

Woodstock Board of Finance Minutes

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Town Hall Room 1

7:00 pm

SPECIAL MEETING

1. **Call to order:** Chairman Michael Dougherty called meeting to order at 7:01 pm. A moment of silence was held in honor of Jay Swan. Chairman Michael Dougherty congratulated and welcomed Chandler Paquette as the new First Selectman.

2. **Roll Call**

- a. **Members Present:** Michael Dougherty (Chairman)
David Fortin
Fred Chmura
Philip Parizeau
Jeffery Kelleher
Michele Woz
Charlene Perkins Cutler
Marilyn Barker
Julie Marcotte

Others Present: Finance Director Karen Fitzpatrick, First Selectman Chandler Paquette, Selectwoman Kate McDonald, Woodstock Public Schools Business Manager Janice Thurlow, Superintendent of Schools Viktor Toth, Tax Collector Nora Valentine, Mary Jane Dougherty, Lee Fontaine, Amy Vinal, Hans Frankhouser, David Richardson, Jessica Weaver Boose, Sonia Greene and Recording Secretary Amy Monahan.

- b. **Noted for the Record:** Quorum

3. **Seat Alternate if Necessary:**

- a. N/A

4. **Approve Minutes**

- a. March 19, 2024 Regular Meeting
i. Michele Woz made a ***Motion** to approve March 19, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented.
***Seconded** by Phil Parizeau. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

5. **Public Comment**

- a. None

6. **Old Business**

- a. Update on State
i. None
- b. Update on Local Bridge Project
i. The Peake Brook Road construction will start on Monday.
1. There is an additional \$115,000 needed for this project in order to comply with the standards of this bridge project.

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- ii. Extensions for Hopkins and Butts Road bridges have been signed. At this point the prices have increased since approval in 2019 and funds available will not cover projects as planned. Prices and funding will be further evaluated closer to construction.
- c. Update on American Rescue Plan Act
 - i. Karen Fitzpatrick continues to ensure compliance standards are being met. She noted that confirmed contracts are needed for all projects by December 31, 2024. The auditor has suggested returning surplus funds to undesignated funds.
 - 1. WFVA Ambulance surplus in the amount of \$60,584.82
 - a. Dave Fortin made a ***Motion** to move surplus funds from the WFVA Ambulance allocation in the amount of \$60,584.82 into undesignated funds account. ***Seconded** by Phil Parizeau. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - 2. Highway Department Freightliner Dump Truck surplus in the amount of \$7,060.72
 - a. David Fortin made a ***Motion** to move surplus funds from the Highway Department Freightliner Dump Truck allocation in the amount of \$7,060.72 into undesignated funds account. ***Seconded** by Fred Chmura. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - 3. Dive Team Equipment surplus in the amount of \$96.72
 - a. David Fortin made a ***Motion** to move surplus funds from the Dive Team Equipment allocation in the amount of \$96.72 into undesignated funds account. ***Seconded** by Fred Chmura. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - 4. Total available ARPA funds remaining total \$138,147.54 to obligate by December 31, 2024.
 - d. WES Tunnel Encapsulation Project
 - i. The Board of Education received 5 bids for the tunnel encapsulation project. The winning bid is in the amount of \$18,000 and work can start on May 6th. Fund allocation will be up to an amount to cover both the lowest and 2nd lowest bid at this time. This will allow work to move forward if the lowest bid does not properly meet specifications of the bid.
 - 1. Mike Dougherty made a ***Motion** to obligate up to \$25,000 for the feasibility study for WES tunnel encapsulation project. Any portion unused will automatically be placed back into undesignated funds. ***Seconded** by David Fortin. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - ii.

7. New Business

- a. FY 24 General Government Budget Update
 - i. Karen Fitzpatrick expects surplus in several areas. She requests overexpanding in the following areas:
 - 1. Board of Selectmen budget by \$6500 to cover death benefits for Swan Family.
 - 2. Building department budget by \$5500 for retirement benefits owed to employee planning to retire.
 - 3. Transfer station hauling fees may run short due to rising costs and she would like up to \$20,000 available to accommodate.
 - a. David Fortin made a ***Motion** to allow over expenditures not to exceed \$7500 for Board of Selectmen budget, \$6500 for the building department budget and \$22,000 for the transfer station budget resulting in a maximum over expenditure total of \$36,000. ***Seconded** by Fred Chmura. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

