

BOARD OF FINANCE
THE TOWN OF WINDSOR LOCKS
50 Church Street, Windsor Locks, Connecticut 06096
Minutes of the August 25, 2020 Regular Meeting

In response to the issuance of declarations concerning a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency, and with regards to a global pandemic of the COVID-19 disease associated with the coronavirus affecting multiple countries and states, this meeting was held via teleconferencing.

Chairman Norman Boucher called the Board of Finance Regular Meeting of Tuesday, August 25, 2020 to order at 6:30 p.m.

BOARD OF FINANCE MEMBERS PRESENT AND ATTENDING REMOTELY:

Chairman Norman Boucher, Michael Ciarcia, Cornelius O’Leary, David Weigert, Paul Riedi (joined at 6:32 p.m.) and Lori Quagliaroli (joined at 6:35 p.m.)
Alternates: Lacinda VanGieson and Mark Whitten

BOARD OF FINANCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

All members were present.

ALSO ATTENDING REMOTELY:

Finance Director, Amanda Moore; Assistant Finance Director, Stephen Brown; First Selectman J. Christopher Kervick; Emergency Management Director, Vic Puia; Assistant Emergency Management Director, Dino Puia; Superintendent of Windsor Locks Public Schools, Shawn Parkhurst; Board of Education Human Resources Director, Sheri Lee; Public Works Director, Philip Sissick; and Tax Collector, Peter Juzczynski

Recording Secretary, Terrie Becker reviewed required teleconferencing meeting rules for all participants who joined this meeting.

PUBLIC INPUT-BOARD OF FINANCE MATTERS ONLY:

There was no public input.

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

ADDED AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no added agenda items.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING APPROVAL: July 28, 2020

Michael Ciarcia moved to approve the Minutes of July 28, 2020 as written. David Weigert seconded this motion. The vote was four in favor (4-Michael Ciarcia, Paul Riedi, Lori Quagliaroli and David Weigert) zero opposed and one abstained (1-Cornelius O’Leary

abstained from voting as he was not present for the July 28, 2020 meeting.) This motion carried.

DISCUSSION REGARDING COVID-19 RELATED COST AND DISTRIBUTION:

Public Works Director Philip Sissick discussed COVID-19 related expenses with this board as requested by Chairman Norman Boucher. Mr. Sissick stated that costs submitted by the Public Works Department covered just about everything for the Town with regards to shielding, cleaning and disinfectants. (Board of Education is separate). He stated that future COVID-19 spending is dependent upon pandemic case spikes. Mr. Sissick stated that COVID-19 expenses have been submitted the Finance Department.

Chairman Boucher questioned COVID-19 submitted expenses with regards to crayons and coloring books. Assistant Finance Director, Stephen Brown stated this expense was related to programs held by Youth Services for children having problems adjusting to home schooling due to the COVID-19 situation and he believed that this expense may not be reimbursed by FEMA.

Mr. Brown continued discussion by explaining the FEMA reimbursement process. Paul Riedi inquired as to what the probable amount of expenses not covered by FEMA may be. Mr. Brown stated that the worse scenario would be if FEMA did not reimburse anything. Mr. Brown stated that the amount submitted in the first application for reimbursement was \$39,000.00. Discussion continued to try to determine a possible expense figure for anticipated COVID-19 expenses until December 31, 2020. Mark Whitten suggested taking an average of the known expenses to date to speculate COVID-19 expenses for the next four months as long as the pandemic situation does not change.

Mr. Brown stated that he is working on a second application to be submitted for reimbursement. He explained that the first application included expenses for the bulk of supplies needed and that that applications are being processed and submitted as soon as possible so that reimbursement can possibly be received faster. It was explained that the usual process of reimbursement from FEMA usually happens after the event is over, but since COVID-19 is an ongoing event, it is hard to determine when reimbursement will be received. FEMA is requiring different portions of event expenses to be documented at different times and there will be multiple opportunities to collect expenses.

Emergency Management Director, Vic Puia stated that he is responsible for the management and collection of COVID-19 expense information and submits it to the Finance Department for documentation and submission to FEMA for reimbursement. Mr. Puia stated that because of his experience and knowledge with regards to emergency situations he is able to work closely with the Finance Department to determine what expenses may qualify for FEMA reimbursement. Mr. Puia stated that FEMA had requested documentation be submitted by the Finance Department due to new computer submittal process.

