

**Town of Seymour
Board of Finance
Minutes
Tuesday, October 26, 2010 at 7:00 PM
Norma Drummer Room, Seymour Town Hall**

Members present: Mark Thompson, Bill Paecht, Bill Sawicki, Peter Jezierny, and Michelle Walsh, Jay Hatfield

Others present: Paul Roy, Doug Thomas, Frank Loda, Tony Caserta, and Kimberly Welch

Item # 1 – Call meeting to order

The Chairman, Mark Thompson, opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Item # 2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item # 3 – Seating of Alternates

A motion was made to seat Jay Hatfield, as alternate for Len Greene.

Motion: Bill Paecht

Second: Bill Sawicki

Yes: 5

No: 0

0 Abstain

Item # 4 – Public Comment

None

Item # 5 – Remarks from the Chair

■ **Board of Fire Commissioners**

Mr. Eugene Atkis, Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners, addressed the need for a new rescue truck. This would replace Rescue 12 which is an 18 year old truck. The new fire truck would cost approximately \$650,000 and the fire department anticipates a trade in value of \$25,000 on the present rescue truck. Mr. Atkis acknowledged the amount was a bit high and the fire department is reviewing what equipment could be removed from the new truck in order to bring down its cost. Mr.

Atkis further stated the fire department would take as much equipment as possible off of the old truck and reuse it on the new truck. He suggested since interest rates are so low the town may want to consider a lease purchase option on the new truck.

- **Water Pollution Control Authority**

At its September 28, 2010 meeting, the BOF requested the first selectman obtain a letter from town counsel explaining why monies should not be transferred from the WPCA to the town. Mr. Thompson stated he had not received any communication from town counsel or the first selectman. The First Selectman, Paul Roy, reported Attorney Colleen Fries was on vacation and she was not able to respond. Mr. Sawicki asked Mr. Roy for a copy of the letter that he must have received from town counsel indicating monies should not be transferred from the WPCA account to the town. Mr. Roy responded he did not receive a letter, that town counsel had only advised him verbally. Mr. Sawicki expressed his dissatisfaction that such a major decision could have been made without having anything in writing. Mr. Sawicki asked the Finance Director, Doug Thomas, if there had been any cash flow or rate analysis made of the WPCA account to which Mr. Tony Caserta, Assistant Director of Finance, replied one had not been prepared.

Motion to request that if a cash flow or rate analysis had never been made of the WPCA account, the finance department shall prepare such a report for the BOF for its next meeting.

Motion: Bill Sawicki
Yes: 6

Second: Jay Hatfield
No: 0

0 Abstain

- **Minimum Budget Requirement**

Mr. Thompson stated he received correspondence from the Assistant Superintendent for the Seymour Public Schools, Rick Belden, indicating the town was in compliance with the state minimum budget requirement for the current fiscal year 2010-2011.

- **Charter Revision Commission**

Mr. Thompson reported he received communication from the first selectman's office announcing the Charter Revision Committee was to have a meeting on October 18, but he was unable to attend. The first selectman noted Kristen Harmeling was in attendance. Mr. Thompson also received communication from Trisha Danka, Chairperson of the Charter Revision Committee, stating there won't be any other public hearings until the Charter Revision Committee composes the recommended changes. Ms. Danka indicated the goal for releasing the committee's first draft is early to mid-December. Ms. Danka further stated all committee meetings will be open to the public and she assured public comment would be a part of the agenda. Mr. Thompson suggested members of the BOF review the appropriate sections of the town charter, and the BOF should discuss at its next meeting the possibility of making recommendations for charter amendments.

Motion to include on the next BOF agenda discussion of the town charter for purposes of making possible recommendations to the Charter Revision Committee.

Motion: Bill Paecht

Second: Peter Jezierny

Yes: 5

No: 1- Bill Sawicki

0 Abstain

- **Seymour Public Library – Wooster Trust**

Mr. Thompson received communication from Carol Ralston, Head Librarian, announcing two representatives from the Bank of America Philanthropic Division will be present during the November 18 meeting of the library board for purposes of reviewing the Wooster Trust account. The meeting will be held at the library starting at 7:00 pm. Mr. Thompson said he planned to attend and he encouraged other interested members from the BOF to attend the meeting as well.

- **Economic Development Commission**

At the previous BOF meeting, the first selectman revealed Auto Zone would soon rent the space formerly occupied by Walgreen's; and the announcement was published in the newspaper. Mr. Thompson said he received a copy of a letter from the Economic Development Commission asking for clarification of the notification procedures used by town hall since the EDC was not aware of Auto Zone's interest in a Seymour location. The letter, which was addressed to the first selectman, indicated the EDC wanted to be kept apprised of requests for information from real

estate agents and private parties interested in locating or expanding their businesses in Seymour. The EDC also asked the first selectman to lead the BOS in the establishment of a policy concerning the sharing of information through the proper channels regarding notification of interest in the town for commercial development. Should such a policy already exist, the EDC asked to receive a copy.

- **Bulletproof Vest Partnership FY 2010 Award Announcement**

Mr. Thompson provided the BOF with a copy of an e-mail from the first selectman concerning the FY 2010 Bulletproof Vest Partnership. The first selectman asked the Police Chief, Michael Metzler, to keep the BOS, BOF, and the town's grant coordinator apprised of all grants the police department may apply for and whether a grant has been approved or rejected.

