

Woodstock Board of Finance Minutes

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

7:00 pm

Town Hall Room 1

Regular Meeting

1. **Call to order:** Michael Dougherty called meeting to order at 7:01 pm

2. **Roll Call**

- a. **Members Present:** Michael Dougherty (Chairman)
David Fortin
Michael Bernardi
Jeffrey Kelleher
Philip Parizeau
Julie Marcotte, Alternate
Asa Scranton, Alternate

Members Absent: Fred Chmura (excused), Michele Woz (excused)

- b. **Others Present:** First Selectman Jay Swan, Finance Director Karen Fitzpatrick, Superintendent of Schools Victor Toth, Woodstock Public Schools Business Manager Janice Thurlow, CPA Michael J. VanDeventer, CPA Lauren A. Messina, several members of the public including Glenn Lessig, Dave Richardson, Sonia Greene, Holly Dearborn and Recording Secretary Amy Monahan
- c. **Noted for the Record:** Quorum

3. **Seat Alternate if Necessary:**

- a. Michael Dougherty announced that the following would be seated - Asa Scranton at the request of Fred Chmura and Phil Parizeau at the request of Michele Woz.

4. **Approve Minutes**

- a. December 13, 2022 Regular Meeting
- i. Michael Bernardi made a ***Motion** to approve the December 13, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. ***Seconded** by Philip Parizeau. ***Motion passed** with one abstention (Dougherty).

5. **Public Comment**

Dave Richardson expressed concerns to how Administration of the Woodstock Public Schools could have allowed the discrepancies outlined in the audit report to happen. He also expressed concern for the oversight responsibility of the Board of Finance and authorizing additional spending and in his opinion not following proper procedures likely violating at least one additional state statute and two town ordinances. Further, he stated the auditors overlooked accounting practices and feels they have not followed up with issues brought to their attention.

6. **FY 22 Audit Presentation**

- a. Michael VanDeventer and Lauren Messina presented the Town of Woodstock 2022 Audit Report. There was no change in scope of work from the previous year. All services provided within, and addition to, the scope of work were described by Michael VanDeventer.
- b. Three significant discrepancies were found with the Woodstock Public School District's Internal Controls. The finding, condition and recommendation for each discrepancy were explained and the Woodstock

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Public School District is required to complete and submit a corrective action plan to the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

- i. Dave Fortin asked Victor Toth if the Board of Finance would receive copies of the corrective action plans that will be submitted to the state. Victor confirmed that those reports would be submitted to the Board of Finance upon completion.
- c. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses were found with Federal Awards or State Awards Accounting
- d. General Fund, Governmental Funds and Government Wide Financials Highlights were reviewed with no concerns found.
- e. Required Communications were reviewed including Auditors Responsibility, Planned Scope & Timing and Significant Audit Findings with no concerns noted.
- f. Dave Fortin noted that there have been no significant deficiencies found since 2019 and in that time we have had the same accounting firm, Business Manager and Superintendent yet something has changed. He would like the Board of Finance to receive copies of the written corrective actions submitted to the State as required by CGS 233-4d. He also stated that it seems that the processes that should have prevented these errors were flawed and hopefully the corrective actions will include putting in place formal procedures that shall prevent these deficiencies from re-occurring in the future.

7. Old Business

- a. Update on State
 - i. Nothing to report at this time
- b. Update on Local Bridge Projects
 - i. Jay Swan stated that Engineer Pete Parent has communicated with CT DOT and was told that approvals the town is waiting for are expected in early 2023 as the State that is currently overwhelmed with work requests.
 - ii. Eversource has created a plan for the utilities to be moved on the Hopkins Road Project. This plan now has to be approved by the state.
 - iii. County Road culverts will be addressed this spring by an outside construction company.
- c. Update on ARPA
 - i. Karen Fitzpatrick has distributed the current ARPA report to the Board of Finance for review.
 - 1. All funds have been received in the amount of \$2,325,579.66 and the additional amount of \$6,104.29 has been accrued in interest to date.
 - ii. Karen Fitzpatrick noted that the new Town Hall SUV is in service at this time and Victor Toth stated the Woodstock Elementary School PA System work will begin when all parts are available.
 - iii. Karen Fitzpatrick noted that Muddy Brooke Fire Department was denied grant for new tanker which could now be an additional upcoming Phase 2 ARPA request. The Highway Department needs a new truck and future Ambulance Service costs are also expected to be upcoming requests. A concern with all of these larger projects is manufacture time.
- d. FY 23 General Government Budget Update
 - i. No concerns at this time.
 - ii. Karen Fitzpatrick stated that John Navarro is going to need to use funding for his tree removal budget because he needs more money for fuel.
 - 1. Dave Fortin noted that a procedure may be needed for securing pricing in the future to avoid fuel concerns.
- e. FY 23 Board of Education Budget Update
 - i. Victor Toth stated that he takes full responsibility with the audit concerns and apologizes. He assures that he has identified the issues and taken steps to keep this from happening in the future.

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1. Janice Thurlow noted that she has never seen prices like current situation in the 40 years she has been doing this job. The price of fuel continues to be a concern in current budget.
 - f. Update on Woodstock Academy Assessment
 - i. A new letter dated January 9th has been received from Chris Sanford, Head of School.
 1. Jeffrey Kelleher noted that the paragraph noting “priorities shifting” is concern as it infers that money could be spent outside of projects outlined. Many Board of Finance members are uncomfortable with the comment and concerned that it may be unacceptable in an audit.
 - a. Karen Fitzpatrick noted that the auditor stated as long as funds are used for a capital project, CNR funds can be used.
 2. Victor Toth suggested approving the letter contingent on removal of “priorities shifting” paragraph.
 - ii. Jeffrey Kelleher made a ***Motion** to appropriate funds in the amount of \$215,441 to the Woodstock Academy for Capital Improvements contingent on removing paragraph referring to “priorities shifting” from the funds request. ***Seconded** by Michael Bernardi. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
8. **New Business**
 - a. Audit Service RFP
 - i. The RFP has been prepared and is set to be approved at Thursday’s Board of Selectmen Meeting to go out to bid.
9. **Public Comment**

None
10. **Other From Board**
 - a. None
11. **Correspondence & Announcements**
 - a. Next Tuesday, January 17, 2023 there will be a Tri Board Meeting in the Woodstock Middle School Cafeteria at 6 pm followed by an Open Forum at 7 pm.
 - b. The next Board of Finance Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 7 pm.
12. **Adjournment**
 - a. Michael Bernardi made a ***Motion to Adjourn**. ***Seconded** by Phil Parizeau. ***The Motion Passed Unanimously**. Meeting Adjourned at 8:13 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.