

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



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
and BOARD OF FINANCE
Budget Workshop
April 27, 2021
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)**

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Tom Pratt called the workshop to order for the BOF at 7:02P.M.

Selectman Bielik called the workshop to order for BOS at 7:03 P.M.

Members Present: Gerard Smith (GS), Mike Krenesky (MK), Chris Bielik (CB), Jim Carroll (JC), Kyle Brennan (KB), Steve Leeper (SL), Tom Pratt (TP), Wendy Hopkinson (WH)

Others Present: Natasha Nau (NN), Erin Schwarz (ES), Laura DeGeorge (LD), Brian DeGeorge (BD), Mark LaFortune- Naugatuck YMCA, Steve Moffat(SM), Robert Egan (BE), 2 Members of the public

Others Absent: Dalton Fennell (DF)

- 2. Public Works –** TP spoke to road foreman and brought him up to speed. Our budget and the way we are doing the line items has changed and we did not want them to be shocked. We just wanted to make sure they understood the line items.
- 3. Fire Department – Budget Discussion re: suspension –** TP - in the packets a couple issues arise, Suspension with BH7 which was lightly touched on previously, so we have invited the Fire Chief back to discuss the status further and discuss changes to Station 2. NN – this is something that was not in the capital list, so it is something that we must add. We discussed it in the summer, but it did not make to the list. BD – we have been having issues with the suspension this is the 2012 ambulance. The issues now is that the remount company is out of business. We did have it worked on and it got better so we tried to talk about how long we could stretch it out for. The remount was a savings at the time. The fix to it is to put a fluid suspension in which is now the normal versus the air ride. The numbers are from the last time we discussed replacing the suspension. It does need other routine maintenance. Is it worth putting money into it or do we cut our losses? GS -what is the total cost of work without the suspension. TP – about \$7,000. GS – when we receive the reimbursement from insurance company, and the loan that we have already taken out on the new unit, we had to make 3 payments right? NN – it is not until this coming January. We must make the payment and then we can pay it off. GS – it would be fiscally irresponsible to put all that work in the suspension if we are going to get rid of it in the next year or so. I think we do the work that we need, do not replace the suspension, because we are getting a new one because this would be 10 years old. BD – that was

confusion too. That is a 2012 now so it is due next year. If we do the suspension, we could add another 3 years so that every 5 years would be a new ambulance. GS – it will be 10 years old next budget cycle. BD – we are going to be bundled up on replacement in the future. TP – what is the feedback you get from people in the back working on patients. BD – there are no positive remarks. Unfortunately, the way it is made you cannot get a soft ride, it is hard. When it is a comfort style patient, it is uncomfortable.

Station 2 – BD - This is a project that we have been working on little by little. This is a complete project cost of a complete conversion of that building. We have a meeting room, fitness area and then 3 bay storage for apparatus. NN – the budget increased in FY21 bringing the total to \$15,250. The scope has now changed. TP – can you tell us what has changed? BD – they were talking about leaving the concrete walls, filling in the intersection and connecting it but the concrete vendor said it would cost more. It is basically connecting that building to the other main portion of the building. NN – is it turning into more of a joining of the two buildings? BD – yes. TP – originally it started at one price and it keeps escalating, obviously they do not have enough money to do it now. I do not believe this cost includes an architectural drawing. NN – part of this presentation to the State which would include drawings, project description etc. we are asking for permission to proceed with the project, and they gave us a right of way but now the State would have a right of way to the building. They have indicated that the State would be open to receiving this request. They could always say no, State retains ownership. In that case, putting this money into a building we do not own is not advisable, we would wait to move forward until we have that permission. BD – we do not need this done right away; we have been waiting a few years now. NN – but we would still have to increase the line by \$31,000.

