

# Town of Plymouth

80 Main Street, Terryville, CT 06786  
www.plymouthct.us

# Board of Finance

Telephone: 860-585-4001  
Fax: 860-585-4015

1. The Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Finance was called to order on Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Peter Cook in the Assembly Room, Plymouth Town Hall. Members in attendance: Vicky Carey, Peter Cook, Pattie DeHuff, Michael Drozdick, Dan Murray. Also present: Mayor David Merchant; AnnMarie Rheault, Interim Director of Finance; Robin Gudeczauskas, Recording Secretary; Council Liaison Sue Murawski; Councilman Bill Heering; Mike Santogatta, Business Manager, and Ray Engle, Chairman, BOE. Excused absent: James Zalot.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. BOE Report – Mr. Santogatta reported concerns with Special Education stating the Board is looking for a full time director; out of district tuition is approximately \$220,000 short, discussion held; budget freeze is on; legal fees had budget of \$50,000 and spent \$160,000 this year; natural gas/utilities are great except for last 30 days due to weather stating \$17,000 to heat THS for one month and still ok but may come short for year; outside pipe running through uninsulated wall froze and broke; custodial overtime is being hit from weekend storms, reviewed; salary items reviewed. Today at MSS a pipe blew, reviewed. Pattie DeHuff stated at a BOE meeting on 2/11/15 the interim superintendent stated the town gave the boe \$250,000 in insurance and she does not have recollection; Mr. Santogatta responded that the comptroller transferred 250,000 into BOE medical reserve and funds are transferred in/out, reviewed, as well as Workers' Comp., property and liability insurance, gas and diesel for vehicles and other in kind services reported to BOE and on ED001 at end of fiscal year.
4. Approve Minutes of October 16, 2014; November 20, 2014; January 15, 2015  
**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of October 16, 2014 by Vicky Carey; second Pattie DeHuff. Discussion: none. Vote: unanimous.  
**MOTION:** To accept the minutes of November 20 2014 by Pattie DeHuff; second Dan Murray. Discussion: Bill Heering was not in attendance. Vote: unanimous.  
**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of January 15, 2015 by Pattie DeHuff; second Dan Murray. Discussion: Bill Heering was not in that meeting. Vote: unanimous.
5. Tax Collectors Report – Mayor Merchant stated exceeded previous year for collections in the month of January.
6. Mayors Report – Heard from the prosecutor's office and Mr. Bertnagel will plead guilty tomorrow morning in federal court. Of the \$808,000 he is not sure of what they will get back; have talked to insurance company; belongings absconded will play out in process. Gave overview of process at cleaning up accounting practices; audit report extended through end of February and asked for extension through end of March. New budget is coming. In negotiations for 5 contracts; will see overage in labor attorney line items; did settle yesterday on two contracts.

**MOTION:** To take a 3 minutes recess at 7:48 p.m. by Vicky Carey; second Pattie DeHuff and the vote unanimous.

Chairman Cook called the meeting back to order at 7:51 p.m.

Pattie DeHuff questioned the Mayor (a) whether Dave Bertnagel is officially gone; Mayor Merchant stated on advice of our labor attorney a letter was sent to Mr. Bertnagel to be suspended without pay until arrest; did make a call today and next he will send letter of termination. (b) using money instead of financing out of general fund and how much should have been financed that was not; Mayor Merchant stated he does not have a number as different things come up all the time, examples given. AnnMarie Rheault stated the short term financing and the biggest piece was fire truck; need to go through in detail; some vehicles may have been lease purchases; stating as she finds and hears about items they are looking into them and is making a list of things need to do to create a list of grants, ongoing projects, who applies for grant reimbursement. (c) in middle of redoing office and found minutes from Nov, 17, 2005 and talks about management letter, reviewed; feels we are past a fraud risk assessment and need forensic audit.

