare – None

Adjournment – A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Kelly to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Hardacker

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Recording Clerk