

Town of Cromwell, CT
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 27, 2016
Town Hall Room 7:00 P.M. Room 224/225

Minutes and Record of Vote

Present: Chairman John Henehan, Vice-Chairman Julius Neto, Joseph Corlis, Allan Spotts, Alternate Jon Dzurka and Alternate Dan Kelly

Not Present: Amanda Drew and Bob Milardo

Also Present: Town Manager Anthony Salvatore, Finance Director Marianne Sylvester, Jon Harriman and Board of Ed Finance Director Eve Spencer.

Call To Order – Chairman John Henehan called the Regular Meeting dated October 27, 2016 to order at 7:01 p.m.

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

Seat Alternates – Motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Neto to seat alternates present. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Spotts to approve the agenda dated October 27, 2016. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings –

Regular Meeting September 22, 2016 – A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve the revised minutes of the Regular Meeting dated September 22, 2016. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Changes to the minutes were under the Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting. Regular Meeting June 23, 2016 changes to July 28, 2016 and Regular Meeting July 28, 2016 – Cancelled changes to August 2016 – Cancelled. Also the header had the incorrect date, which was also corrected. Also noted that the June 23, 2016 minutes were approved at the previous meeting.

Citizens Report – None

Report of the Town Manager – Town Manager Anthony Salvatore updated on the various projects –

- Finishing touches to the Town Hall – the irrigation is going in and then the parking lot can be opened up in the front for employees during the day and citizens for overflow for activities in the evenings and weekends.
- Pierson Park lighting project is now completed.

- Still negotiating two union contracts – in the final phase for Public Works blue collar. Mediation took place and a packet was put together. Due to the Town Council meeting-taking place early a document will be generated and presented to the council at that time.

The Police contract for the sworn officers where mediation began and will be going back to mediation on November 2nd to clarify some points and hopefully the union will be ratified it and possibly it can also be presented to the Town Council.

In January 2017 negotiations for the contract for the Dispatchers will begin. Then the White Collar contract negotiations will follow. The White Collar contract is due Spring 2018.

- Mr. Salvatore reported that he hired the new Parks and Rec Director (Chris Razik who employed with the Town of Rocky Hill). He will be starting November 14th. Mr. Salvatore noted that he is now concentrating his efforts to hire a Library Director and once that is completed he will work on hiring the Social Services Director.

That basically covers everything except the Ms Sylvester and Mr. Salvatore met with the financial advisors in regards to bonding. All reports received are favorable for the Town. Ms. Sylvester will report on the details.

Discussion took place in regards to the cost of the negotiations for the two unions and details on how a mediator was chosen.

Mr. Spotts commended the parties involved in the parking lot renovation for a job well done. Mr. Salvatore noted that the Walking Trails project maybe be started depending on the weather and the progress made on the leaf collection. It was asked if a gazebo would be built and if it could be ready done before winter in time for when the kids go sledding. Discussion took place as to what the work scope is to be.

Mr. Corlis asked how the progress for the Police Dept Cover/solar panels. Mr. Salvatore noted that the police chief was getting ready to go out for proposals and was reminded that funds are available for this project.

Report of the Finance Director – Finance Director Marianne Sylvester reported on the financial reports through the end of September included in the packets provided prior to the meeting. There have not been any significant changes to report. Business as usual in regards to the fiscal budget. Still working with the Auditors and trying to finish up the audit. Should have a rough draft by Thanksgiving but may run a little later due to Ms. Sylvester being out in September and Doug Sienna's absence. In regards to the ending balance from last year's budget we are waiting for the results of the audit but it appears that there will be an operating surplus. However, the General Fund Balance will be decreasing by \$200,000 but this was planned. Ms. Sylvester further explained why and how this went about. The funds were used to finance projects that were needed to be done. It was asked what the dollar amount was but Ms. Sylvester did not have any final numbers but would like to wait until the audit is complete before stating what the amount would be.

Strong tax collections again last month; although, the other areas of revenue were very tight. As everyone knows the State Aid was reduced by approximately \$70,000 -\$80,000. Departmental Revenue also came in tight than usual. Supplemental Motor Vehicle came in lower but still came in at a surplus. The current tax collection is a smidge higher than the 98.7 that was forecasted. The bigger savings cam in from the

expenditures (wages in particular from the Police Department due to the numerous changes that took place and from benefits.)

There was discussion in regards to some of the expenditures (attorney fees, etc.) and Ms. Sylvester state that these areas were expected to be higher and was budgeted for it.