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- b. FY 24 Board of Education Budget Update
 - i. Janice Thurlow state that the over expended Special Education budget continue to rise. Substitute teachers are also a concern with the current illnesses rate in the community. A special budget appropriation will most likely be needed for the Special Education over expenditure. She has distributed the newest quarterly report to the board for review.
 - 1. There is a possibility that the State will have funding available Special Education, but the availability and amount is unknown at this time.
- c. FY Final Estimated Revenues
 - i. Total estimated revenues for FY 24-25 totals \$28,549,522.
 - ii. If the proposed budget was approved, it would result in a shortfall of \$1,379,278 or 1.45 mils
- d. FY 25 Allocation of Funds
 - i. Michele Woz suggested to approve the BOS as proposed and BOE budget reduction of \$1.25 million resulting in total budget amount of \$22,735,846 or 5.83% which would be a .6135 mil increase
 - ii. Mike Dougherty has prepared 3 different budget amounts to represent high, low and middle range budget numbers.
 - iii. Phil Parizeau was \$130,000 above Michele Woz with his recommendation in the BOE budget and noted the rate of inflation as a guide for his numbers
 - iv. Fred Chmura agrees with general budget as proposed and recommends a 6.04% increase resulting in budget amount of \$22,830,831 for BOE which would be a .75 mil increase
 - v. Dave Fortin agrees with general government proposed budget and recommends the BOE budget to be in the amount of \$22,560,135 or 5% increase resulting in a .47 mil increase
 - 1. Michael Dougherty made a ***Motion** to approve the General Government Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$6,432,672. ***Seconded** by David Fortin. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - 2. Michael Dougherty made a ***Motion** to approve the Board of Education Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$22,713,826. ***Seconded** by Phil Parizeau. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - 3. Michele Woz made a ***Motion** to recommend the approval of the Town of Woodstock Budget for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$29,146,498 and to appropriate said sum to meet the recommended expenditures. ***Seconded** by Michael Dougherty. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- e. Approve 5-Year Capital Plans
 - i. Board of Education Five Year Capital Plan total amount is \$3,212,961
 - ii. General Government Five Year Capital Plan total amount is \$11,312,800
 - iii. Total Five Year Capital Plan funds for the Town of Woodstock total \$14,483,952
 - 1. Mike Dougherty made a ***Motion** to approve Five Year Capital Plans as presented. ***Seconded** by Fred Chmura. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- f. Tax Collector Suspense List
 - i. Nora Valentine has created a suspense list in the amount of \$26,684.10
 - ii. Nora would like to have a collection agency work on some outstanding accounts.
 - 1. David Fortin made ***Motion** to approve Tax Suspense List as presented. ***Seconded** by Jeffrey Kelleher. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- g. Appoint an Auditor
 - i. The Town of Woodstock is currently under a 3-year contract with Mahoney Sabol that includes the option to extend for 2 additional years.
 - ii. Michele Woz asked if the town plans to go out to bid after the contract ends. She noted that the town of Woodstock is well past the time for a single independent auditor.

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1. David Fortin made a ***Motion** to appoint Mahoney Sabol as Town Auditor for FY 24 audit. ***Seconded** by Jeffrey Kelleher. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

8. Public Comment

- a. Dana Charzan noted that the budget passed tonight is disappointing to the taxpayers struggling year after year. She feels the BOE budget is too high.
- b. Linda McGee agrees with the BOS budget and feels the BOE increase rate is much too high and larger than any other rate increases.
- c. Hans Frankhouser noted that a special meeting is scheduled for tomorrow for the BOE. He noted that the gym floors will most likely be cut, which is a town building. He is looking for suggestions from the town to assist with these costs.
 - i. Karen noted that the cost of the middle school floor had been discussed as it is used for elections and recreation programs. This will be addressed at the next BOS meeting.
- d. Dana Charzan would like to see all meetings recorded and posted to the website for the public to view if they cannot attend.
- e. Lee Fontaine asked if auditor is for both Town and Board of Education. It was confirmed that the same auditor is used for both audits.

9. Other From Board

- a. None

10. Correspondence & Announcements

- a. The Annual Town Meeting will be held on May 14, 2024.
- b. The budget referendum will be held at the town hall on May 21, 2024.
- c. The next Board of Finance Meeting will be held on May 21, 2024 immediately after the referendum.

11. Adjournment

- a. Michele Woz made a ***Motion to Adjourn**. ***Seconded** by Phil Parizeau. ***The Motion Passed Unanimously**. Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Amy Monahan, Recording Secretary. DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Finance. Please refer to next month's meeting for approval/amendments.