

Town of Plymouth

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

Board of Finance

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1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Jim Kilduff, Chairman called the scheduled March 23, 2023, Board of Finance regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at Plymouth Town Hall. Members in attendance: Victoria Carey - Vice Chairman, Eugene Croce, Barbara Rockwell, Briana Brumaghim-excused absence, and Jennifer Brunoli. Also Present; Grace K. Zweig - Finance Director, Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director, Gerry Bourbonniere, Parks & Recreation Commission, Meg McCreedy, Human Services, and Roxanne McCann - Town Council Liaison

2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Jim Kilduff led the group and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Fire Exit Notification: Jim Kilduff noted the Fire Exits for the record.

3. **Acceptance of Minutes**

Barbara Rockwell made a motion seconded by Eugene Croce to accept the minutes of March 13, 2023.

Motion passed unanimously

4. **Review Parks & Recreation/Public Health Services Section of the Budget**

Various Members of the Board of Finance discussed in detail the Parks & Recreation and Public Health Services section of the budget/ Town of Plymouth Fiscal Year July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024. Mayor's Proposed Budget Draft #1 dated February 10, 2023, for discussion purposes DRAFT/WORKING COPY* can be viewed in its entirety at the Plymouth, CT -Town Hall and on the Town of Plymouth's website (www.plymouthct.us)

PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
RECEIVED FOR RECORD
2023 MAR 31 PM 3:31
Shirley Kilduff
TOWN CLERK

NOTE: MILL RATE CALCULATION IS FOR REFERENCE ONLY. THE FINAL MILL RATE HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE AND WILL NOT BE FINAL UNTIL AFTER APPROVAL BY THE TOWN COUNCIL

Barbara Rockwell noted spoke with Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director, and reviewed the Parks section of the budget. re. conversation confirmed that the two full-time employees who were moved under the Public Works section of the budget – clarified that they have a full workload - also, noted the need for additional summer help.

Eugene Croce questioned the amount of \$20,500.

Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director stated this line item is for the Summer help needed for Parks.

Vicky Carey questioned if Parks & Recreation never helped the highway department.

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Barbara Rockwell stated they do come in and open the building, and fill in for maintenance if the building maintenance people are not here and briefly elaborated.

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated re. assembling a desk - They are basically – Parks and facilities duties, building, salt, and plowing and briefly elaborated.

Vicky Carey questioned the full-time facility position request, which would be used as a filler for parks and/or public works, and briefly elaborated.

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director reiterated present system in place works great! We do what has always been done in Parks (i.e. lake, cutting trees, trails, fixing holes in fences, cutting down some trees) and briefly elaborated.

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated the switch over to Public Works has not affected us at all. Although, Paul and Will are stretched to their limits and briefly elaborated

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated if you take away our part-time summer employees then we are back to where we were before which does not benefit Parks & Recreation.

Vicky Carey questioned how many people are included in that \$20,500.

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated two (2) - they work 40 hours (part-time period of time (mid-April – mid-August, 20 weeks).

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated we should have a paid part-time person who would be utilized for fall and community garden clean-up, helping with setting up community events, and briefly elaborated.

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated there is some value to offering jobs to young people and/or seniors and briefly elaborated.

Gerry Bourbonniere, Parks & Recreation Commission stated re. how parks operated 10 years ago, noted work at Veterans Park, N. Street Reservoir, Lake Winfield, other areas of town, and issues in the town hall. Presently work includes Mayfair Garage, Waterwheel, and PVAC - adding all of this on existing hours available, these individuals are at their breaking point and briefly elaborated.

Vicky Carey questioned who is taking care of the waterwheel (beautification).

Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated Parks mow there.

Vicky Carey questioned who is taking care of the PVAC property.

Gerry Bourbonniere, Parks & Recreation Commission stated yes, I have seen them there mowing.

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Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director stated Yes, Parks.

A brief discussion took place regarding invasive plants.

Grace Zweig, Finance Director questioned historical numbers for 2021 and 2022 – noting there wasn't Parks & Recreation Director.

Grace Zweig, Finance Director stated those years we spent around \$10,000.

Grace Zweig, Finance Director stated the most recent number in the current fiscal year is \$1,500 spent. Although Park's budget last year was \$20,500 – your request is for an increase of \$500.

Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director stated asking increase due to a minimum wage increase.

Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director stated the money should be there - I don't know where it was put and briefly elaborated.

Gerry Bourbonniere, Parks & Recreation Commission stated for clarification purposes - we have two fiscal years, April – June our town people are getting paid from the previous budget and July and August is getting paid from the current fiscal year. Noting – will be starting again in April next month, re. part-time staff - this is the issue and briefly elaborated.

Vicky Carey questioned any accounting records for April, May, and June.

Grace Zweig, Finance Director stated Yes, I do. - will follow up next week

Recreation

Jennifer Brunoli questioned advertising.

Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director stated the importance of larger ads to promote the larger programs available. Noted senior activities are up - additionally running ads in church bulletins (need to donate).

Vicky Carey questioned the rental of buildings/land.

Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director Board of Education noted the \$10,000 (second year of agreement) with the Board of Education - still collect and then utilize the money for programs for children in our town and briefly elaborated.

Maureen Cappelto, Parks & Recreation Director Board stated if we decided to continue - will rename the line item for transparency reasons.

Vicky Carey questioned the equipment line item.

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Maureen Cappetto, Parks & Recreation Director stated this is real equipment – re. sports equipment, lacrosse clinic, balls, and scoreboards.

Gerry Bourbonniere, Parks & Recreation Commission stated our funds ARPA funds, tennis court, and pickleball courts, will need some equipment some will come out of that line item.

Human Services

Meg McCreedy, Human Services noted HRA contracted professional services increase in the contract.

Meg McCreedy, Human Services gave a brief summary of her almost 30 years of experience in the Human Services field. Noting she was appointed to the Commission on community service by the governor because he liked her work.

Meg McCreedy, Human Services stated I'm looking to do a lot of good things in town. Apparently, I'm getting a good reputation already received 457 phone calls last month. Yes, so quite happy to be here!

Jim Kilduff, Chairman questioned is there a range of the types of calls that you're getting?

Meg McCreedy, Human Services stated everything from – “Can you help me get a job?” to “Can you help me be able to afford food for my cats and myself?”.

Meg McCreedy, Human Services stated I'd like to try and get some volunteers in the community to help with folks that have those needs that can't afford to get help or go through the paperwork, which takes forever. So I've got some ideas going forward. I'd like to put, to use what I've learned over the years and hope to go in that direction with them. It's a nice, very nice town!

Vicky Carey questioned under public health services on the medical - The Torrington Health District, did they increase their budget?

Vicky Carey stated is that the actual amount that's in there?

Grace Zweig, Finance Director confirmed that is the Torrington area health district as well as Amplify, Inc. which is a Community Behavioral Health Services small amount of \$800 and briefly elaborated.

5. To discuss and take action on ARPA Committee recommendation for Community Investment Fund (CIF) project.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman noted ARPA Committee's recommendation for Community Investment Fund CIF project. Noted this is the extensive flow chart of the things involved in the Community investment transformational plan.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated this could be something that's really important for the future of the town. So there needs to be seed money appropriated.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman noted in the press Plymouth was mentioned in addition, noted: "the real work begins." A comment that was made by our mayor.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated there is a lot of work involved in this as you can see.

Roxanne McCann stated I am a member of the Committee for the Community Investment Fund appointed by the mayor. We have been working on grant funding through the CIF program. It is an \$875 million program grant, money that the state will be awarded to certain communities over the next five years.

