

Town of Cromwell, CT  
Board of Finance  
Special Meeting  
Monday, April 9, 2015  
Town Hall at 7:00 p.m.

RECEIVED FOR FILING  
4/15/2015 at 10:07A.M.  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
CROMWELL, CONN.

*Gloria Brundage*  
TOWN CLERK

### Minutes and Record of Vote

**Present:** Chairman John Henahan, Julius Neto, Amanda Drew, Joseph Corlis, Ed Wenners, Bob Milardo, Alternate Dan Delisle and Alternate Dan Kelly (arrived at approximately 7:20 p.m.)

**Others Present:** Finance Director Marianne Sylvester, Acting Town Manager Chief Anthony Salvatore and Town Staff

**Call Meeting to Order** - Chairman Henahan called the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Seating of Alternates** - None

**Discussion and Decisions on the 2015-2106 Town Council's proposed budget and Debt Services** - A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to discuss and vote on 2015-2106 Town Council's proposed budget and Debt Service. All in Favor - Motion Passed

**Discussion and decisions on any 2015-2016 Town Managers proposed budget matters:**

#### Budget Line #4 Economic Development

A motion was made by Mr. Corlis and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$20,400 for line Item #4 Economic Development. All in Favor - Motion Passed

Ms. Drew asked about the expense for the website resources. Town Planner Stuart Popper responded that the CERC website is used for advertising properties. It is a well known website that gets good results. There is no charge to advertise on the website.

Mr. Neto wanted to know about the show booths and the increase to this line item. He also wanted to know if it was used primarily for the TPC. Mr. Popper mentioned that the booths are over 10 years old and needed to be replaced. The booths are used for various events (trade shows, etc.) and not just for the TPC. Signs are also used for advertising.

#### Budget Line #5 Developer/Planner

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$136,669 for line item #5 Developer/Planner. All in Favor - Motion Passed

#### Budget Line #6 Development Compliance

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$88,570 for line item # 6 Development Compliance. All in Favor - Motion Passed

Chairman Henahan questioned the increase for wages and wanted to know if it was for a full year of service for the compliance officer. Mr. Neto asked if the administrative secretary was shared and was advised the position is shared with the Town Planner.

#### Budget Line #23 Planning & Zoning Comm.

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$3,225 for line item #23 Planning & Zoning Commission. All in Favor - Motion Passed

Ms. Drew asked about how the screen and projector was going to be implemented in the room for presentations. Mr. Popper (Town Planner) stated that those details still need to be worked out but once installed it will be available to everyone who uses the meeting room. The Board was advised this system will be paid out of the Building Maintenance budget.

#### Budge Line #24 Zoning Board of Appeals

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$1,535 for line item #24 Zoning Board of Appeals. All in Favor – Motion Passed

#### Budget Line #25 Inland Wetlands

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$2,185 for line item #25 Inland Wetlands. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Mr. Neto inquired about the differences in dollars from year to year. Mr. Popper explained the fund varies from month to month based on the number of applicants. A meeting is not held if there are no applicants. As a result the budget line varies from year to year.

#### Budget Line #26 Conservation Comm.

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$1,510 for line item #26 Conservation Commission. All in Favor – Motion Passed

The same concerns regarding wages were expressed by Finance Board members.

#### Budget Line #27 Public Works Admin.

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$246,164 for line item #27 Public Works Admin. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Chairman Henehan expressed a concern about uniform expenses. Lou Spina, Director of Public Work stated that this line expense was determined on the basis of all employees utilizing the full contractual uniform package (5 shirts, 5 pants, outerwear where needed, cleaning services, etc.). He explained that there are employees who choose not to use all the uniforms/services by contract. Therefore, this line may be lower by year's end.

#### Budget Line #28 Engineering

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$202,680 for line item #28 Engineering. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Ms. Drew asked about the \$2,500 for the easement drainage issue. Mr. Spina stated that it was not originally in the budget but it needs to be done.

