

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



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Regular VIRTUAL Monthly Meeting via TEAMS
January 11, 2022, 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, J. Carroll, W. Hopkinson, K. Brennan, D. Fennell (7:20 PM)

Members Absent: S. West

Public Present: Finance Manager N. Nau, Selectman Mike Krenesky, First Selectman G. Smith

2. **Comments from the Public:** No Public Present.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** J. Carroll made a motion to approve the December 14, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. W. Hopkinson seconded the motion. All ayes.
4. **Correspondence:** None.
5. **Reporting:**
 - a. Tax Collector Report – Revenue is strong. Supplemental taxes have been billed and total \$288,000 which is more than the budget for Supplemental taxes.
 - b. Treasurers Report - There is a General Fund difference which the Finance Office will sort out.
 - c. Town Clerk Report – The IQS report has been revised, as the Town Clerk is no longer receiving fees from collections as part of income. The Town Clerk position has changed from elected to appointed effective 1/1/2022, so the new salary is reflected in the budget and the recording fees will now be General Fund revenue, rather than payroll.
 - d. Region 16 Report – Expenditures through 12/31/21 were provided from their website. Their budget process is underway.
 - e. Ambulance Report – EMS report through November 2021. T. Pratt reviewed the report and EMS had over 800 calls last year. Payments to AMR have been reduced this year. EMS performed more calls and were paid more regularly this year. The collection agency collected some funds. Insurance and Medicare calls were paid. The daytime crew has been using the new EKG machines. The volunteers will begin using it in February. The units came in with modems and the machines are now working with the iPads. EMS is stretched thin throughout the Valley and often are called provide mutual aid. EMS has two new paid full-time people, and they are reviewing medical insurance options for these full timers.
6. First Selectman's Report:
 - a. Budget Transfers: There are 2 transfers which were approved by the BOS last night. The first is a \$19,999 transfer from Contingency to the 35 Wolfe Avenue Demolition project in Non-Recurring Capital Fund. NEWS LLC is the contractor being awarded the work, which is a price negotiated from the original RFP. They expect to be on site

in the next 2 weeks. The carriage house will remain standing for now and is not included in the price of demolition.

- b. The 2nd transfer is for Pistols for Police Officers: On the original quote, pistols which were being traded in which reduced the cost. The old pistols are now being purchased by the officers. Checks from the officers will be deposited back into the Private Duty Fund. The transfer is an appropriation from the Police Private Duty fund to allow for the increased expense.
- c. Capital Projects:
 - Fire Apparatus: Natasha met with the Fire Dept last week to finalize the details of the apparatus and she is working with the vendors on financing options. BHC is looking at a Pierce engine and a Marion tanker and the numbers are being researched and finalized. Package for the meeting reviewed and there is a difference between the original budget we received for the apparatus and the budgets that we are now working with. The process was disjointed but we are closer than we were last week to finalizing the purchase. There is a prepayment discount, trade in possibility for the tanker, demo options, etc. There are questions on elements of the bids. The Fire Department provided their process and commentary on why they are requesting the specifications that they have outlined. Prices will increase February 1st, so we are hoping to be ahead of this deadline.
 - N. Nau wants the Board to have solid numbers. The pumper is in line with the original budget from the Fire Dept. The tanker pricing is much higher than the proposed budget. The purchase should be solidified by the end of January, N. Nau will be working hard to get the questions answered. G. Smith noted that this process has been difficult, there are opportunities for improvement and BOS/BOF needs to be involved. The process was frustrating, and communication was a challenge. IN the future, the Finance Office will control the process so that we understand what is being provided. There will be no cushion remaining in the vehicle replacement fund with the financing needed for these vehicles. The original intention of the Vehicle Replacement Fund was to have an amount allocated to it annually, so that there is funding for future vehicle purchases.
 - Pent Road: G. Smith noted that the fencing is finished and SLR gave their seal of approval. We want to confirm in writing the guarantee from the fence company. There are some items which need to be finished, but the project is complete. T. Pratt wanted to ensure that the fence provided is what we ordered, and the engineer upon inspection has reviewed the material, and we did receive what we paid for. The packing slip is from Stevens Pipe & Steel and confirmed that it was 9-gauge fencing. The warranty will be validated by the said company and N. Nau is waiting for receipt and validation.
 - Generators: We are hoping for some movement on the generators as Cummins is scheduled to come out for review. If Cummins cannot improve their price this will go to RFP.
 - Burton Road Wall: The project will encompass the wall repair and the road from the base of Burton Road up to Highland Avenue. Final design is 70% done public to be view plans in the next 2 weeks.
 - Beacon Valley Road: Project is on hold for the winter, the drainage will be completed in the spring. The LOTCIP portion of the road is in the final stages of approval and will take place in the spring. The STEAP portion of the road should be done by mid-summer. For the LOTCIP portion, the Town is dealing with both DOT and NVCOG and we are at the mercy of the State's timeline.

The construction season will start in the spring, and we hope to move the LOTCIP piece of the project to move forward then.

