



Beacon Falls Board of Finance

10 Maple Avenue

Beacon Falls, CT 06403

BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE

VIRTUAL Regular Monthly Meeting

January 12, 2021

MINUTES

(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman T. Pratt called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

He concluded the Pledge by welcoming the Board's new member: Wendy Hopkinson.

Members Present: T. Pratt, S. Leeper, K. Brennan, J. Carroll, D. Fennell, W. Hopkinson

Members Absent: None

Others Present: First Selectman G. Smith, Selectman M. Krenesky, Finance Manager N. Nau,

Note: One member of the public attending the meeting via Zoom.

2. Comments from the Public: None at this time. No comments were received via email before or after the meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings: T. Pratt asked the members for approval on the December 2020 Meeting minutes. **K. Brennan made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. J. Carroll seconded the motion. W. Hopkinson abstained from the vote. The 5 remaining members voted aye.**

4. Correspondence: None at this time.

5. Reports

- a. Tax Collector Report –No questions on the Tax Collector reporting. January bills have gone out and collections are steady.
- b. Treasurers Report - No questions.
- c. Town Clerk Report – No questions. T. Pratt noted how quickly this report is generated each month.
- d. Region 16 – December 2020 reporting from Region 16 was recently added to their website and to the Board of Finance meeting folder. No questions.

- e. Ambulance Report – T. Pratt provided the latest EMS report, along with newly established BHC write off and collection policy and the agreement signed with Pagliaro Inc. Collection agency who will be collecting on overdue EMS payments.

6. **Finance Manager Report:**

- N. Nau noted there are 2 changes to the Finance Policy Manual this month to be addressed later in the agenda.
- The Finance Office intern has completed his required hours, so if anyone is aware of a student looking for a remote unpaid internship, the Finance Office is happy to accept help.
- IT Projects are underway including conversions to virtual servers and there is also a new Wi-Fi network installed in the town hall as part of the library's COVID grant.
- Financial Accounting Software- New module installations are also moving forward with AR, Capital Assets, and Purchasing modules to be implemented in the next few weeks.]
- Cybersecurity Insurance – We are awaiting a quote for a separate Cybersecurity policy, which is a recommended policy, in addition to the limits CIRMS provides. Once we have the quote, we can decide on moving forward.
- Parking Tickets – Recently, N. Nau reviewed the ordinance related to parking tickets and it is out of date and 22 years old. Trooper Henriques and the Police Department are looking at revising the language and tying it to a DMV search. There are ways to ensure that the town is collecting on parking tickets. Now that we have uncovered this issue, we are working on addressing both the fee schedule and the procedure so that parking tickets are collected properly. Discussion will continue on parking ticket fees and how tickets will be collected.
- RFPs (Request for Proposals) – On Call Tree Service – The bid was extended and there was some confusion amidst potential bidders on this bid from the onset. Because there was only one submission, the bid was not opened, and the suggestion is to rebid this RFP (Request for Proposals). The new bid will be issued soon. Future RFPs are forthcoming.
- The Dime Oil contract for gas and diesel has been locked in for the upcoming year at a fixed price, which amounts to a reduction of 30 cents per gallon.
- Heating oil is one of the next bids on the CRPC (Capital Region Purchasing Council) site, so N. Nau plans to submit quantities to the CRPC. Our current oil provider's company was recently sold. Finance is also working on fuel quantities for the new generator at the WWTP which will be installed next year. The generator uses a different type of fuel and it is run each week, so this cost should be factored into next year's budget.
- Revenue & Expenditures Reporting is attached through December 2020 with potential trouble lines highlighted. There were no questions on revenue and EE&A reports.
- \$4M BAN (Bond Anticipation Notes) – The funds were issued and received on 12/15/20 and in the Bonded Projects fund.
- Mahoney Sabol is ready to present the audit at the top of the February meeting.
- Capital Projects: The Fire/EMS Fly car Purchase Order was signed today and is being purchased through Blasius and we will investigate the timeline for the delivery of the car. Other Projects are in motion with follow up needed on the Public Works

generator and the dump trailer purchase, which we hope to have them executed within the next months. N. Nau reviewed the cost of bulletproof glass for the police vehicle at D. Fennell's request and the cost is \$20,000. This type of glass is uncommon in CT and is costly.

