

TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
BOARD OF FINANCE
Regular Meeting
August 25, 2013
Town Grange

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Finance was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairwoman Susan Link.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance:

Board of Finance Members:

Susan Line, Chairwoman
Robert Bennett
William DiCristofaro
Bruce Dutch
Raymond Willis

Others:

Mark B. Walter, First Selectman
Emmett Lyman, Selectman
Cindy Varricchio, Finance Director
Craig Mansfield, Facilities Director
Denise Dill, Tax Collector
Dean Anderson
Edward Blaschik
Kevin Cavallo
Susan Costomiris
Tracey Gionta
Jeffrey King, Kaestle Boos Architects
David Moffat
Patricia Stricker
Linda Stuhlman
Ray Swol
Joseph Szczech
Felicia Tencza
Robert Weronik
Sharon Wheeler

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairwoman Link stated she would like to amend the agenda to discuss New Business items (a) through (h) immediately following the approval of the minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2014 regular meeting as presented. Mr. DiCristofaro seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2014 special meeting as presented. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Lakes Association Grant Application:

Mr. DiCristofaro summarized the Moodus and Hayward Lake Associations' request to apply for a DEEP grant for invasive plant control treatments. He noted that there would be no additional cost to the town; however, part of their match would come from the 2014-2015 Lakes Association budget. In response to a question, Mr. DiCristofaro stated that the Bashan Lake Association had also been offered the option to be included in the grant but they are not ready, at this time, to pursue it.

Motion was made by Mr. DiCristofaro to authorize the Lakes Association, representing Moodus Reservoir and Lake Hayward, to apply for a Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Aquatic Invasive Species Grant for lakes remediation. Mr. Bennett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

b. Elementary School Building Advisory Group Update/Funding Request:

Ms. Link recognized Facilities Director Craig Mansfield who introduced Advisory Group Chairman Robert Weronik. Mr. Weronik advised that the Advisory Group had worked with town officials and the school Board to prioritize the required repairs at the elementary school. He stated that, given the existing budgetary constraints, the Advisory Group recommends that the boiler, roof and parking lot be repaired this year. He noted that these items were the "barebones" list and that the Board of Finance should expect that the Advisory Group will recommend additional repairs/renovations over the next several years.

Mr. Mansfield reported that the Group had also worked with the Fire Marshal to trim the list of Life Safety Code items that had been identified. He advised that railings and emergency lights had been installed and paid for from the Board of Education maintenance fund. In response to a question from Ms. Link, Mr. Mansfield advised that the cost of that work was approximately \$20,000.

Mr. Mansfield estimated that it would cost \$1.6M for roof repairs, \$330,000 for parking lot repairs, and \$100,000 to \$150,000 to replace the boiler. He noted that the roof repairs would qualify for approximately 48% reimbursement from the State. He stated that environmental tests for asbestos and PCBs would have to be done on the roof and boiler.

Mr. Mansfield stated that subsequent phases of work would include replacement of windows, doors and cosmetic upgrades such as replacing the ceiling tiles. There was a brief discussion regarding the feasibility of adding a new wing to the middle school for the elementary grades. Mr. Mansfield noted that tests are being done to see if the septic could accommodate the increased use; however, he did not feel a new wing would be cost effective. Mr. Weronik stated that the elementary school is structurally sound and investing in the needed repairs would save a building that provides much more space than what the State would approve for reimbursement on a new wing at the middle school given the current enrollment numbers.

In response to a questions from the Board members, Mr. Mansfield advised that work on the parking lot is planned for next spring and that the new locking mechanisms on the doors could be used on the new doors when they are installed.

Mr. Mansfield stated that funding to hire an engineer for the roof and boiler repairs would cost \$80,000.00 and \$25,000.00 respectively. He noted that the cost of the engineer for the roof work would qualify for State reimbursement. Ms. Varricchio and the Board Members discussed various budget lines from which the funding could be taken. Ms. Varricchio stated the Board could also request a special appropriation from the general fund.

In response to a request from Ms. Link, Ms. Varricchio agreed to provide the Board members with a spreadsheet detailing the funding request and outlining the options for where the funds could be drawn from.

c. Municipal Facilities Building Advisory Group Update/Funding Request:

Mr. Mansfield provided background information on this project and stated that, given the limited budget available for this project, the Advisory Group is pursuing the option of removing the Ray wing and revising the plans to accommodate all the offices in the original building. He advised that the Group is requesting funding to perform environmental tests on the buildings (\$14,920), a contingency fund for any additional environmental testing resulting from the findings of the preliminary tests (\$10,000 to \$15,000), to extend Silver & Petrucelli's contract to re-do the schematic and reconfigure the floor plan for a reduced footprint (\$8,500) and hire a firm to verify O&G's estimates for the project (\$2,200). He stated the Group is also waiting for O&G's bid to update their estimates based on the revised plans.

The Board members and Mr. Mansfield discussed the Advisory Group's request and Mr. Mansfield advised that the project could not move forward without the funding. Ms. Varricchio agreed to provide the Board members with a spreadsheet detailing the funding request and outlining the options of where the funds could be drawn from.

d. Emergency Radio Committee Update/Funding Request:

Mr. Mansfield reviewed a PowerPoint presentation which provided information on the Emergency Management sub-committee's findings, recommendation and funding request to upgrade the town's emergency communications system. Members of the emergency management services provided specific examples of call failures they have experienced.