Mr. Puia discussed what he felt would be possible future COVID-19 expenses. He stated the last few months have been fairly easy with lower expenses than previous months and does not expect spending to be as much as it was during the beginning of the pandemic. Mr. Puia stated the only thing that would change this (which he stated there is no control over) is if there is a major spike in COVID-19 cases and more need for PPE equipment. Mr. Puia stated that if this situation remains constant, he feels very confident that there is currently a substantial stock of PPE inventory.

Discussion continued with regards emergency expenses relating to storm Isaias. Mr. Puia stated that expenses for this storm amounted to approximately \$55,000.00.

Mr. Riedi stated that he had requested a more precise breakdown of COVID-19 expenses with a clear indication of categories for 2020, 2021 and to also requested anticipated future expenses all to be presented in a spreadsheet format. He also asked if Mr. Puia was the individual responsible for approving all COVID-19 expenses. Mr. Puia again stated that he and the Finance Department agreed that due to Mr Puia's prior experience and knowledge dealing with emergency situations, and FEMA reimbursement protocol, it was agreed that he would oversee and manage COVID-19 expenses and the Finance Department would submit applications to FEMA.

Finance Director, Amanda Moore stated that the computer software is set up such that First Selectman Kervick approves all expenses that go through the COVID-19 accounts.

Assistant Emergency Management Director, Dino Puia stated that the \$30,000.00 allocated for COVID-19 expenses is not there to be spent, but it is there to be spent as necessary for this particular event. He also clarified that all storm emergency spending is categorized separately from COVID-19 emergency spending.

Lori Quagliaroli requested clarification of purchases listed for acrylic sheets and sanitizing machines. Stephen Brown stated that a sanitizing machine was purchased by the Board of Education who submits expenses through the Department of Education and acrylic sheets (plexiglass) was listed under Home Depot as the vendor.

First Selectman Kervick stated that he instructed all department heads not to complete the form sent out by the Finance Department as requested by the Board of Finance as they were already completing identical information when submitting the FEMA forms for application. First Selectman Kervick felt it was unnecessary for department heads to document the same information twice. He then stated that the Chairman of the Board of Finance suggested that all department heads meet together to determine future expense needs. First Selectman Kervick stated that with regards to future expenses, there is no way to anticipate needs as this situation has never happened before and the length of this situation is unknown. He stated spending is not being done by speculation of possible need and reimbursement. All purchases are for items needed to cope with this emergency and would not have been purchased otherwise. First

Selectman Kervick stated that all FEMA reimbursement forms will be forwarded to Board of Finance Members so they can see what is being submitted and when.

Ms. Quagliaroli made mention of greeting cards and motivational cards in the amount of \$1,294.00 which may not be reimbursed by FEMA. She stated that this is the type of information the Board of Finance Department is seeking.

Paul Riedi stated that some COVID-19 purchases could be considered discretionary and that the Board of Finance needs to understand its risks and wanted to know who is responsible to approve expenses in advance. First Selectman Kervick stated that department heads are responsible to approve purchases and if it is emergency related, they are instructed to go ahead with purchase. Stephan Brown stated the definition of emergency expenses for Category B (emergency of COVID-19) of what needs to be followed when applying for FEMA reimbursement as per FEMA was as follows: "*Per biological incident-Emergency protective measures conducted before during and after incident are eligible if the measures are to eliminate or lessen the immediate threat of lives or public health and safety related to COVID-19.*" First Selectman Kervick stated that purchases made by the Youth Services Director were a perfect example of a public health related expense that would not have occurred if it were not for COVID-19 and that it has been made very clear that the mental health of students and confinement issues related to COVID-19 are very real. He stated that the Youth Services Director should be commended for coming up with creative programs to help combat these issues at a moderate cost. These items would not have been purchased if it had not been for the COVID-19 emergency situation. First Selectman Kervick stated that purchases should not be determined by what FEMA will reimburse, but what can help combat this situation.

Chairman Boucher requested that expense information be submitted to the Board of Finance a week in advance of a Board of Finance meeting so that members can have time to look at information before a meeting. Stephen Brown stated as information is ready to be sent to FEMA it will be also forwarded to the Board of Finance. Paul Riedi requested that information be compiled in a spreadsheet in a categorized manner so that it would be easier to understand as it takes time to look through all the FEMA applications and try to make sense of them. He felt it was the responsibility of the Finance Department to present information to the Board of Finance in a coherent fashion. Mr. Brown responded by stating that every member of the Board of Finance has access to the financial software to look up this information and that he is more than willing to show members how to pull up pertinent information at any time.

Ms. Moore stated that the two appropriations for fiscal year 2020 totaling \$45,000.00, has been spent. She stated that out of the \$30,000.00 that had been appropriated for the current fiscal year (2021), approximately \$22,000.00 has been spent.