- Budget Workshop schedule – To be finalized and voted on later tonight. The Workshops will be via Zoom and Finance is looking at ways to include the public.
- FY2022 Public Input Webform – Finance has drafted an open-ended form which will be available on the town website. The form can have preloaded questions or be generic. T. Pratt asked for input on the webform. S. Leeper advocated for a simple form to start. D. Fennell likes the idea of preloaded questions for ease of response. G. Smith noted that the town will not respond to comments which are anonymous, and we will make name, address, and email a required field to verify the comment is from a resident. K. Brennan noted that the simpler the form, the better, and allow residents to direct themselves, also to be wary of fake names and addresses. D. Fennell encouraged verifying the addresses and the website can export the data which can then be verified.
- Master Fee Schedule – The attorney reviewed Fee Schedule and there was missing data from the Town Clerk's Office, along with some revisions suggested by the attorney. No fees are changing at this time, but we will have one document that we can go to for all Town fees. This is an easy document to reference and the final version will be ready for approval next month.
- Grants –
 - AFG grant for SCBA system is open and the new application will be a \$57,000 application which is significantly less than what was submitted last round. The declined grant was for the higher-level model. This model is sufficient, without all the bells and whistles. N. Nau noted that application is 85% complete and will be submitted before the deadline. This item will be bid out when purchase is approved. D. Fennell asked if we could upgrade the compressor after the grant is awarded. N. Nau noted that this is a large piece of capital equipment and we would be committed to the model that is bid out, with potential small add-ons for certain features.
 - COVID-19 – Finance submitted a DEMHS/FEMA claim for COVID for July-December expenses, and FEMA they denied many of the expenses because only Fire and Police expenses are eligible. OPM completed their cost calculation for the CRF Covid Grant and they awarded the Town \$53,000 based on population, which was to be spent prior to year-end. COVID related PPE, sanitizing items, technology and improvements were ordered prior to year-end. The roof being built outside Town Hall which allows for contactless pick up is being funded with that CRF Grant.

7. First Selectman's Report

- a. Budget Transfers – None at this time.
- b. Position Changes to Land Use Administrative and Police Office Manager – G. Smith provided updated job descriptions for the position changes and CCM (Connecticut Conference of Municipalities) Salary surveys on the positions which compares town salaries across the state. G. Smith also provided pay rates for other Town Hall union employees. The comparative information shows that the

positions are at a fair market rate salary and in line with what the town rates are for similar work. BOS approved the changes to the positions at last night's meeting with the February 1st start date. The budget transfers associated with the changes will be presented at the February meeting and the BOS would agree to take the funds from Contingency.