#### Budget Line #29 Sol. Waste/Recycling Center

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$593,452 for the Solid Waste/Recycling Center. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Members of the Finance Board questioned the Reimbursement Program. Director of Public Works Lou Spina said back in the fall the 1.3 tons seemed high. After review it was felt that a more realistic figure would be .75 tons.

Mr. Neto understands the transfer station is trying to get the public educated as how to recycle. This began by going to the elementary school and educating the kids at a young age. As time goes on solid waste is becoming more specialized. There are now different market places for various materials. For example, mattresses are being recycled instead of being disposed of. Consumers are beginning to be charged for mattress disposal at the time of purchase.

#### Budget Line #30 Highway Dept.

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$1,247,137 for line item #30 Highway Dept. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Mr. Neto asked Director Spina if there was anywhere in the Highway's Department budget he could reduce expenses. Director Spina answered that there was no "fluff" within the budget being presented. In fact, Director Spina not sure if it is high enough. After submittal of the budget Director Spina found that there were items that were missed. However, he is leaving the budget as is. Mr. Neto questioned fuel costs. Director Spina responded that the fuel costs have been contracted and prices are locked in for 3 years. This figure is lower than last year's budget.

Ms. Drew wanted to know what Road Master/Road Scholar was. Mr. Spina explained that it is a series of classes taken to get certified in road repair (paving, maintenance, etc.)

#### Budget Line #31 Vehicle Maintenance

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$338,122 for line item #31 Vehicle Maintenance. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Mr. Corlis wanted to know if the new chemicals used this winter are causing premature corrosion. Director Spina said that there was some premature corrosion and some brake lines were affected. However, this was anticipated and drivers were instructed to wash their vehicles as often as possible. The present wash station is outside and at times the freezing conditions prevented them from washing the trucks. Mr. Corlis also inquired if new vehicles would be needed sooner and Director Spina stated that is was possible.

Ms. Drew asked why contract services increased. Director Spina responded that he is requesting a 550 dump truck in this year's budget and tri-axel next year. Both vehicles are in bad disrepair and getting new vehicles may lower maintenance repairs.

Mr. Neto inquired if it is possible to get the Town's mechanics trained to repair new vehicles. Director Spina replied that getting diagnostic equipment and getting personnel trained may save money in the end but the diesel vehicles are more complicated and it may not be possible to get personnel trained. Director Spina will look into training to see if it is feasible and practical to get the Town's mechanics trained for the new vehicle(s). Until then vehicle(s) will need to be sent to the dealership for repair.

#### Budget Line #32 Building Maintenance

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$565,863 for line item #32 Building Maintenance. All in Favor – Motion Passed

#### Budget Line #33 Parks & Grounds

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$366,271 for line item #33 Parks & Ground. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Chairman Henahan inquired about the security system for Watros Park. Director Spina informed Board of Finance members that the Town Council recommended the recordable and retrievable capabilities camera system.

Mr. Neto asked if there is a list of small equipment list. Marianne Sylvester (Director of Finance) informed that she keeps an asset list for items \$5,000 and more. Anything under \$5,000 is usually kept by the department.

Ms. Drew asked about paint and other materials for the fields. Paint and other materials are used for the soccer field, baseball fields, etc. The Board of Education presently splits the cost of this material (3 loads paid by Board of Education and 3 loads paid for through Parks & Grounds budget).

#### Budget Line #34 Public Works – Other Exp.

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$496,376 for line item #34 Public Works-Other Exp. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Mr. Neto requested an explanation as to how the sewer usage and assessment was determined. He wanted to know why the Town is paying for sewer/water. Chief Salvatore advised that it was paid per state statute. Ms. Sylvester was not sure how it was determined but would look into getting the explanation. Chief Salvatore said he would check the state statute for sewer usage fees.

Ms. Drew wanted to know about the cost and savings for the street lighting project. Director Spina budgeted for \$190,000 and the Town Council proposed \$210,000. He stated that in the long term there would be significant savings to the town (approximately \$80,000 to \$90,000 per year). Finalization of details is still being worked on for this project. The increase is due to the rate increases for electricity.

