

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING
40 OLD FARMS ROAD
WILLINGTON, CT 06279**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 20, 2018

7:00 PM

**Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting*

Members Present:

Mike Makuch, Vice Chairman
Randy Belair
Peter Tanaka
Barry Wallett
Fred Schoen – Alternate
Laurie Semprebon

Members Absent:

Jim Bulick, Chairman
Bill Rankin

Also Present:

Donna Latincsics, Business Manager
Tish Ignatowicz, Treasurer

Vice Chairman Mike Makuch called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

Peter Tanaka moved to seat Fred Schoen in place of Jim Bulick. Laurie Semprebon seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, L.Semprebon, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Peter Tanaka moved to accept the BOF Special Meeting of November 29 as amended to correct grammatical error. Laurie Semprebbon seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, L.Semprebbon, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No.

Peter Tanaka moved to accept the BOF Special Meeting of November 20 as amended. Laurie Semprebbon seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, F. Schoen, R. Belair). 0 No. Abstain (L.Semprebbon).

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

No one present to speak

NEW BUSINESS:

Set of Board of Finance Regular Meeting Calendar for 2019

Peter Tanaka moved to accept the BOF Regular Meeting Calendar for 2019 as proposed. Laurie Semprebbon seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, L.Semprebbon, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No.

Update from Bill Rankin: EO Smith Budget Meeting of December 11, 2018 (See attached)

Vice Chairman Mike Makuch says there isn't much in the email from Bill Ranking that he didn't expect to see. Barry wallet continues by saying telling the board to view the first paragraph. He says that the state budget, with the predicted spending reduction of 17%, will presumably have a \$1.6 billion shortfall and that is terrifying.

Laurie Semprebbon thanks Bill Rankin for attending the meeting. She says the more information we have, the better.

Budget Letter/Process

Things are still unknown at the state level and the BOF can only make projections. Peter Tanaka adds that things are even more obscure this year because of a new governor, new budget, and a new everything this year. Barry Wallet doesn't believe that raising taxes is going to be viable this year because of the previous raises in taxes.

Vice Chairman Mike Makuch said that everyone he's talked to so far (although a small sample) who had their house built before the 1980s is seeing their revaluation go up, and all the newer houses go down.

The board turned to Business Manager Donna Latinsics and Treasurer Tish Ignatowicz to ask if they know anything about the town's financial future. Tish Ignatowicz says that they don't expect to know any revenue information until February due to the change in governor. By

February she will have some numbers and she will be able to give the board at least some idea about what will be going on.

The preliminary information is hinting at a \$1.6 billion shortfall at the state level, so the BOF is asking that an operating budget is presented with a 0% increase from the previous fiscal year.

In response to a letter by Christina Mailhos (see attached), the board thinks that it is a wise idea to address the issue with the crumbling foundations in town structures and potentially solve the pyrrhotite problem sooner rather than later.

Peter Tanaka motioned that the BOF advises BOS to make provisions to test town physical assets that were constructed in a time frame and with material that is considered suspect for pyrrhotite contamination as soon as administratively possible. Laurie Semprebon seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, L. Semprebon, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No.

Barry Wallet thanks Christina Mailhos for bringing this issue to the BOF's attention.

OLD BUSINESS:

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Meetings have started on December 19, 2018

Annual Reports for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2018 was due September 30, 2018

Most reports have been submitted, but still there are a few that have yet to be turned in.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Jim Bulick regrets to inform the board that he is not able to attend the December 20, 2018 board meeting. Vice Chairman Mike Makuch will chair the meeting in his absence.

An email sent by Bill Rankin was received and reviewed.

A letter from Christina Mailhos was received and reviewed.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Peter Tanaka moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Laurie Semprebon seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, L. Semprebon, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No.

Respectfully submitted,

Guinnevere Almquist, Recording Secretary

Email to BOF from Bill Rankin, Received December 18, 2018

Erika and I attended a meeting last eve at E O Smith. All three towns were well represented by BOE members as well as elected and administrative officials. This included a local legislator that shared current thoughts re to the upcoming state budget discussions as well as advising incoming administration/transition team working on additional revenue streams and spending reductions to address an estimated \$1.6 billion shortfall projected for 2020 state budget even with a forecasted spending reduction of 17% (51% of budget - fixed costs). Preliminary discussions include cutting Municipal Aid to townships that can afford it as well as increased Teachers Retirement Benefits (TRB) Funding to towns based on their ability to Pay - specifically mentioned mill rate/real estate tax revenue stream - referred to as a Progressive Tax legislation. This lead to numerous conversations including:

- 1). How is a towns ability to pay figured
- 2). Real Estate Taxes - future Grand List Revenue Stream concerns re to home value reductions based on crumbling foundations - Ashford official estimated that only one third of home owners have come forth to date - the group was in agreement
- 3). How would TRB funding be allocate for townships with Regional Schools
- 4). Erika made a very strong request for the elimination of MBR legislation siting our declining headcount as well as budgeted efficiency programs over the years.
- 5). All three towns discussed the dangers of deferred maintenance and capital programs (“catching up with us”) over the past few years to hold budgeted spending at minimum - especially large facility expenses i.e. roof replacements at schools, etc..
- 6). At Erika’s request, Superintendent District 199 Jill Krieger advised they will attempt to provide next years budgeted costs to townships March/April to assist each towns budget program.
- 7). Possible Regionalization of K thru 8 programs were discussed - historical attempts reviewed - logistics/special education/ quality of education reviewed - believe this is a current topic with Ashford BOE.

Good Meeting

Bill

Christina Mailhos 46
Hall Hill Road
Willington, CT 06279

December 18,
2018

Willington First Selectwoman Wiecenski Willington Board
of Finance Chairman Bulick Willington Capital
Improvement Plan Committee Chair TBD Willington
Town Office Building 40 Old Farm Road Willington, CT
06279

Dear First Selectwoman Wiecenski, Chairman Bulick and future Chair of the
CIP Committee,

I am sure you have heard the news out of Tolland that the Birch Grove School that was built in 1999 is suffering from a crumbling foundation. Tolland's relatively new Fire House is also being tested as it is suspected that pyrrhotite is in the concrete. This news caught many by surprise as we have been repeatedly assured by the CT Department of Consumer Protection, the Attorney General and the Department of Transportation that commercial and municipal structures are somehow immune from the devastating effects of pyrrhotite.

The Town of Tolland is doing the right thing by addressing the issue and planning for worst case scenarios in their CIP plan. I am writing to request that Willington do the same.

There are several municipal structures that have been built in Willington since 1983, including the Willington Public Library, the Senior Center, Senior Housing, Salt Shed and bridges. These structures should be tested as soon as possible to find out what the useful life of these buildings and bridges are.

As you head into budget season, please consider this request. Testing will require funding and the support of all of your boards. It is my opinion that

finding out the truth is worth the small investment and I hope you agree.

Thank you in
advance,

Sincerely,

Christina Beebe
Mailhos