- c. Capital Projects – As Natasha said, they are underway. G. Smith is reconsidering the Dump Trailer purchase and will let the Board know next month when a decision has been made. On the WWTP Generator, the generator will hold a lot of fuel, but may not burn a lot of fuel, as we should only go through fuel during a significant power outage.
- d. Burton Road Bridge – G. Smith sent letters sent to our State Representatives and to Representative Rosa DeLauro on the Burton Road Bridge. Sources of funds are limited, and we have been searching for grants, as the road is closed due to a catastrophic failure. LOTCIP appears to be the best source of funds, but the Town already has an LOTCIP application in for Beacon Valley Road. The COG has agreed to allow a second LOTCIP application due to emergent situation with Burton Road, the disruption it causes to the town and the significant traffic on the road. G. Smith anticipates the road will remain closed for at least a year. In a week to 10 days, G. Smith will have a clear direction on funds available and after that point, the Town will most like pursue a LOTCIP application. The full reengineering of the road from Main Street to Highland Avenue would include a sidewalk that continues to Highland Avenue to complete the project. The unwelcome news is that the Town will bear all the engineering costs of a LOTCIP project and engineering for the scale of the project would be in the hundreds of thousands. The Burton Road bridge repair is going to be a prolonged process and it is major inconvenience to the town. We will do everything we can to push it along with more information coming at the next meeting.
- e. Beacon Valley Road – The LOTCIP application through Decarlo & Doll is in the final approval stage and the project will go out to bid shortly for spring work. G. Smith is signing engineering Task Orders on this work.
- f. Station 2 – No movement at this time. A design drawing was supposed to be sent to the Building Inspector.
- g. Road Projects – The town is on autopilot until the spring when the asphalt plants reopen and Cocchiola will return to complete the east side of Rimmon Hill, Lady Slipper Drive area. The project to date is \$30,000 under budget. Cook Lane is also in the design phase with MMI.
- h. On Burton Road, K. Brennan asked about the pipes, sewer, etc. under Burton Road and G. Smith noted that all the infrastructure, water, and sewer lines under that section of Burton Road will be reviewed and updated as part of the repair. The Road being closed will be helpful for construction and the sewer and water lines run up the northbound side of Burton where the road is failing. MMI is also looking at reconfiguring the site lines for safety and moving the road to soften the curve, so that it is less dangerous. M. Krenesky is seeking historical information on the project which built the large wall on the southside of Burton Road.
- i. Discussion continued about the safety and speeding that result along Wolfe Avenue and other roads in the area due to the detour. D. Fennell noted the

increase in traffic in the neighborhood and G. Smith will look at steps to make the detour route safer and hold drivers speed down.

8. Finance Policy Manual

- Due to 2 incidents in December with Public Works and Fire Department, the revision is to the Claim Reporting section of the manual. Public Works took lampposts down on the Streetscape and did not report the claim. The Fire Department had an accident which we thought would have inconsequential damage. The vehicle repairs are now estimated at \$11,000 and the claim was not reported. The manual changes are to provide clarity and the expectation when there is damage to town property and vehicles.
- Workman's Comp is reported through Human Resources. Property claims are reported to CIRMA through the Finance Office and the language outlines the process for claim reporting. K. Brennan noted that it is good to put this in writing, but employees will sign off on the manual without reading it. D. Fennell added that words are great, but enforcing the words are better. Employees will go to the manual's last page and sign it, so it will be important to support this issue.
- Once this change is instituted, G. Smith noted that he is meeting with department heads each month, so he will let them all know that about the amendments and his intention to enforce them. W. Hopkinson agreed that it is easier to implement the policy with employees rather than volunteers. With volunteers, there are lower consequences. One of the consequences mentioned by N. Nau is the requirement of a driver training program for drivers involved in accidents with town vehicles.
- The second change to the policy manual is an increase to the Finance Manager credit card limits, which was necessary last month for the CRF COVID grant expenditures. J. Carroll agreed that the limit should increase to \$10,000 and stay there.
- **D. Fennell made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the Finance Manual and J. Carroll seconded the motions. All ayes.**

9. Old Business –

- a. Budget Workshop Schedule – **The BOS approved the schedule last night. S. Leeper made a motion to approve the schedule. J. Carroll seconded the motion. All ayes.**
- b. 2022 Budget Public Input Webform – **S. Leeper made a motion to approve the Public Input webform to be posted on the town website for public comment on the budget. K. Brennan seconded the motion. All ayes.**
- c. Land Use Administrative and Police Admin position changes – **D. Fennell made a motion to accept the changes to the positions. S. Leeper seconded the motion. All ayes.**

- 10. New Business – FY2022 Budget:** The first joint workshop will be on January 26th and will consist of a 5-minute high level overview with all department heads attending, to get people more involved in the process. The deadline for departments to submit their budgets to Finance is 1/15/21 and N. Nau and G. Smith agreed to keep this deadline and aim for this date, although N. Nau expects some submissions will trickle in later.

- 11. Executive Session (if needed)** None needed.

- 12. Adjournment:** **K. Brennan made a motion to adjourn at 8:33 PM. S. Leeper seconded the motion. All ayes.**

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Schwarz
Finance Office