Tax Collector Peter Juszczynski stated he did not foresee any future COVID-19 related expenses. He also stated that expenses for setting up for tax collections in the Town Hall gym ran through the Public Works Department and items such as hand sanitizers, cleaning wipes and face masks

came through the Department of Emergency Management. Mr. Juszczynski stated the only future expense he may have is if a COVID-19 insert is included with supplemental tax bills. He estimated this expense to be approximately \$300.00.

Ms. Moore stated that the Registrar's Office has spent funds on face shields and face masks. Expenses are anticipated with regards to the upcoming Presidential Election. Ms. Moore stated that they will be waiting until that time to determine what needs to be purchased and what will need to be done per regulation. Ms. Moore discussed possible expenses that may occur during the Presidential Election based on expenses needed during the recent Primary Election. It is unsure what protocol will be necessary.

Emergency Management Director Vic Puia stated that big expense items have already been purchased and he does not believe spending will be as much as in the past going forward. He also felt that there is a good inventory of PPE equipment on hand.

Discussion continued regarding an estimated amount over the 75% reimbursement amount which may not be covered by FEMA (\$34,000.00). This remaining amount may possibly be reimbursed by the State.

Lori Quagliaroli inquired about COVID-19 expenses from the Social Services Department. Mr. Vic Puia stated that Social Services Director, Heidi Gilmore has been giving out more food than usual and expenses have been minimal. This department has received a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (\$10,000.00) along with many private donations to help during this emergency situation. Ms Quagliaroli asked what would happen should funds run out for this department. First Selectman Kervick stated that if these funds are depleted, Ms. Gilmore would submit information for FEMA reimbursement like any other department.

Paul Riedi requested review of expense calculations. Ms. Moore stated that \$39,000.00 was the amount of the first application submitted to FEMA and explained how this figure was determined and that each application will be submitted on a rolling basis in hopes that funds will be received within an ongoing basis rather than in a one-time sum amount possibly years from now. Ms. Moore stated the amount spent in fiscal year 2020 was \$45,000.00 and the amount spent for fiscal year 2021 is approximately \$22,000.00. (These figures exclude the Board of Education COVID-19 spending) Mr. Riedi calculated the COVID-19 total expense amount based on figures presented to be \$67,000.00.

Superintendent, Shawn Parkhurst presented a spreadsheet pertaining to COVID-19 expenses for the Windsor Locks Board of Education. Superintendent Parkhurst discussed high-level COVID-19 expenses and spoke about funding that was available to the Board of Education.

Superintendent Parkhurst stated that one COVID-19 expense was for Food Services wages which were not offset by meal sales. This expense was for labor to prepare meals for the free meal

program (closure of school and drive and go meal service). He stated that much of the equipment has been covered by reallocating alliance grants. (Cleaning supplies, thermometer, no-contact pad, various different types of masks, germicide, trifold desk shields, visual markings and signs, table shields, hybrid classroom camera, speakers and microphones)- (2020 Spent/\$24,695.43-2021 Spent/\$401,009.30)

Superintendent Parkhurst also explained 2021 anticipated spending for items which included gloves, face shields, hand sanitizers, dry wipes, trifold replacements, Zoom accounts for each school, afterschool coverage of an additional 7 housekeepers per school per shift and school day custodial coverage to include an additional 3 housekeepers per day shift at each school. The estimated cost for these items could be \$214,120.00. Superintendent Parkhurst expects that most of the anticipated material expenses should be covered by grants, however the cost for additional labor of housekeepers for extra cleaning and disinfecting due to COVID-19 prevention is not expected to be covered. The amount not expected to be covered is \$157,000.00 which may be requested in the future.

Superintendent Parkhurst stated the only other anticipated expense may include additional staffing at a future date. Board of Education Human Resources Director, Sheri Lee discussed FFCRA (First Family Corona Virus Act) with this board and explained how staffing at schools may be affected. She stated that if a staff member has childcare issues under FFCRA, this individual can remain at home. Ms. Lee explained salary options. This program is expected to expire on December 31, 2020 unless it is extended. Ms. Lee also stated that there are some staff members who have compromising health issues with regards to COVID-19 exposure and are not able to return to work at this time. Efforts are being made to accommodate these individuals so that they may be able to work remotely, however replacement may be necessary.