KB – with the capital, you and Cal presented a vehicle replacement plan and the plan we have in place is less money, is this plan ok to start with? BD – is it seeding it with \$115,000 and the first year would be \$230,000? NN – the idea is that you would finance the first payment of the Engine and then basically start the fund/payment on the next payment on that Engine or the next apparatus that you need. BD – so that is seeding at \$115,000 and having a payment. NN – yes unless we buy outright. BD – we can plan for it to work but we are trying to get us on track with other things we have. Engines are coming up for replacement. We have a short period of time to get on track. We are an advocate for replacing the Engine with an Engine and an Engine/Tanker split. After the replacement of those two, the next replacement is the Ariel. Seeding it for that period is just giving us a longer time to seed that replacement. After this short stint, we have a long wait before vehicles will need to be replaced. TP – class A pumper, what do we have in town? BD – Engine 3 is our class A for 4 more years. It is a 1999. TP – so, without having two Class A pumpers are we at risk? BD – your ISO will be less. TP – what would happen if a transmission etc. went in that pumper? Not replacing could put us in a bad position, could it not? BD – Engine 3 was out of service and Engine 2 is a 1995 and is our back up. It is clunky and is our primary truck and primary for mutual aid. A single source truck is a better way to go. TP – these are off the production line? BD – yes, you can buy them in production. I think if we do not replace these two trucks now, I am not sure how we are going to get on track. If we do them now, we can make a payment on those trucks work and stretch it out over a 6-year period. NN – we do have a lot of hydrants, what is the protocol for tanker operation? BD – mutual aid is something that is in your addition fleet,

not relying on other communities. BD – I believe that the plan we put in place, is the minimal that we would like to see and if it does not work out that way, it is not the way we want to operate as a company. GS – Could you make the \$115,000 and the \$115,000 work thought? BD – I think we can do the initial \$115,000. GS - The challenge is the big \$415,000 up front and the \$115,000 is a good way to proceed and to continue the conversation as we move forward. I am glad to hear you can work with how we presented it with the \$115,000 and continuing the conversation. ES – Brian is talking about leasing two more vehicles. We currently have a lease on a plow truck, ambulance, and another ambulance next year. We are bonding in December and we could include the vehicles under that, for a shorter term. We could explore that, and it becomes part of our debt services rather than having 5 open leases with various terms.

MK – whatever equipment we need needs to be bought for Beacon Falls, not mutual aid. We spend a lot of time on mutual aid. We need to be able to explain that further at the public hearing. BD – nothing is bought for mutual aid. MK – I understand that, but that is what some residents may think, because we do a lot of mutual aid. BD – only our Class A pumper goes out of town. If we did have another pumper that goes mutual aid, that means we would still have a Class A pumper here in town. BD – what is the situation with the air compressor if it is not funded via grant money. TP – if we do not get the grant the BOS/BOF will have to pay for it. TP – regardless, you will have a compressor. NN – They are supposed to start notification this month. CB- page 22 of the package, provides other funding sources if the grant does not come through. BD – I appreciate everything, and we came in with a hefty budget. I feel like we are moving forward.

4. **Park & Recreation – Naugatuck Valley YMCA Mark LaFortune** – Mark - I have been talking with Tom over the last few months. I grew up in Beacon Falls and have taken place in some of the programs growing up. I am looking to try and help your Park & Recreation Program to figure out youth programing etc. What I propose, is how can Beacon Falls use the YMCA to provide programs and activities to the youth of Beacon Falls. Why can't we work together in having these programs? There are a lot of things we can do. It is not to benefit the YMCA, but I want to see the Town flourish and the families and kids have opportunities. We can do programs for cheaper than bringing in outside vendors. TP – the value with Mark and the YMCA is that the programs are licensed, the instructors are certified. Mark – insurance wise, if we are running the program, we are covering it. We would use your schools and parks, but we cover it. I can get you all information and we can collect all fees etc. There are many cool things we can do and work together on. TP – we do have a summer program but, in the future, we could have you assist with enhancing that program. GS – so the Park and Recreation would be offering programs and those would be administered through the YMCA and the charges would be collected through the YMCA. So, we would just need to provide a liaison to bridge the programs between the Town and the YMCA. Mark – coming off the pandemic, I want to see kids back out in programs and activities. We also have a financial aid bucket, to assist families who may not be able to afford a program. GS – it would be great for both organizations to let them know we are working together. TP – the YMCA has done something with the Region too. Mark – we have a Campership Fund, and we can send kids to camp with that money. In the past, it was lumped in with financial aid. This year, we gave the schools 20 Campership slots and told them to pick the kids and families and we would send them to our camp. We are opening internship programs with the high

