

**TOWN OF EAST HADDAM**

**Board of Finance**

Special Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2019

Municipal Office Complex

Meeting Rooms 1 and 2

Mr. DiCristofaro called the special meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 9:00 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and recording devices started.

In attendance:

Board of Finance Members

William DiCristofaro, Chairman

Bruce Dutch

Todd Gelston

Tracey Gionta

Harvey Thomas

Others

Emmett J. Lyman, First Selectman

Robert Smith, Selectman

Deb Denette, Town Clerk and Recording Secretary

Bryan Perry, Chairman, Board of Education

Cindy Varricchio, Finance Director

Linda Zemienieski, Executive Assistant to the First Selectman

Irene Haines, State Representative

**GUESTS AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None.

**BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET REVIEW**

A page by page review of the entire budget book was conducted. Discussion regarding how the information was presented, which items were reduced by the Board of Selectmen, and highlights of each Department were noted. Following the in-depth review, it was the consensus of the Board of Finance to do a line-by-line review of the Board of Education, Public Works, Public Safety and Capital budgets.

**Motion was made by Mr. Thomas to recess at 10:45 am. Mrs. Gionta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

The Board recessed from 10:45 am to 11 am.

The Board of Education budget was reviewed line by line and school by school. Questions were formulated to be forwarded to the Superintendent, including but not limited to:

- Justification for the hall monitor and all new positions
- A breakdown of what represents contractual increases vs. new staff.
- Negotiated employee contributions that document good faith on both sides
- Comparison to other districts of similar size and scope
- Further detail on salary and fringe benefits was requested
- Further detail regarding staffing changes regarding the library media center at the middle school
- Justification for the increases in audio visual at the high school
- An overview of the special education budget was requested

Regarding the Human Resources position, the Board of Finance inquired:

- What problems will this new hire resolve?
- What is the root causes of those problems?
- What alternatives were reviewed?
- Has it been considered within the realm of Shared Services?

The Board of Finance requested further information regarding how the solar agreement with Shagbark was working out.

Further discussion was requested regarding delaying the building maintenance issues at the elementary school (windows, doors and façade) and combining it with the driveway and boiler projects at the high school for savings in a bonding package. The need to move this sooner than later was discussed, as future state reimbursement is questionable. Other potential Board of Education items that could be removed from capital included a track and irrigation system at the high school.

**Motion was made by Mr. Thomas to recess at 10:45 am. Mrs. Gionta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

The Board recessed from 10:45 am to 11 am.

The Board continued budget discussion.

**Motion was made by Mrs. Gionta to recess at 12:15 pm. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

Board recessed from 12:15 pm to 12:45 pm. (Mrs. Denette did not join the Board when the reconvened.)

The Board reviewed the Public Works budgets. Questions for Public Works Director Beth Lunt include the following:

Trees:

- What is plan to spend \$150,000 recommended by the Board of Selectmen?
- What is the needs to be met in 2019-2020?
- How/what is the process for selecting a contractor, are we sure we are getting the best deal that we can? Seeking clarification of other options with other contractors.
- What are surrounding communities doing? Rough idea of their budget dollars for tree remediation.

Transfer Station:

- Looking for greater information on the reorganization of the newly-proposed traffic pattern
- Information regarding the gap between what we are paying to remove bulky waste and what we collect for bulky waste disposal. Are there was to cover the bulky waste so that it does not become water laden.
- Are there opportunities to increase the revenue receipts?

Capital:

- The Board will discuss in greater detail the capital budget with the Public Works Director when they meet with her on Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. DiCristofaro indicated that the Board will be meeting with the Board of Education on Monday. Mr. DiCristofaro recommended that on Monday the Board could review the Public Safety budgets and prepare questions for meeting with Public Safety representatives on Saturday.

Board of Finance Budget reviewed their budget; especially the Contingency amount. It was the consensus to keep the Contingency Fund budget at \$90,000.

### **GUESTS AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None.

**Motion was made by Mr. Gelston to adjourn at 2:01 pm. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Denette and Cindy Varricchio