Ms. Sylvester also updated the Finance Board with status on bonds. There was a meeting in Wethersfield and had a conference call with the respective parties. These individuals assist us with the ratings presentation in collecting data needed to obtain bonds. Many questions were asked and we had answers for them and as a result, it has been affirmed that the Town of Cromwell will continue to keep their AAA rating. Ms Sylvester saw a preliminary report and it looked good due to the strong management and economy the town has. Other factors were also mentioned.

Report of The Tax Collector – In the absence of Tax Collector Doug Sienna Ms. Sylvester reported that the collections report included in the packet provided prior to the meeting is on target and came in as expected for the end of September. Refer to the report for details.

Old Business – None

New Business –

1. To consider and act upon a resolution making a supplemental appropriation of \$1,716,000 to be funded from borrowings to the extent not defrayed from grant receipts, for costs related to the replacement of the North Road Extension Bridge (Bridge No. 05939) in Cromwell and related work; and recommending to the Town Meeting the approval of such appropriation, if approved by the Board of Finance. A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Spotts to consider and act upon a resolution making a supplemental appropriation of \$1,716,000 to be funded from borrowings to the extent not defrayed from grant receipts for costs related to the replacement of the North Road Extension Bridge (Bridge No. 05939) in Cromwell and related work; and recommending to the Town Meeting the approval of such appropriation if approved by the Board of Finance. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

Jon Harriman, Town Engineer reported on the details of the scope of work that would be done. A report was included in the packet provide prior to the meeting that details what will be done. He also reported that the bridge has been declared in poor condition recommended it replacement since repairs were not feasible. Mr. Harriman reported how he went about creating his report to obtain the grant that would cover 80% and the town being responsible for 20%. He noted that he based his estimate from the Christian Hill bridge repairs since the work is similar. His estimate in the packet is higher to factor in right of way costs and any other costs that may arise.

Discussion took place in regards to how the financial obligations would work with the Town and/or State. This is a Federal program and if for some reason the State backs out financially, the Federal will step in. It was also asked how soon would the funds be reimbursed and providing all documentation is in order it should only take 6 to 8 weeks or soon thereafter.

2. Discussion and authorization to re-appropriate LoCIP funds previously designated for construction inspection services to engineering services for the realignment of County Line Drive and Shunpike Road for the Northern Industrial Tier. A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Spotts to authorize to re-appropriate LoCIP funds previously designated for construction

inspection services to engineering services for the realignment of County Line Drive and Shunpike Road for the Northern Industrial Tier. ***All in favor – Motion Passed.***

Mr. Harriman provided documentation explaining the amendments to this project. Details of the work scope are also described in the documentation provided. Discussion took place asking questions in regards to exactly how this work/changes would affect the traffic flow, etc.

Board of Education-Liaison Report – Mr. Corlis reported that the Board of Ed met on October 11th and the Superintendent of School recommended a soft freeze on the budget because of the concern for grant money. No other changes to the budget. The Board of Education also met on October 25th and at that time the Board of Ed Director Eve Spencer came up with the figures for the per pupil expense rate for 2016-2017 which is \$14,377 compared to this year's figure of \$14,166 per pupil.

Questions were presented to Eve Spencer to explain what a soft freeze is and how it works. Ms. Spencer explained that it is a temporary freeze of non-essential expenditures until the budget can be re-evaluated. She mentioned that the grant money was lower than anticipated and wanted to make sure funds were available for areas that would need them. She also noted that they did not have a handle on the Special Ed costs yet. They have been working hard to get this done and reported to the State.

Questions were asked in regards to which grants came in lower than anticipated and what they are doing to get them worked out. It was also if a report for the per pupil rate for the last 5 years can be provided. Ms. Spencer noted that this available but did not have it with her. She will provide it to the Finance Board members after the meeting.

Chairman's Comments – Chairman John Henehan stated that it is good to be back. There was a meeting with Town Council, Board of Ed and Board of Finance and found it very helpful and everyone felt good about the meeting and what came from it. Now it is just a matter to see what happens.

Vice-Chairman's Comments – None

Good and Welfare – The Board wishes Doug Sienna a speedy recovery. Mr. Spotts noted on detail for Halloween on Main (street closures, time of the event, etc.). He noted that Walgreen's would be giving flu shots.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 17th since Thanksgiving falls on the 4th Thursday of the month.

Adjournment – A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Corlis to adjourn meeting at 7:57 p.m. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed***

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Hardacker

Cynthia Hardacker
Recording Clerk