Mr. Mansfield advised that the sub-committee issued an RFP, interviewed three vendors and selected Tactical Communications. He stated that the town has leased four frequencies from the FCC and the town is nearing the FCC's deadline to bring two of the frequencies/sites online. He noted the sub-committee recommends getting the Riverhouse site on-line and working with Department of Public Safety once the Mt. Parnassus site is constructed to bring that site on line. Mr. Mansfield and the Board members discussed the impact of the placing the simulcast equipment in the locations selected.

Mr. Mansfield advised that the sub-committee is requesting current funding for the Riverhouse site (\$80,000), the Mt. Parnassus site equipment (\$520,000) and for mobile/portable radio (\$50,000). He advised that the project is a multi-year/phased project and it is estimated that approximately \$650,000 for each year will be needed for the next two years to complete the project. He stated that ongoing maintenance and the fiber/phone list cost has not yet been determined.

e. School Security Grant Opportunities:

Mr. Mansfield reviewed security work that was recently done at the schools which was paid for out of the Board of Education's budget. He advised that he would like to pursue a grant to recoup some of the cost of the security work. Mr. Mansfield noted that Board of Education approval to apply was required as well.

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett to approve the application for additional school security grant monies (pending Board of Education approval). Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

f. FY 2014 Emergency Management Performance Grant Acceptance:

Mr. Mansfield advised that the CT Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection has notified the town that it had been awarded \$9,146.00 for its local emergency management program. He advised that this is an annual grant that the town is awarded.

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett to recommend to the Board of Selectmen the acceptance of the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security grant, entitled "FY 2014 Emergency Management Performance Grant", in the amount of \$4,573 (revenue budget 10542-43000 [\$4,573], expense budgets 10541810-51510 [\$4,000] and 10542070-51590 [\$573]) and to ask the Board of Selectmen to schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

g. Historic Documents Preservation Grant Acceptance:

Ms. Varricchio advised that the CT State Library has awarded the town the annual Historic Documents Preservation Grant in the amount of \$5,000.

Motion was made by Mr. DiCristofaro to recommend to the Board of Selectmen the acceptance of the State of Connecticut, State Library, Historic Documents Preservation Grant in the amount of \$5,000 and to appropriate said funds to Fund 2600—Document Preservation Fund and to ask the Board of Selectmen to schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Mr. Bennett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

h. Transfer Station Contracts for Waste Hauling:

Mr. Walter called the Board members' attention to a memo in their meeting packets from Public Works Director Lunt with information regarding the renewal our contract for hauling with Willimantic Waste. Her memo included a summary of the costs of three additional vendors. Mr. Walter noted that the contracts are multi-year and require Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Town Meeting approval. The Selectmen approved renewing the contracts with Willimantic Waste Paper Co., Inc. at the August 20th meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett to approve three two-year contracts for Municipal Bulky Waste Disposal Services, Municipal Waste and Recyclables Hauling Services and Municipal Solid Waste Disposal Services with Willimantic Waste Paper Co., Inc. and to ask the Board of Selectmen to schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approve. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

a. Year-End Board of Education Budget Results Correspondence:

Ms. Link called the Board members' attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from David Scata, Interim Superintendent of Schools, dated July 29, 2014. She read the letter and it was noted that Mr. Scata reported, "... *that of the total Board of Education budget allocation of \$18,767,535.00, \$18,613,527.41 has been expended, \$140,699.40 has been reserved for outstanding encumbrances, \$13,308.19 remains unexpended*". Further, that on behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Scata requested that the unexpended amount be transferred to the Board of Education's Capital Reserve Fund upon completion of the annual audit.

b. Correspondence from Harvey Thomas:

Ms. Link called the Board members' attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from Harvey Thomas, dated August 13, 2014. She read the letter and it was noted that Mr. Thomas advised that, due to his teaching schedule, he will, "*be unable to attend the now scheduled October, November and December Board of Finance meetings*".

c. Blum, Shapiro & Company, P.C. – Auditor's Communication with Those Charged with Governance:

Ms. Link called the Board members' attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from Gerald Paradis, CPA, Audit Partner of Blum, Shapiro & Company, P.C., dated June 30, 2014. She stated that, due to the length of the letter, she would not read it aloud. Ms. Varricchio advised that the letter provided information on the

town's then upcoming audit such as their expectations of what should be prepared for them, what would be tested, etc.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

a. Tax Collector Report:

In response to a question from Ms. Link, Tax Collector Denise Dill advised that the tax collections are going well.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

a. Shared Services Update:

Mr. Walter called the Board members' attention to a report in their meeting packets, dated July and August 2014, summarizing the accomplishments of the Town's Shared Services. He noted that the report includes the results of a survey conducted by CCM regarding shared services between governments and Boards of Education.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. 2014 Audit Update:

Ms. Varricchio reported that the audit went very well and the auditors completed their work early. She advised that the budget books will be ready shortly.

b. 2014 Preliminary Year-End Budget Report:

Ms. Varricchio called the Board members' attention to a preliminary Year-End budget report in their meeting packets and reviewed several items in the report.

c. Financial Advisor Update/RFP:

Ms. Varricchio advised that Webster Bank is no longer offering financial advisory services. Consequently, the town has to issue an RFP for a new financial advisor. In response to a question from Mr. DiCristofaro, Ms. Varricchio stated that the town is very happy with Webster's banking services.

LIAISON REPORTS

Nothing noted.

GUESTS AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Nothing noted.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Link asked for opinions on whether or not to tape the Board meetings. There was a brief discussion about the topic, however, no decision was made at the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OTHER/FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

Nothing noted.

Motion was made by Mr. Dutch to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Mr. Willis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Wheeler