



**Woodstock Board of Finance
Regular Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, March 9, 2021
via Zoom from remote locations**

In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC, the Board of Finance meeting was conducted via ZOOM online.

1. Call to Order: Chair M. Dougherty called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM noting that the full Board is present.

2. Roll Call: Michael Bernardi (Present)
Roy Bradrick, Jr. (Present)
Frederick Chmura (Present)
Michael Dougherty (Present)
David Fortin (Present)

Jeffrey Kelleher (Present)
Charlene Cutler (Alternate) (Present)
Barry Shead (Alternate) (Present)
Michele Woz (Alternate) (Present)

Others: First Selectman Jay Swan, Treasurer Karen Fitzpatrick, Schools Business Manager Janice Thurlow, BOE Chair Megan Bard-Morse, Superintendent of Schools Victor Toth, Members of the Public, WINY

3. Seat alternate if necessary: n/a

4. Approve Minutes: **Motion R. Bradrick seconded by F. Chmura to approve the February 9, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes as presented carried unanimously.**

5. Public Comment Instructions: Chairman Dougherty briefly reviewed the rules and regulations associated with the Governor's Executive Orders relative to conducting meetings via Zoom Online during COVID-19.

6. Old Business:

A. Update on State Budget: K. Fitzpatrick and J. Swan-- no report from the State at this time

B. Update on Local Bridge Project: J. Swan- no report at this time but the process is moving forward

C. Update on Town Hall Renovations: J. Swan- the work is complete with illumination of the exit sign. The total was \$15,447, with some of the work done in-house by DPW staff. K. Fitzpatrick-some of the cost was handled in 2020 (Contingency), some through a FEMA Grant, some the Repairs line item.

D. Request for Town Hall Emergency Expenditure (Heating system): an emergency repair will carry the system through the end of the heating season. The work cannot wait until next year, however. The probable total cost will be around \$10,680 this year, to be requested from Contingency. No action taken at this time.

E. Update on Governor's Executive Orders: M. Dougherty- there is no official news. J. Swan- we will stand pat until mid-April; the Governor is expected to make an official Executive Orders announcement then.

7. New Business:

A. FY 22 General Government Budget Presentation: J. Swan reviewed the pages of the proposed budget which was approved by the BOS on 02-22-2021, noting on each page if there were increases or decreases proposed over Fiscal Year 20-21. Salary increases are proposed in the 2-3% range; some staffing is eliminated and other full-time staff proposed, with note made of the resulting impacts on benefits (page 11). The appointment of a Town Finance Director, in addition to the current position of Treasurer (elected), was reviewed; this is a decision within the responsibilities of the BOS. who state that the broad list of tasks/responsibilities currently being handled are far beyond the statutory duties of a Treasurer. A Treasurer is also required by each town, to handle duties specified by Statute, on a few-hours-per-week basis (p. 4). A new approach is being planned for budgeting the Land Use Department, continuing to use fully-credentialed staff (page 14). Public Safety: a new approach could be 24/7 coverage with a proportionate cost increase (p. 23). Tree removal expenses are now found under the DPW; staff changes are proposed (p 24). NDDH has increased their per-capita fees (p.28). Debt has decreased by \$98,913. The total operational budget proposes an increase of \$269,382 over FY 2020-2021 or 5%.

BOF Questions New Town Position: R. Bradrick (advocated that a new position such as this should have gone to the townspeople who elected the Treasurer, as it changes the work of that person; suggested a rigorous selection process), C. Cutler (noting that the process was not transparent,

confirmed the BOS did not reach out to the BOF Chair during the process; confirmed that the Town Attorney was consulted to determine that this decision lies within the scope of responsibilities of the BOS exclusively; confirmed that the position change is underway at this time), F. Chmura (verified that there is no change in the salary now allocated to the Finance Director/the current year's Treasurer, but that an additional amount is allocated for the person who assumes the Treasurer's position), D. Fortin (confirmed that there was no problem that the BOS was trying to solve with this change; confirmed that instead it was a decision to move the town toward what other towns are doing. He requested that the BOF receive the job descriptions for both positions, as well the comments from the Town Attorney, as the BOF has responsibilities regarding the matter as well. J. Swan agreed to provide the documents; he has informed both Town Committees of the steps needed regarding the elected Treasurer position), M. Woz (verified that 127 of the 169 towns use the proposed Finance Director/Treasurer configuration; confirmed that when the decision was made to implement the position change, it was not advertised and interviews were not conducted). B. Shead (questioned whether a qualified person will want a position for only 4/5 hours a week). All BOF members made it clear their questions are not regarding the person who has been appointed, who actually received a good deal of praise.

Other Questions D. Fortin- (page 29) the proposed budget shows an increase over 20-21 of \$268,382 or about 5% before factoring in Debt reduction. The redemption of debt by \$98,913 is absorbed into that number; the actual increase proposed is \$367,995. M. Dougherty: Confirmed that the Town does not point out the reduction of Debt by 22% here; when not factored in, this means a spending increase in the proposed budget of 4.9% or an actual operating budget increase of 7.35%.

C. Cutler- Confirmed that Covid, in part, drove the costs of the Elections budget higher.

B. FY 22-FY 26 Five-Year Capital Plan Presentation J. Swan noted that proposal is pro-active planning for the Town's future. He reviewed the \$9,402,800 proposal, which includes DPW needs for road surfacing/drainage/bridges and fleet operations. The DEEP has, because of public safety, mandated action at Crystal Pond. An alternative for the upcoming Revaluation process is being considered, at a better price than in the past cycle. Question D. Fortin: was a grant received years ago to address ground contamination at the landfill? K. Fitzpatrick: Yes, but it could not be utilized in time.

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C. Preliminary Estimated Revenues: K. Fitzpatrick prepared a very preliminary estimate; she will have numbers which are much more complete by the budget presentation in April. Question C. Perkins-Cutler: are FEMA Covid-relief funds expected? American Recovery Act Funds? They have come in and been expended as required. F. Chmura: Since CT has no County governments, we cannot receive ARA funds.

8. Public Comment: none

9. Other from Board: none

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10. Correspondence & Announcements:

M. Dougherty *reminded the BOF that members are required to attend an update of the FOI Act training; one is scheduled for March 10. It will be recorded and available in case anyone has a conflict. * A BOF Special Meeting next Tuesday is for the BOE Budget proposal presentation, followed on March 23 by the combined budgets review. The updated current-year revenue will be presented.

11. Adjournment. **Motion David Fortin seconded by F. Chmura to adjourn carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm by Chair M. Dougherty.**

To hear the meeting in its entirety, click on the link or copy/paste it to your search bar:

<https://youtu.be/tZXmNYXORgA>

Respectfully submitted by Dotti Durst, Acting Recording Secretary. *DDurst*

DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Finance. Please refer to next month's minutes for approval/amendments