

Beacon Falls Board of Finance
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403



BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Regular Monthly Meeting
November 9, 2021
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. **Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance:** T. Pratt called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: T. Pratt, S. Leeper, J. Carroll, K. Brennan, D. Fennell (7:08 PM)

Members Absent: W. Hopkinson

Public Present: Finance Manager N. Nau (via TEAMS), Selectman G. Smith (7:02 PM), S. West (newly elected BOF member)

T. Pratt began the meeting by thanking S. Leeper for his work as Co-Chair and his service to the Board of Finance and presented him with a small gift from the members of the Board. S. Leeper appreciated the time he has spent in service to the Board and the progress made during that time.

T. Pratt introduced Stephen West who will be filling S. Leeper's position. He congratulated J. Carroll on his reelection to the board.

2. **Comments from the Public:** No Comments.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** The October 12, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes were tabled until a quorum that attended this meeting is available.
4. **Reporting:**
 - a. Tax Collector Report – October report was very favorable, and collections are on track. MV taxes are up, as the values of used vehicles have increased.
 - b. Treasurers Report – Liberty Bank has closed in town, but the town remains a client of the bank.
 - c. Town Clerk Report – October 2021 Fees are positive. McInnis is working on the process of transitioning the Town Clerk position from elected to appointed in January. G. Smith noted that the position will mirror the appointed Tax Collector position.
 - d. Region 16 Report – Expenditures report through October 2021. N. Nau noted that the Region is leaning towards bonding their capital project for a new track and pool repairs.
 - e. Ambulance Report – Not available currently. T. Pratt has been working with Laura DeGeorge regarding the collection agency (red numbers) on their reporting. When they collect more than budgeted, the variance on the revenue side is represented as a negative, but the collections are above the budgeted number. The VA Hospital owes BHC some funds. Another issue is that they are budgeting Medicare/Medicaid calls at \$900+ owed, but the actual amount that will be received is \$383.00. Adjustments will be made to the EMS report. BHC has sent \$24,000 to the collection

agency and the collection agency has collected \$6000 to date. T. Pratt is also seeking write-off information for trips in town versus out of town. G. Smith asked about the new agreement with Naugatuck and how has it impacted the revenue. AMR costs should also be moving down.

5. First Selectman's Report:

- a. Budget Transfers: One transfer was approved last night at the BOS meeting for the Fire Marshal office renovation, however the second transfer for VFIS on the Service Award program was tabled.
- b. Fire Apparatus: G. Smith noted that BHC's committee on the vehicles has been meeting and their numbers for the apparatus are where they were supposed to be. N. Nau has been waiting for information from the group and she just received an email today with specifications. She is still waiting for item numbers from the HGAC contract.
- c. Pent Road – G. Smith noted that the fence is up, and the project should be complete. This work should have been done a long time ago. Damaged materials and supply chain problems were part of the issue. It is finally up and complete and the area will be graded and cleaned.
- d. Generators – They are not presently out to bid. Fire and Public Works are working together on their specifications.
- e. SCBA Compressor – This bid is currently open on Bonfire and closing shortly.
- f. Burton Road Wall – Surveys are being done for the construction. The project has been fully funded and now the plans need to be approved by DOT. It is taking a little longer as the engineer is collaborating closely with DOT to keep them in the loop, so changes do not take place at the end of the process.
- g. Beacon Valley Road – There have been some problems with stormwater and sewers mappings on the road (which belong to Naugatuck). Grasso believes that they will be able to get drainage done at the end of the year and the project is moving along.
- h. Gerber – The drainage on Cook Lane should be completed in 3 weeks. They will not get a binder course down before the winter months. G. Smith is looking at skim coating lower Cook, to get the road through the winter. Wolfe & Maple will also be skim coated. This will just be an overlap of asphalt on these roads, they are passable through the winter and payable in the spring. N. Nau reminded the group that patching is part of the Contract with Gerber Construction, to ensure the road remains passable over the course of the project.
- i. Station 2 – Now that the drawings are complete, the ball is in the Town's court to approach the State of CT on ownership of the building. We have spent \$50,000 on the building over the past several years. The Station 2 project is \$58,000. We want to gain ownership before making this large investment. N. Nau concurred that with the magnitude of the project that has grown, we gain ownership first, then get advice on how the project can proceed. She composed a letter to the State, which G. Smith is reviewing.
- j. Matthies House – Work was completed at the house as of today.
- k. WWTP – SLR is working on the electrical upgrade project specifications. Updates are ongoing with the Digester project and SLR has been working closely with the WWTP on their permit renewal.
- l. Wolfe Ave House – G. Smith has a local contractor who can haul the debris away within budget and the plan is still to burn the house down. He hopes this can take place before the end of the year.