- ❖ Our initial grant, our idea. First, we start with the idea of what the Ad Hoc Committee is considering. Our idea is that we work to revitalize our downtown area. We don't have a true downtown and little by little different organizations and mayors have nitpicked here and there, a little project here, a little project there, but there hasn't been a grand vision.
- ❖ Sort of thought processes - to work with a consulting firm to help us determine - between our land, the demographics of the town, and what we can do to better the downtown area. And we're considering that downtown area from the water wheel to the Route 672 intersection.
- ❖ The goal for us is to work with this consulting firm and for them to help us work with the community, the businesses along Route 6, and the citizens in the town to set up surveys, meet and greets, and public meetings, and that will help us transform the idea, inform an idea - of what we want our downtown to look like, and what the needs of the Community are.
- ❖ And what our long-term, short-term, long term goals are. So, in order to kick this off we need a consulting firm. So our first grant going in was the request for \$250,000 to the state so that we could hire a consulting company. From there the consulting company - to come in and help us start the process, and then from there, obviously the implementation side we would use that firm to help us decide what that's going to cost, what can we bring in for private development, and what do we need as a town - with that grant money.
- ❖ We would then apply for an additional grant further on we're hoping for January of next year. We have that next grant and that will be a big grant that will be where the big money comes in that we request - that we can really move the project forward. So, our grant was accepted for \$250,000.
- ❖ The idea is that the town would kick in \$50,000 on top of that and we have gone to the ARPA committee to fund that \$50,000 and they did approve it. So, the next request is obviously here and then to the town Council, that being said - CIF Grant money still goes through a bonds committee -it passed their CIF American Rescue Ad Hoc Committee. It goes forward to the committee and that Commission will then hopefully approve it. The governor signs off on it. We take that \$250,000 with this hopefully \$50,000, and then we start moving forward on a big project for our town.

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Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated one of the things that when I get comments coming in and I've mentioned them at some of the meetings over the last couple of years. Several of the comments talked about the downtown -that's like a major thing - downtown activities for youth and senior citizens.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated they want these types of things - building a downtown and a community that would engage all these things.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated there are also sections in here, you know, talks about possible things, but also there's a lot about housing and everything else.

Roxanne McCann, Town Council Liaison stated it is very geared toward housing.

Roxanne McCann stated yes, economic development. So, the idea would be working to find a way to add more affordable housing - it would be a big chunk of this could be transformational - in the greatest possible way, you need community involvement in this - so that what comes out of this benefits the whole community.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated more importantly it doesn't become an albatross. Because once you start taking federal money and grant money. If you don't have involvement in it, they'll tell you what to do. And we don't want that to happen. We want total involvement in this, OK?

Roxanne McCann, Town Council Liaison stated we want it to be a cohesive vision, noted know our long-term vision so one project doesn't get torn up to complete another, and so on, and briefly elaborated.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated if we take the lead on this and we present our plan. So you know that's what we would want to be approved as a community. So this is a big deal!

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated this ARPA request fits in for this type of thing. The ARPA talks about transformational things you want to do with the community, and this is exactly one of those things, 110%, totally should be a slam dunk about approving this and that's what we're here tonight to do -to allocate \$50,000, that's our percentage of the Community Investment Fund Ad Hoc committee to be used for this transformational plan.

Meg McCreedy, Human Services stated I've been thinking of doing a survey myself with the Human Services position and but the big thing I've been hearing over and over and over again is transportation, transportation, transportation.

Roxanne McCann, Town Council Liaison stated that is actually included and briefly elaborated.

Jim Kilduff, Chairman stated this is a lot of work and that's why our mayor is the one that said the real work begins. The real work begins with you approving this. They approved it for \$200,000. The 50,000 our contribution is to approve this and send it. Our recommendation goes to the Council, which has the ultimate authority on that. So what we need is a motion.

MOTION

Jennifer Brunoli made a motion, seconded by Eugene Croce to recommend \$50,000 of ARPA funds towards the Community Investment Fund Ad Hoc Committee for the Community investment transformational plan.

VOTE:

Eugene Croce - Yes
Vicky Carey -Yes
Barbara Rockwell - Yes
Jennifer Brunoli – Yes

Motion passed unanimously

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, Terryville, CT - Number of Accounts Parks & Recs, and Police, Final amount in extra duty fund, ARPA, taxes, non-profits, and taxpayers dollars.

7. Correspondence

None

8. Board Member's Comments

Jennifer Brunoli - None

Vicky Carey - The importance of setting standards.

Eugene Croce - Move forward with downtown beautification – bonding situations, importance to get reserves up – otherwise, the bond would be much more expensive.

Barbara Rockwell - None

Jim Kilduff stated the importance of solving issues, and having research done if necessary before the budget season (time) - noted this is a volunteer position, and only wants the best for the town and briefly elaborated.

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9. Adjournment

There being no further business of the Board of Finance, a motion was made by Eugene Croce seconded by Barbara Rockwell to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Yokubinas

Michele Yokubinas
Recording Secretary