

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 7, 2019
7:00 PM

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

Members Present:

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

Members Absent:

Bill Rankin

Also Present:

Erika Wiecenski, First Selectwoman
Donna Latinsics, Business Manager
Tish Ignatowicz, Treasurer
Phil Stevens, Superintendent
Tina B, Animal Control
Maureen Parsell, Director of Parks and Recreation
Joe Colangelo, Chairman of Parks and Recreation
Jennie, Director of Human Services
Sarah Peck, Chairwomen of the Library Board

Chairman Jim Bulick called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Peter Tanaka moved to accept the BOF Meeting Minutes of January 17 as amended to correct an error in the date. Mike Makuch seconded the motion. Vote: Yes (J. Bulick, M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No. L. Semprebon abstained.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

No one present to speak

NEW BUSINESS:

Special Revenue Funds:

Animal Control Budget, Presented By Animal Control Officer Tina Binheimer

The only increase in expenses is 1.2% which equivalates to \$361. This is mainly due to the town wide salary increase. However there is a \$200 decrease for repairs on their truck, so the budget balances out.

Impact to the town General Fund is a 1.64% increase over last year.

The Board of Finance thanks Tina Binheimer.

Parks and Recreation Budget, Presented By Director of Parks & Recreation Maureen Parsell and Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission Joe Colangelo

Maureen Parsell says that they are requesting a transfer out of the general fund for administration and salary primarily because they are looking to hire an Assistant Rec Director. Programs have grown causing the Director to not be able to complete everything needed. The new Assistant Rec Director would help with Publishing the Willington Wire, Performing Administrative work (Programming, website updates, Electronic payments), Adding Summer Camp Programs, Townwide landscape maintenance, and Human Services Camps support. All of this is far too much work for just one person.

Impact to the General Fund is an additional \$10,923 over last year or a +18.75% increase.

The Board of Finance thanks Maureen Parsell and Joe Colangelo.

Family Services Budget, Presented By Director of Human Services Jennie Arpin

This year they are requesting the same as last year as far as funding goes. There is a 2% increase for the salaries of the Director and the Assistant Director. A few line items were added to the budget for summer camp. Summer camp staff wages have increased because they've added a 2 week extension to the original duration of the camp.

They are trying to keep the amount coming from their fund balance as low as possible. Jennie Arpin was fortunate enough to get an additional \$6,062 in grant money to offset much of the expenses.

Even though Family Services is spending more, they are not requesting any more from the General Fund.

The Board of Finance thanks Jennie Arpin.

Library Board Budget, Presented By Sarah Peck

The Library Board is requesting a 3.87% increase from the General Fund. This would be to help pay for health insurance, better book binding and repair supplies, and office supplies. Expenses have increased 0.66% but revenue is anticipated to fall sharply.

Several fundraisers were not included in the budget because it was part of "Friends of the Library" which has a confusing relationship to the Library itself, but is separate from each other. "Friends of the Library" is basically part of a net gain to the Library.

The Library Board's past Chair was trying to divide her time into being both Chair and treasurer. Now she is just treasurer and has more time to come up with a better strategy.

It was recommended by the board that the library consult a financial planner to manage their investments. Bob Shabot (Jared Sparks Road) said the Willington Historical Society uses "Ameriprise Financial".

The Board of Finance thanks Sarah Peck.

Governor's budget is due to be presented February 20, 2019.

No new news has been reported.

Barry Wallett reported the legislature is discussing a proposal to freeze property taxes on those 65 years of age and older.

Randy Belair reported more than 40 Bills regarding the crumbling foundation issue have been proposed.

Senator Martin Looney's School Consolidation Proposal and Potential Impact on Willington

When allowing you to regionalize efforts, one of the problems is that if someone were to send someone to another school for a specific program one of the towns would have to own the student. Say Willington sends a student to Ashford for a special program, Willington will own the student but Ashford will be charging the tuition (example given by Superintendent Phil Stevens). There's a real problem with how that works right now because it doesn't allow that creative programing. We can't just send our students to special programs at other schools and they can't send their students to our special programs. Another piece of that efforts is, there are a couple programs that almost every district in the state utilizes, one is called "IP Direct" it is an online system used to track IDs for individualized plans or special education. The other is "Power School" which is an operating system where every district negotiates their rate individually. If this was done by the state and there was a state contract, Superintendent Phil Stevens says "we guarantee the numbers would go down". Alas they are tied to it because there is so much money that would have to be extended in order to make this happen.

OLD BUSINESS:

Not Discussed

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter received from The Assessor, Walter Topliff, Jr regarding the Grand List. Net change in property valuations was \$2,697,139 or +0.61%, primarily due to an increase in personal property assessments. There were 14 homeowners that requested a reduction in their assessment due to crumbling foundations. This valuation figure is preliminary as the Board of Assessment Appeals meets in March to make final adjustments. Property assessments are revenue neutral to the town and do not increase or decrease your property taxes. Town spending impacts taxes.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Chairman Jim Bulick regrets to inform the board that he is not able to attend the February 14,

2019 board meeting. Vice Chairman Mike Makuch will chair the meeting in his absence.

Peter Tanaka moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. Laurie Semprebbon seconded the motion. (J. Bulick, M. Makuch, P. Tanaka, B. Wallett, L.Semprebbon, F. Schoen, R. Belair) 0 No.

Respectfully submitted,

Guinnevere Almquist, Recording Secretary