6. Finance Manager's Report:

- a. Financial Accounting Software: The software is moving forward slowly with AssetTrax coming on board next. N. Nau is hoping to implement asset tags for all the towns assets. S. Leeper recently worked on this process using RFI tags.
- b. Interns: We are meeting with the two high school interns tomorrow and hope to have them for a couple of months to work on several projects, including Streetlogix.
- c. Cyber Insurance: Costs are increasing for cyber insurance and our policy renews in February, so N. Nau is already seeking quotes.
- d. Propane: Costs are increasing from our vendor, so we will be reviewing competitive propane prices.
- e. We signed the salt contract for the year and submitted quantities to CRPC on several bids they have pending.
- f. The SCBA Air Compressor rebid went out and is due on Friday. There has been some interest and activity in the Bonfire portal, so we are hopeful.
- g. Cook Lane: G. Smith covered the progress on Cook Lane, but N. Nau reminded the group that temporary pavement patching is part of the Gerber contract.
- h. We recently submitted our Category Z: Management Costs for the Hurricane Isaias FEMA project and we will be completing Category Z for the tornado costs soon, to finally close out those FEMA grants.
- i. P&Z has been pursuing reimbursement from mining from HI Stone and the revenue has been posted in Miscellaneous Income
- j. Lines to Monitor: N. Nau provided a list of nine lines to monitor, which are trending over at this point in the year and Finance will continue to track.
- k. Capital Projects: N. Nau's Reporting provided a list of ongoing capital projects for both FY2021 and FY2022 and she reviewed progress on the following 2021 projects: Generators, WWTP Digester, Excavator trailer, Station 2, Town wide security and Revaluation. She reviewed all the open FY2022 projects.
- l. Fire Engine and Tanker – N. Nau noted that about a month ago she met with the BHC members working on the vehicle replacements and she had not heard back from them until yesterday when the RFP arrived. N. Nau is still waiting for Item numbers from the HGAC contract, and she has not received that information yet.
- m. Grants –
 - a. The Main Street Connectivity grant has not been released by the State of CT to date.
 - b. The FEMA AFG grant will close in December, and we will be applying for Fire & EMS spreader, rams, and struts. The good news is that call volume has less weight on this grant, as BHC's volume cannot compete with larger cities and towns. Grant awards for AFG will be next summer and therefore will not take place until next fiscal year.
 - c. K. Matthies Park Benches – Price increases are impacting the budget, so we can reduce the number of benches we are buying to stay within budget. The board concurred that Finance should begin to move forward as prices are not decreasing and supply chain issues are also causing delays.
 - d. ARPA: This is a hot topic, so we wanted to take the temperature of what the Board would like to see for reporting on ARP funds. N. Nau provided the ARPA revenue and expense lines in her monthly report and will continue to provide that information each month for transparency.
 - e. CT Rec Trails Grant: We have applied for \$10,000 grant for a boardwalk, arbors, and trail enhancements at Toby's Pond. This is separate from clearing work.
 - f. N. Nau is also catching up on STEAP reporting.

- n. T. Pratt noted that the alarm company returning and programming phones so that the new cameras can be accessed remotely and then we will move forward with other buildings.
- o. Bond Issue: Tomorrow is the S&P Rating call for the \$6M Bond Issue which will take place at the end of the month. N. Nau is optimistic that the Town's rating will trend positive.