school and just received a grant for electronics and during the pandemic, we saw that kids had a difficult time using those items. We are getting 12 iPads that we will teach them how to use. GS – is there a financial component from the town? Mark – we could work that out. I do not know how much staff time etc. it would take. As things move along, there may be no cost. My thing is that if you want to subsidize families and make programs cheaper, we can work together for the families. At the end of the day, we want to work with the town. BE – I think we should discuss this more. GS- I think it would be great for BE to meet and discuss moving forward with the YMCA. LD – I think this is great. Those programs offered by the YMCA should be brought into town for children. GS – you can come and do the programs in Town or at the YMCA? Mark – yes, the opportunities are endless. NN – the revenue that you bring in, that would pay your staff? Mark – I would need to figure that out. In 2020, we had almost no programs but still provided \$60,000 in financial assistance. At the end of the day, the more programs the more families we can provide aid too. I would work with you on an agreement that is best for the both of us. SM– I think it is nice to be able to work with them and great to get together. MK – I am in favor and I do not know why it was not done decades ago.

5. **Budget – Discussion & Action** - GS – there are a couple of things that I did add. I am proposing to put a line item in the Finance Department and Land Use Coordinator line item to add a line item for Overtime. I am throwing a lot of work at departments and there is overtime that get incurred. I want to be able to comfortably tell staff to finish any tasks. I am asking a lot of our staff and there are just not enough hours of the day. They are willing to take on the extra time to do it and no one works overtime without asking. We are getting a stellar performance from all staff. TP – I think that aligns with other departments. GS – Non-Reoccurring Capital – we discussed some repairs and Matthies Park is such a large expense and we do not put much out there, and we are discussing the island house, and I propose we put \$5,000 towards the repairs of the house. Also, I am proposing \$5,000 for the Rimmon Hill School house as well. We have surveyed the land, but we have no money to make the next steps. Selectman Krenesky has been good about exploring some historical grant fund options.

TP - the BOF worked on some Wages, the proposed wages after election – 1st Selectman would increase to \$62,000, and the other two Selectmen would increase to \$13,750. Treasurer would increase to \$13,750, Register of Voters – Selectman Krenesky recused himself from this part of the discussion. TP - we had a lengthy discussion regarding Registrar of Voters and the outcome was basing it on 10 hours for both at \$22.00 per hour on election day or if there is a primary. We would be putting money in almost like a wage overtime. We have reviewed the pays around us, and we are around 70% higher. We do offer something other towns do not and that is the evening registration for voters. Obviously, every year we must review this. The other things is under Non-reoccurring Capital is that the EMD came in with recommendation about generator on Rimmon Hill Tower. I discussed the propane tank placement with the Fire Marshal and reached out to Region 16 to see if anyone contacted them re: the generator.

NN – Pilot and ECS grant funding changed. It was an effect of about \$38,000. ES – this is all government proposed so we are still waiting on final numbers.

TP – Natasha and I did talk, and I think we are going to reduce the Main Street improvements from \$600,000 to about \$400,000. NN – we did change that and still do not have refined numbers for the Public Works Garage/Transfer Station Project. TP – when the

road foreman was in, I asked him to take the plans to the Engineer. NN – I do not think it went as far as a task order. GS – Paul looked at that number and he thought it was significantly higher. I think it was close to \$400,000. NN – has anyone heard on the new garage at Pent Road.? TP – we discussed enclosing the older pavilion into a cold storage shed area. We will be far under the \$100,000. NN – the transfer station renewal needs to start soon. MK – I was approached a few weeks ago about the Boy Scouts interest in renovating that area as a project. NN – on the screen are other Police items, we still do not have a final price for the holsters because the new pistols do not fit the current ones. In other news, the roof came in cheaper. The original quote was not a state contract provider and we saved about \$3,000 by using a State approved provider.