- **Mandatory Furlough Days and Unpaid Time Off**

During the October 2010 meeting, the BOF requested the finance department prepare a report showing the cumulative dollar value for the unpaid time off for each department; and to list the targeted amount for each department. Mr Thomas distributed the requested report and it showed almost 3500 hours are still needed in furlough days. The first selectman assured the BOF that town employees are taking their furlough days and he indicated he will send out a notice reminding the employees to use their furlough days before June 30.

A motion was made for the Finance Department to provide the BOF with monthly furlough days/unpaid time off reports.

Motion: Bill Sawicki
Yes: 6

Second: Michelle Walsh
No: 0 Abstain: 0

- **Town Audit**

Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Thomas to update the BOF on the town audit. Mr. Thomas said due to computer problems he was a week late in getting the necessary information to the auditor, James George. Mr. Thomas said Mr. George will be in town on November 1 and Mr. George believes he will have a draft audit report completed by Thanksgiving.

■ **FOI Response Policy**

Mr. Thompson provided the BOF with a copy of the Freedom of Information Response Policy distributed by the first selectman that became effective October 7, 2010. Mr. Thompson remarked having a policy on the handling of FOI requests was necessary since over the past 12 months at least two FOI requests had been made of the BOF, and it was unclear who would be responsible for responding to those requests. Mr. Thompson expressed serious reservations with how the October 7 FOI policy was written and he vociferously disagreed that an unpaid, part-time, volunteer committee members should be ultimately responsible for responding to FOI requests. Mr. Sawicki expressed strong concerns with the policy as he believes it would deter people from serving on boards and commissions. Mr. Sawicki said responding to FOI requests is beyond the control of volunteers. Mr. Sawicki further added volunteers shouldn't be responsible for responding to FOI requests if there isn't any indemnification in place to protect the volunteers should paid staff be negligent in any way.

In response to a question from Mr. Thompson, the first selectman stated he did not seek input or approval from the BOS concerning the FOI policy that is currently in place.

Mr. Thompson acknowledged he was unaware of the status of the two FOI requests that had been made of the BOF earlier this year and he asked staff if the requests were still pending, or whether a complaint had been filed with the FOI Commission. Mr. Roy answered there were no outstanding FOI issues.

Motion to allow the Chairman to contact the Board of Selectman and express the Board of Finance's concerns with the FOI Policy as currently written.

Motion: Bill Sawicki

Second: Bill Paecht

Yes: 6

No: 0

Abstain: 0

■ **Development of Greenway/River Walk**

Mr. Thompson shared a copy of an email he received from Cindy Bernardini, administrative assistant to the first selectman, inviting the BOF to attend a meeting to discuss plans for a possible greenway walk in Seymour. As chairman of the Conservation Commission, Mr. Jezierny said he had been attending the meetings and he would be pleased to also serve as a liaison from the BOF. Mr. Jezierny gave an overview of the potential plans for the greenway/river walk through Seymour and he summarized the challenges for its development.

Item # 6 - Comments from the First Selectman

Mr. Roy said the town was soliciting quotes for the repair of the roof at the police station. Mr. Roy also noted bids had been received for the repair of several sidewalks throughout town. Mr. Roy stated that because the bids were so low, he felt the town will be able to do twice as much work as originally planned. Since grant monies will be used for the repair of the sidewalks, the work needs to be approved by the state. Mr Roy further reported replacement of the windows at the Community Center was almost complete.

Item # 7 - Report from the Finance Director

Mr. Thomas indicated his monthly financial report was included in everyone's packet. Mr. Thomas stated that revenues for 2009-2010 were approximately \$46,700,000 expenses were approximately \$47,200,000, for a net loss of approximately \$540,000. The net loss was less than projected.

In response to the question that had been raised at the previous BOF meeting concerning the re-opening of the EDC purchase orders that had been released to fund balance, Mr. Thomas referred to the letter that had been received from the auditor. Mr. Thomas noted the auditor deferred the question to town counsel whether purchase orders from a previous fiscal year could be re-opened and the monies taken from fund balance. In response to a question from Mr. Thompson, Mr Sawicki said while it may not violate any accounting standards the practice was highly unusual. Mr. Thompson next asked Mr. Thomas if it ever had been done before in the Town of Seymour to which Mr. Thomas said "no".

Item # 8 - Transfer Requests

Motion to postpone until the next meeting discussion of Ctrl. 4 for the Legal Department to transfer \$10,000 from Purchased Professional Services to Legal Settlements account.

Motion: Bill Sawicki

Second: Michelle Walsh

Yes: 5

No: 0

Abstain: 1- Jay Hatfield

Item # 9 – Correspondence

None

Item # 10 - Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes of the September 28, 2010 BOF meeting

Motion: Bill Paecht

Second: Bill Sawicki

Yes: 5

No: 0

Abstain: 1- Jay Hatfield

Item # 11 - Other Business

None

Item # 12 - Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Motion: Bill Paecht

Second: Peter Jezierny

Yes: 6

No: 0

0 – Abstain

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Submitted by:

Kelly Breault
Recording Secretary