7. Comptrollers Report – Reviewed items they are working on. Over budget on labor attorney; foreclosure legal expense and account ballooning because of foreclosure happenings and now at 26,000 over budget as had no budget; as stuff gets sold, we will recoup money. Foreclosure legal expenses will be budgeted for and proceeds revenue line item in new budget. Now at 68,000 over budget in legal. Also, salt/sand snow removal, contract service over budget by 16,000 and have stopped contract service. Charlie Wiegert stated two portions, we pay for schools to get done and also used sub contract services on roads; and one of in kind service things Mike Santogatta mentioned. Sand and salt inventory reviewed. Town attorney is dealing with issues with the Director of Finance and we will go over budget.

#### 8. Public Input

- a. Marie MacDermid, representing Plymouth Historical Society; did send letters to the Mayor and Peter and advocating for the town historian, Judy Giguere, historian for 7 years or so; appointed by Mayor Festa and never had a budget and has absorbed all expense on own which include memberships to different organizations, writes for town website and has expenses for taking care of cemetery photographs of tombstones and printing, mileage; advocate a minimum of \$600 for her. If put under Library, please consider putting under Plymouth Library as that is where the Plymouth Historical Society is archiving stuff.
- b. Michael Ganem, Director Parks and Recreation – thanked the Board for their service; next big program is summer youth recreation and posting registration for that; trying to incorporate camp coordinator into getting paid as independent contractor. Chairman Cook stated he put preliminary as March 12th for budget of Parks and Recreation.
- c. John Murphy, 385 Greystone Road - requested (a) understanding of events in town such as 370 South Main and purchasing practices called for in Charter; Section 4 Subsection 6 of purchasing procedures. 367, 370 South Main described sold for 300,000 and his concern is on back taxes of property; also a 260,000 bill for the town to do work and disposal fee of 107,000 incurred by town and should have dumped on person buying property; big hit. His understanding was town changed zoning regulations to allow purchase. Chairman Cook responded with the report from the Mayor with accounting practices, reviewed. (b) why wasn't expenditure put to public bid. Mayor

Merchant stated we have bid for general contractor; Chairman Cook stated it was not bid as a special project but went through general contractor bid and the bid process is not through the BOF. Discussion held.

- d. Melanie Church, 328 Main Street – (a) budget – had agreed to buy snow machine to do sidewalks; have bought 5 pieces for that machine, does not know under what. (b) understand we bought a welder and do not see one in capitals and it is not a small welder. (c) observed Ply73 truck plowing the superintendent driveway during working hours.

9. Correspondence - none

10. Review proposed Budget meeting schedule

- a. Meeting schedule reviewed – discussion held; Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> have tax collector in; review budget. Assignment of Departments:  
Admin and BOF – Peter Cook  
Public Works – Dan Murray  
Parks & Rec/Library – Mike Drozdick  
Public Safety and Fire Dept. – Jim Zalot  
Capitals – Vicky Carey  
Land Use – Pattie DeHuff

Tax Collector in on Thursday, Feb. 26th

11. Board Member Comments

- a. Dan Murray – Public Works should be commended for work done during snow storms
- b. Pattie DeHuff –questioned the Mayor: (a) last month she asked which line item taking Structus clean up from; Mayor Merchant stated he was told by the former comptroller that money was taken from tipping fees and would be offset when property sold; (b) renovations in west wing; Mayor Merchant stated same thing and from town hall carpeting money and line item is over some. Vicky Carey stated when she talked with David and some LoCIP was not closed out yet and one had to do with remodeling and still outstanding. (c) projects to be discussed with board and we have not met; Mayor Merchant stated there are a lot of projects needing to be done and not ready to ask the community to take on, overview given on Safe Routes to School where we spend the money and then get reimbursed. Chairman Cook stated this is Board Member Comments and questioning in not appropriate in this line item.

**MOTION:** To bring Mayors Report line item back up by Pattie DeHuff. No second, motion fails.

Historically evident through management letters we need fraud risk assessment and believe the Board has to look at forensic audit of town side; Chairman Cook asked for clarification as to a fraud risk or forensic audit; Pattie DeHuff clarified forensic audit and to consider in budget.

12. Adjournment

**MOTION:** To adjourn by Dan Murray; second Mike Drozdick and the vote unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas, Recording Secretary