- Beacon Valley Bridge is another project with LOCIB: The Army Corps of Engineers got their provisional permit and then, we are hoping within 4 weeks we can advertise the bridge. N. Nau noted if we advertise by Valentine's Day, close the RFP by March 15th, have a contract drawn up by mid-April, work can take place beginning in the spring, continuing through summer and fall.
- Cook Lane Drainage - This work is all done. Cocchiola will reclaim and pave the road in the spring.
- Matthies House - Work is completed.
- Station 2 – We have not received a response from the State yet. N. Nau sent them a proposal to take ownership of the building.
- WWTP – G, Smith noted that the digester project was woefully and inadequately designed and SLR has taken over the project and their new designs are nearly finished and they are working on getting parts for the upgrades for the electric project underway. There will be change orders for the digester project, and we are signing EESC under the State's Trade Labor Services contract to do the additional electrical work for digester. This will be \$21,000 worth of additional work for the project. The WWTP Superintendent has approved the plans. There will be a lot of additional costs, from all the vendors on this project, which will be coming out of the sewer fund totaling \$75,000-\$100,000.
- G, Smith continued that the WWTP Electrical project will come from bonded monies from both the 2016 and 2021 bond. T. Pratt asked about the WPCA role in these projects. G. Smith noted that they have some challenges with attendance, and they talk about getting involved and then they do not take any action. The digester project was designed as penny wise and pound foolish. We were expecting the WWTP operators to spearhead the project, which is not a prudent strategy. Going forward SLR will take the reins and they will be responsible for the entire project. The digester project was put together so poorly. WPCA's charge in this is unclear. We hope that Boards & commissions will go back to in person meetings in February. G. Smith would like to make corrections needed with this board.
- Burton Road – T. Pratt asked when the road will be open to the public? G. Smith hopes that it will be completed a year from now, early winter 2022. Work will start in the spring and then continue through the Fall/Winter 2022.

7. Finance Manager's Report

- a. Financial Accounting Software: N. Nau noted that Finance is continuing collaborating with the developer on the Asset Trax software and we are getting closer to producing reporting.
- b. Interns: Street Logix is another software which will be updated as an intern project.
- c. The Cyberinsurance policy will be renewed in February, and we are not bidding propane at present.
- d. ARPA Guidance has developed Final Rule. The Final Rule is effective 4/1/2022 and not too much has changed to the areas where the ARPA funds can be used, except that the parameters are less restrictive. There is more flexibility with water and sewer. Our projects are construction driven and with spring, the water/stormwater projects will move forward.
- e. Procurement/Contracts: RFQ 21-4: Professional Engineering Services – Contract for \$100k being reviewed by First Selectman for account code(s) selection.

- f. SCBA Air Compressor (21-5): Air Compressor Engineering LLC selected. Air Compressor engineering will be delivering a compressor next week and within 3-4 weeks they will have a working compressor.
- g. Budget SharePoint Site has launched for the FY2023 Budget. Departments are returning their operating and capital projects by the end of January. The Budget workshops will kick off in February.
- h. Turning to the EE&A and Micro fund reporting: Revenue is strong and on track and expenditures are in line. There are several lines to monitor which are noted for the BOF and we are tracking those expenditures closely.
- i. Capital Projects: Many of the projects were covered in the First Selectman's reporting. N. Nau provided a progress listing on all capital projects and will continue to provide detailed updates each month.
 - The Revaluation is on point to wrap up and the reval company went through multiple appeals hearings this month.
 - The equipment trailer will be delivered soon.
- j. Grants:
 - Main Street Connectivity – Last year the town used a TPA Design Group study to apply for a \$600,000 grant for Main Street improvements, which was declined. The State's Connectivity Grant representative reached out to N. Nau personally and asked if the Town was ready to hit the ground running with this grant. This is a positive sign for the grant application this year. The project would improve appearances on Main Street, as you enter Town.
 - AFG/VFA Apparatus Grant: The AFG Grant was extended, so N. Nau will submit this \$70000 application for spreaders and rams next month.
 - K. Matthies – The new Benches were delivered and will be paying the vendor.
 - Ambulance – We expect a proposal from the Fire Dept. to pay off the ambulance next year or earlier.
 - ARPA Grant – Finance has provided an Expenditures report showing disbursements for the EKG machines and for Cook Lane Drainage work.

8. Old Business:

- a. Finance Policy Manual – No revisions this month. N. Nau is developing a section to encourage people to communicate grant applications before they put it in. It will clearly state that Finance should be aware of grants submitted. While we appreciate departments seeking out grants and even taking the lead on applications, the Finance Department needs to be aware of all applications. J. Carroll noted that it should never happen that a grant is applied for without our knowledge. Finance is happy to support the departments, and just needs to be informed. J. Carroll and T. Pratt reiterated that the authority to sign a grant application on behalf of the Town should be only with N. Nau and G. Smith.
- b. VFIS Service Award Program – We have no updates this month to the review of this program. J. Carroll will discuss with Finance.

9. New Business:

- a. **Budget Transfers:** J. Carroll made a motion to transfer \$19,999 from Contingency to Non-Recurring Capital Projects for the demolition of Wolfe Ave D. Fennell seconded the motion. All ayes. J. Carroll made a motion to appropriate an additional \$4550 from the Police Private Duty Fund for the purchase of Police Pistols, with the understanding that monies received from the purchase of the older pistols will be received back to the Police Private Duty Fund. D. Fennell seconded the motion. All ayes.

- b. FY2023 Budget: The SharePoint site was launched for all departments and the first Budget workshop which is a high-level overview will be on 2/8/2022. T. Pratt and J. Carroll noted that from the public's perspective it will be important to note where items are increasing in the budget that the Town does not have control over. Debt service, Region 16, other mandates, will be important to point out. With the revaluation, J. Carroll noted that we need to be very clear in communicating budget increases for the next fiscal year.
 - c. M. Krenesky added that he is waiting to hear back from the State registry of Historic place on Matthies Park. The nomination package was completed and there will be a site visit to the park.
10. **Adjournment: Carroll made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 PM. K. Brennan seconded the motion. All ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz

Finance Office