2. Old Business:

- a. Finance Policy Manual – The Policy Manual changes that were made by the Board will be extremely helpful to refer to during the S&P rating call. BOF still needs to update several pages in December/January.
- b. Master Fee Schedule – On hold. Police and WPCA fees are being reviewed.
- c. Budget Process – T. Pratt would like the board to look at the capital project process for the budget. Major projects have been brought to BOS/BOF by the Departments at budget season and then when the project is approved, the departments are not prepared to procure the item or manage the projects. The Departments should know exactly what they want and then on July 1st, these projects can move forward. Instead, departments are throwing a wish list out and when the project is granted, they do not come through with the completion of the project.
- d. D. Fennell would like to build a schedule or process and so leg work is done ahead of time. He noted that if we build the process, and the process is not followed, without that information we will not consider the request. Without the back up for each item, then it comes off the list.
- e. K. Brennan added that both sides have been burned the way the budget process works now. If volunteers or managers spend a lot of time putting this information together and then they get denied, then they feel it has been a waste of their time. He agrees that it is a big mistake by the Fire Department not to have something in hand for their vehicle projects. D. Fennell noted that may be there is a middle ground.
- f. K. Brennan continued that we have opened the budget process to Departments coming in and presenting couple of years ago. If Departments are not prepared, it feels like BOS/BOF's time has been wasted. It is possible that the process is backwards and BOS/BOF should not consider projects until they have the documentation submitted before the departments present.
- g. J. Carroll noted that specifications are important. Spec sheets and proposals are needed from the beginning of the process. As a board to collectively look at advancing a project, there should be a drop-dead date. This sets the framework of what to expect and sets some firm ground for departments. The budget process is just around the corner and managers need to understand the motivation for doing this is that capital monies are granted and several years later the funds are still there. The members discussed putting a deadline on capital projects of two fiscal years. They considered withholding approval for projects without proper documentation and withdrawing funding if projects are not spent over 2 years' time.
- h. The members discussed January 31st as the deadline for budget submissions and capital projects with written specifications and quotations/proposals are part of this deadline. The purpose would be that departments who do not hit this deadline will not have capital projects considered. D. Fennell would like to see a process refined from the current wish list from departments and the projects should have one fully specified quote. J. Carroll reiterated that specifications are the biggest piece. If there is a state bid that meets the specification, managers need to take the time to do the research. N. Nau added that they need to spend the time, the hour to look through the contract to see what is available and they need to know how we plan to procure each project: Whether it is one quote needed, three quotes, an RFP or contract (State, CRPC or HGAC

or Sourcewell consortium.) The Finance Office has a form to use for Capital project submissions.

- i. **K. Brennan made a motion that, for the upcoming fiscal-year budget process, each department must submit written documentation, using the Finance Department's resources and budget forms, with full specifications and at least one price quote for each capital project proposal by January 31, or the Board of Finance will not consider the proposal for the upcoming fiscal-year budget process, beginning with the fiscal-year 2023 budget process. J. Carroll seconded the motion.**

Discussion continued with the consensus that when July 1st arrives, under this process, the Town can begin to cut POs and get the projects moving. D. Fennell asked about the timeline for projects if POs are not cut within a reasonable amount of time – a year for example. The board agreed to leave this open to discretion this time. **All ayes.**

3. New Business:

- a. **Service Award Program:** Fire Department & EMS Services – J. Carroll is part of the Service Award Committee and they met recently, and three items arose during the meeting. K. Brennan recused himself from any discussion on this topic.

- J. Carroll continued; the first item when a Firefighter who collected the service award passed away, the family would typically want a lump sum payment and BHC was purchasing annuities to cover this lump sum payment. This piece is missing from the revised ordinance and the annuities are no longer being purchased.
- The old Ordinance designated the beneficiaries as spouse and then "dependent" children and then the estate. This language "dependent" was removed from the ordinance. Also, the members were handed beneficiary forms and completing them themselves as they saw fit when the proper beneficiaries are outlined in the ordinance.
- Finally, if we can no longer buy a single payment annuity for lump sum payments, and the fund is on a pay as you go basis will all those funds come out of Town's General Fund. An actuarial valuation will be needed to determine if the \$50,000 which is currently budgeted is enough to support the fund. J. Carroll noted that the BOF needs to truly look at this and we need to make sure we have enough money to do this. Is this the right program for BHC and for the Town?
- Our auditors have requested a GASB73 disclosure on the VFIS program which Finance is providing them for the 2021 audit. G. Smith added that McInnis will be administering the fund for the Town, as an HR firm with experience. Beacon Hose needs to be accountable for their piece as well, as the Town's HR costs will increase as a result of administering this for them. The Town needs to ensure the program is administered correctly as the Town is paying for the program.