#### Capital Expenditures for Public Works

- A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$30,000 for Public Works Pavement Management Study. All in Favor – Motion Passed
- A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$200,000 for engineering drainage upgrade at the Police Station parking lot. All in Favor – Motion Passed Mr. Milardo excused himself from the vote due to a conflict of interest.

The scope of work involves removing the 18" pipe and replacing it with a 36" pipe, which will drain out into a 54" pipe. The path chosen will slightly impact the football field. This drainage upgrade will help prevent flooding of the police station's parking lot and flooding of the lower level of the police station which would cause damage to the community room, the dispatch area, walls, etc. Mr. Delisle asked what would be done with the vehicles while work is being done. Chief Salvatore advised that personal vehicles may be parked at Pierson Park. Determination as for the parking of other departmental vehicles will be made at the time the work is done.

- A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve for the Highway Dept \$125,000 for a mason dump truck. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Director of Public Works Lou Spina advised that the mason dump truck the Highway Dept presently uses has been out-of-service more than it is in-service. This truck is approximately 11 years old and since August, 2014 approximately \$10,000 to \$11,000 has been expended for repairs. This truck is used heavily and on a daily basis for road repairs, patching, hauling of materials, etc.

- A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve under Building Maintenance \$100,000 for repair to the Town Hall roof. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Director Spina informed the board that the roof is over 25 years old and beginning to show wear. Areas of the roof have been patched and shingles replaced. Ms. Drew wanted to know if a metal roof would be better and save money in repairs in years to come. Director Spina responded that it was not considered since it is more expensive. Mr. Wenners also recommended that they look into fiberglass shingles in place of asphalt shingles quoted. Mr. Kelly asked Marianne Sylvester (Director of Finance) to check if the property insurance would be lower as a result of the roof upgrade. Ms. Sylvester will look into it.

- A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve under Building Maintenance \$23,000 for HVAC software (replacement) at the police station. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Presently two software systems are running (one for the police station and one for the town hall). This will allow the HVAC to run on one program instead of two separate programs. Both systems will be operated from the town hall.

Mr. Neto asked Ms. Sylvester if the capital expenditures coming out of Fund Balance would affect our AAA rating. She stated that it should stay an AAA. With all the expenditures approved it would bring it to approximately 13%.

#### Budget Line #45 Employee Benefits

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$3,304,623 for line item #45 Employee Benefits. A revised motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Wenners to approve \$3,212,623 for Employee Benefits. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Ms. Sylvester informed Finance Board members that the Health Insurance was reduced by \$92,000 and pensions were already reduced substantially (100% funded).

Budget Line #46 Debt Service

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$3,882,952 for line item #46 Debt Service. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Ms. Sylvester recommended using \$150,000 for the Willowbrook project from Fund Balance instead of taxation.

Budget Line #16 General Expense

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve \$857,343 for line item #16 General Expense. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Mr. Delisle noticed that the Town Council did not budget for fireworks this year and was wondering if there would be a Riverport Festival this year. To date no festival is scheduled for this year.

\$2,500 is used to support the inventory system to track assets. Ms. Sylvester tracks assets \$5,000 and over.

Ms. Drew questioned why the budget line for the Rose Garden was in General Expenses. She thought it should be under Parks. Chief Salvatore stated that there were community groups such as scouts, local groups or individuals that would take care of its up keep. However there are times when the town needs to take care of it and address its needs.

Budget Line #20 Charter Revis. Comm.

A motion was made by Mr. Milardo and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$2.00 for line item #20 Charter Revis. Comm. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Ms. Sylvester reported that the approved bottom line is now \$15,585,538. A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Corlis to approve the new bottom line of \$15,585,538. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Total General Expense is \$47,743,727. Government Expense, Board of Education and Debt Service minus last year's CNR and deducting this year's capital to an increase of 2.86%.

**Adjournment** - Motion made by Mr. Milardo and seconded by Ms. Drew to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance at 8:41 p.m. All in Favor – Motion Passed

NOTE: Referendum set for May 5, 2015 (time to be announced and will be held at the high school)

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia Hardacker  
Recording Clerk