TP – the other project in the packet is the alarm systems in the town buildings. There are actual emails attached. I reached out to the alarm company doing the police station and I think it is American Total Protection out of Hamden. Their installer came out, went through buildings and those are all broken down. NN – we have \$21,500 and this quote is over \$46,000 not including the monitoring. TP – two areas we would need to address sooner is the Senior Center and the Public Works building. NN – there is the investment and then the monthly monitoring. TP – they would set up cameras on the corners of the maintenance garage, to monitor the parking lot and baseball fields and pavilion area and view it by CCTV. Instead of having phone lines it would be cellular. They recommend using Verizon and that is where all the signal comes from. TP – the elevator in Town Hall does not have a call box, however this company cannot cover that. Believe it or not, Town Hall is only two stories, technically it does not need a fire alarm, but I am thinking about the people inside of the building. The Deputy Fire Marshal reviewed this, and we may need to pay additional for some of these buildings that may have to have plans completed. Finally, we do not have a price yet, but an electrician came through all buildings except Town Hall, to review emergency lighting. There is not a drastic cost, but we can buy the items at a wholesale price and the electrician will do the install, there is no problem with that, and we will meet code. NN – the capital implication for this budget year would be to add about \$20,000 to this line item. TP – regarding the lamp posts downtown, there is an additional cost for adding the platform base. I am thinking about conserving them down the road. We have already powder coated them once. They are out in the weather elements. I think it is important that we maintain them now, versus replacing them sooner than we have too. KB – I agree with the maintenance and upkeep but the \$10,000 is a hard one for me to justify on a base.

KB - When public works presented capital, they listed the town garage, ramp project as a middle priority at \$100,000 and we have it as \$300,000, can you explain? NN – that was a ballpark from years ago, there is additional engineering involved and the cost of the permit renewal is between \$8,000-\$10,000. We were trying to think of all of those costs, and I do not think it is enough. The canopy is supposed to cover to protect storm water. The canopy is what drove the change. The parking lot is also included.

KB – does this mean we are going to commit to a new building there? What is the future of the property if we are going to invest in over \$300,000? TP – I would say one of the biggest problems there is storage, so having a cold storage, secured site, that would help. NN – as of right now, we cannot apply for the permit process, we would fail, so it is important to have the components in place.

KB – it seems like the Chief indicated that the \$115,000 and \$115,000 will work for him so long as that \$115,000 seed is not stashed where he cannot touch it for 5 years. TP – my concern is that we are talking about almost \$1million. I do not know if we should be leasing anymore vehicles. How are we going to secure \$1M for apparatus and continue projects that we have? NN – the number of leases does not concern me, the ariel apparatus would be a great bond item because of the amount. ES – the vehicle costs provided not including interest, additionally as we lease vehicles, are Non-Reoccurring Capital will start at \$200K prior to projects. GS – my concern with bonding is if we are going to continue the road repair program, you are talking more bonding and larger. Just to do the hill section, you are talking sidewalks, sewers and there is no LOTCIP for that. I would like to talk to Pullman about what our better play would be and how our rating would be affected if we bonded more. NN – at our current levels, they were not concerned.

CB – regarding the Registrars, Selectman Krenesky recused himself. I propose a salary increase to \$13,750 and having the bonus would more accurately reflect their duties. It is a tiny amount of money but from a morale perspective, it is money well spent.

WH- did anyone present on the Senior Center? I saw there was a PT position that was newly added. Is it the same as the rec? Can you explain the reasoning? TP – the rec is separate and was in last year's budget, so that is a carry over. The Senior Center is new. GS – with COVID we did not fill the Park & Rec. department. The nice thing about the YMCA is that program could bring activities to both Park & Recreation and the Seniors, therefore those line items could go to any costs of those programs. TP – we do have to sit down and talk numbers with the YMCA. GS – yes, and I think we need some sort of Liaison from the Town to support both. We should update our current packet, so that we can review things at next week's workshop, and I will speak to the Fire Chief for more clarification on the \$115,000.

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn BOS at 9:06 P.M. CB/MK, all ayes.

Motion to adjourn BOF at 9:06 P.M. JC/SL, all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry McAndrew

First Selectman's Office Administrator/Clerk