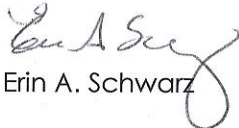
b. **Budget Transfers:**

- **For the Fire/Fire Marshal: Transfer \$975 from Building Maintenance 10.90.44.1435 and \$1850 from Fire Marshal Expenses 10.90.45.1527 to the Capital Project for the Fire Marshal Office Renovation 45.90.44.1011 for a total of \$2825. J. Carroll made a motion to approve the transfer. S. Leeper seconded the motion. All ayes.**
- **BOF Service Award program line – This transfer needs to be returned to the BOS for approval. The transfer is \$750 from Engineering & Consultants 10.90.33.1270 to 10.90.44.1500 for the Service Award program for the actuarial GASB73 study on the VFIS program. J. Carroll made a motion to approve the transfer and sent it back to BOS for approval. He added that this cost is part of the program costs, so**

it should be included in the Service Award line. **D. Fennell seconded the motion. T. Pratt, S. Leeper, J. Carroll and D. Fennell voted aye. K. Brennan abstained from this vote.**

- c. 2022 Meeting Calendar: **K. Brennan made a motion to accept the 2022 BOF meeting calendar. S. Leeper seconded the motion. All ayes.**
 - d. ARPA Fund spreadsheet – This page will be included in the Finance Manager report each month for review.
 - e. G. Smith added that he is happy to be back as First Selectman and looks forward to working together. To Steve Leeper, we will miss you. To Jim Carroll, welcome back and to Steve West welcome to the board.
4. **Adjournment: S. Leeper made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 PM. K. Brennan seconded the motion. All ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Erin A. Schwarz

Finance Office

TOWN OF BEACON FALLS FINANCIAL POLICY MANUAL



Addendum A Town of Beacon Falls Budget Transfer Request Form

Date: 10/20/2021

To: First Selectman & Board of Finance Chair

From: Fire/Fire Marshal

The undersigned respectfully requests that the following budgetary transfers be approved for Fiscal Year 2022.

	TRANSFER FROM	TRANSFER TO	AMOUNT OF TRANSFER
1.	Building Maintenance	Office Renovation Fire & Fire Marshal	
	<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Account Name</i>	
	10.90.44.1435	45.90.44.1011	\$ 975.00
	<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Account Number</i>	
2.	Fire Marshal - Expenses	Office Renovation Fire & Fire Marshal	
	<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Account Name</i>	
	10.90.45.1527	45.90.44.1011	\$ 1,850.00
	<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Account Number</i>	
3.			
	<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Account Name</i>	
			\$
	<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Account Number</i>	

Brief Explanation of the Purpose of the Transfer:

1. Increase of project scope to include painting of office walls (PO Increase request presented but not yet approved)
2. Increase of project scope to add replacement of flooring (PO Increase request approved)
3. _____

Requested by: 
Department Head Signature & Date

Approved by: _____
First Selectman Signature & Date

Approved by: _____
Board of Finance Chair Signature & Date

Transfer Completed: _____
Finance Manager Signature & Date

Comments: _____

TOWN OF BEACON FALLS FINANCIAL POLICY MANUAL



Addendum A Town of Beacon Falls Budget Transfer Request Form

Date: 10/14/21

To: First Selectman & Board of Finance Chair

From: Assistant to the Finance Manager

The undersigned respectfully requests that the following budgetary transfers be approved for Fiscal Year 2022.

	TRANSFER FROM	TRANSFER TO	AMOUNT OF TRANSFER
1.	Engineering & Consultants	Service Award Program	
	<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Account Name</i>	
	10.90.33.1290	10.90.44.1500	\$ 750.00
	<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Account Number</i>	
2.			
	<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Account Name</i>	
			\$
	<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Account Number</i>	
3.			
	<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Account Name</i>	
			\$
	<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Account Number</i>	

Brief Explanation of the Purpose of the Transfer:

1. The Town's auditing firm made staff aware that a GASB 73 disclosure would be required, which was unbudgeted.
2. _____
3. _____

Requested by: [Signature] 10/14/21
Fin Clerk Department Head Signature & Date

Approved by: _____
First Selectman Signature & Date

Approved by: _____
Board of Finance Chair Signature & Date

Transfer Completed: _____
Finance Manager Signature & Date

Comments: _____



Town of BEACON FALLS *Connecticut*

Board of Finance

November 4, 2021

The following Business meetings for the Board of Finance shall be held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month with the exception if noted with a (*). These meetings have been changed to follow the 3rd Tuesday in order to follow the Board of Selectman's Meeting. The location of the meetings held are in the large Assembly Room, located at 10 Maple Ave, in the Town Hall.

January 11, 2022

(*) February 15, 2022 (*)

(*) March 15, 2022 (*)

April 12, 2022

May 10, 2022

June 14, 2022

July 12, 2022

August 9, 2022

September 13, 2022

October 11, 2022

(*) November 15, 2022 (*)

December 13, 2022

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Pratt

Thomas Pratt

Chairman

Board of Finance