Chairman Boucher asked Superintendent Parkhurst if the Board of Education would be obligated to keep additional staffing after the COVID-19 emergency situation is over. Sheri Lee explained that these employees will be hired as “as needed” employees and told that when circumstances change, they will not be needed the following school year. Ms. Lee also stated that these employees would be eligible for benefits under the Affordable Care Act. (Employee contribution would be a little different: \$82.50 per pay period/responsible for full deductible; 30/hours per week)

Superintendent Parkhurst stated that a disinfecting fogger machine was purchased but cannot be used because the Health Department and CDC regulations will not allow the schools to use them at this time.

David Weigert asked Superintendent Parkhurst if schools were to shut down again due to a spike in COVID-19 cases, would expenses increase for the Board of Education. Superintendent Parkhurst stated he did not anticipate a rise in expenses, however if schools were to close, he there may be a savings in cleaning expense as there would not be reason to disinfect as much.

DISCUSSION REGARDING ADJUSTMENT TO EMPLOYEE MEDICAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION:

Chairman Boucher stated that he did not believe there was action taken by the Board of Selectmen regarding this item. There was no discussion.

DISCUSS BOARD OF SELECTMEN SPECIAL MEETING WITH REGARDS TO BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING SCHEDULE:

Chairman Boucher stated there has been no meeting date scheduled at this time. There was no discussion.

TRANSFERS:

T21-2 (Previously Tabled)

This transfer was submitted by the Finance Department for the First Selectman:

From: General Supplies/Grounds	Acct #2880-417710-56105	Amount: \$2,350.00
To : Salary and Wages/Seasonal	Acct #1005-430100-51621	Amount: \$2,350.00

The Lock Tender position is part of the Public Works seasonal staff, which is funded by TIF allocation for district beautification. (Seasonal Employee/25 hours per week for July and August-2020).

First Selectman Kervick stated there is a line item in the TIF budget for “Main Street Beautification” and there was opportunity to hire a seasonal employee. This individual was hired under the Public Works Department as there is no salary line item within the TIF budget. Funds needed to be moved from the General/Supplies-Grounds line item in the TIF budget, to the Salary and Wages/Seasonal line item in the Public Works budget.

There was discussion regarding the responsibilities of the TIF Advisory Committee and whether or not this committee should have been notified or needed to approve this added position. First Selectman Kervick stated that the TIF Advisory Committee responsibility is the TIF budget. First Selectman Kervick stated this was a very successful program and very well received by businesses on Main Street. He also stated that he would like it be available next year but will have to wait to see how Main Street development goes.

Chairman Boucher inquired if the Board of Selectmen had approved this position and if approval was necessary. First Selectman Kervick stated that the Board of Selectmen would not generally be consulted when adding seasonal employees. Lacinda VanGieson suggested posting this job if the position continues in the future. First Selectman Kervick stated this would be considered.

After further discussion that included the clarification of transferring funds to and from different individual budgets after budget adoption, ***Cornelius O’Leary moved to approve transfer T21-2 as presented. David Weigert seconded this motion. The vote was unanimous and this motion carried.***

FINANCE OFFICE UPDATE:

Ms. Moore stated there was discussion with the First Selectman with regards to discussing medical insurance employee contribution at the next Board of Selectmen meeting and inviting the Board of Finance and Board of Education. Tentative scheduled date for this meeting is September 1, 2020.

PUBLIC INPUT-BOARD OF FINANCE MATTERS ONLY:

There was no public input.

BOARD MEMBER INPUT:

Paul Riedi suggested adding to Board of Finance future minutes “the take away, who’s the owner, and what’s the ask so that everyone is on the same page”. He felt that it is needed for this board for respect of their time. He stated that this way there is documentation as to what this board is asking for.

David Weigert agreed with Paul Riedi and stated that all asks should be included in meeting minutes so that it is clear for all board members at the next meeting.

Chairman Boucher stated that going forward all “asks” should be clarified so that they can be recorded in the meeting minutes appropriately.

First Selectman Kervick stated that if a task is assigned to an employee, the Board of Finance should request that he assign that task so that efforts are not duplicated.

Lacinda VanGieson asked for confirmation with regards to the hydrology study and wanted to know when information will be discussed and presented. First Selectman Kervick responded by stating that on September 1, 2020 the consultant pursuant to the contract will be making a presentation of findings to the Board of Selectmen. At that meeting, a public information meeting with regards to this study will be scheduled.

There was also discussion with regards to scheduling of the Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss medical insurance employee contribution. This item is tentatively scheduled to be discussed at the Board of Selectmen meeting on September 1, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further discussion or information to come before the Board of Finance, a *motion to adjourn was made by Paul Riedi and this motion was seconded by Lori Quagliaroli. The vote was unanimous and this meeting stood adjourned at 8:25 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Terrie-Ann Becker
Board of Finance Recording Secretary