

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



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
February 15, 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, W. Hopkinson, K. Brennan, D. Fennell, S. West (7:05 PM)

Members Absent: J. Carroll

Public Present: Finance Manager N. Nau, Selectman Mike Krenesky, First Selectman G. Smith, Selectman P. Betkoski (7:05 PM),

2. **Comments from the Public:** No Public Present.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** K. Brennan made a motion to approve the January 11, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. D. Fennell seconded the motion. All ayes.
4. **Correspondence:** None at this time.
5. **Reporting:**
  - a. Tax Collector Report – J. Bilsky provided a letter from the Town Attorney regarding requesting a donation to the Melbourne Scholarship fund on tax bills and the addition will require an ordinance to allow Melbourne solicitation. The town will need some time to put the ordinance in place, so discussion surrounded the timing of the addition to the tax bills. The scholarship can be funded at the \$250.00 level for 2022 and 2023, so there is time to get the changes finalized and on tax bills in 2023. January tax collections were strong and on track.
  - b. Treasurers Report – The General Fund difference from November and December has been resolved, as it was an issue with payroll entries coming over from the payroll system.
  - c. Town Clerk Report – The January report was revised to reflect the new structure of the Town Clerk position. The Town Clerk payroll was eliminated. There are 3 accounts which categorized as Town Clerk revenue; MERS, LOCIP and Historic Preservation, which are for the Town Clerk fund and use.
  - d. Region 16 Report – Expenditures through 1/2022 were obtained from their website. T. Di Leone provided the balance of the Non-Recurring Capital Fund of Region 16. There was a \$781,000 balance in Non-Recurring Capital at the end of July 2021. W. Hopkinson and T. Pratt would like to have this amount updated through December 2021. Have any new projects or use of these funds been approved by the BOE since July 2021. W. Hopkinson asked if the report could be broken down by fiscal year. N. Nau will follow up with Region 16 for updated information on Non-Recurring Capital.
  - e. Ambulance Report – For 2021 there were 64 calls which were written off and over 40 out of town calls were written off. AMR only did 5.2% of those calls, which is fewer calls. K. Brennan noted that BHC members are working without a medic more

frequently, as they gain experience and feel more comfortable handling calls themselves. BHC waits about 3 years before they write off calls.

6. First Selectman's Report:

- a. Budget Transfers: There are 3 transfers which were approved by the BOS. The first is a \$19,999 transfer from EDC Marketing to 10.90.33.1270 Legal Fees for the MOU for the O&G Data Center legal work. EDC has not hired a marketing Consultant, so these funds have not been spent. G. Smith noted that the town needs specialized counsel for the O&G negotiations and the project represents economic development for the town. There is a \$3,000 transfer from PT Patrol to FT Patrol, due to the promotion of a FT officer to a Corporal position. The promotion results in a pay increase and the transfer will cover the increase through the end of the fiscal year. There is a \$1500 transfer from Minibus Wages to Minibus Gas & Maintenance for new tires and additional oil changes, increased costs for gas.
- b. Police Department: G. Smith noted that there are other changes being made to the Police Department. Regarding the entrance to the Station, the plan is to leave the outside door unlocked, so people can enter the building, put a phone for people to call into the office, and bulletproof glass will be installed. There will be an officer at the window and the admin assistant will also be visible. The restructure should increase the PD's level of accountability and accessibility to the public. G. Smith also wants to have every shift filled. Beacon Falls is \$5.00/hour below the pay rate of surrounding towns for the Part Time officers. G. Smith noted that his goal would be to hire 5 more officers and raise their pay rates.
- c. **K. Brennan made a motion to approve all 3 transfers, as presented. D. Fennell seconded the motion. All ayes.**
- d. Capital Projects: N. Nau will cover the capital projects in her report.
- e. Burton Road Wall: G. Smith noted that design plans have been moved to the NVCOG for their 70% review and third-party review, then it moves to DOT for final review. We are hoping for spring construction and G. Smith is working on plans to show the public to show what the road will look like. The road will have sidewalks to Highland Avenue. T. Pratt asked for a timeline on completion and G. Smith stated the project will be substantially underway by the end of the year.
- f. Beacon Valley Road: G. Smith explained that Beacon Valley Road is set up in 3 phases and T. Pratt would like to define the phases, so that people understand when the project will be completed.
  - There is the Bridge phase; N. Nau is writing the RFP now, which will be submitted to the State for review. We are dealing with NVCOG, Local Bridge and DOT for this project, and with each agency involved, this slows down the approval process. The bridge work will be bid soon with work beginning during this spring/summer.
  - Phase 2 is the drainage piece of Beacon Valley, which is underway with Grasso Engineering that started in the Fall. Phase 2 drainage should be resolved by August. This is the STEAP grant portion of the road, and it will begin again this spring.
  - Phase 3 is the end of the road from the condos to the Naugatuck line and this is a LOTCIP Grant. The engineer for this piece of the road now needs to do a drainage survey. The State is dictating how the project will move forward, and easements were needed which complicated the process. The State is understaffed, and the projects rely on signatures from DOT. Also, because the State is providing the funds, DOT wants it to be a 15-year road, and this slows the approval process. All the delays are looking out for the Town, so that the road is done correctly and will last a longer time. The State now wants to relocate all the catch basins on one side of Beacon Valley. The NVCOG has

a set of guidelines from the State which they must adhere to. P. Betkoski asked if our engineers say the plans are good enough and G. Smith explained that NVCOG conducts a third-party review of the plans, so the project meets DOT standards. Then, the State does a full review.

- In short, Grasso will be done this summer, the Bridge should be done by the end of the year, and the final section will begin this year and end in 2023.
- g. Cook Lane Drainage - This work is all done. Cocchiola will reclaim and pave the road in the spring. There are a couple of catch basin tops which Public Works will replace after the street is graded. G. Smith is hoping it will be done by May.
- h. Dolly Drive & Patricia Terrace will be the next project underway in the spring.
- i. Station 2: The State responded to N. Nau, so she will provide the update.
- j. Wolfe Ave: Abatement is just about done, and they are now pulling permits for the demolition of the building. The building should come down in early March. G. Smith currently does not have plans for the site.
- k. WWTP: The digester project has been painful, and we have been working on it since 2018. G. Smith will be reviewing change orders for Philadelphia Mixing Solutions for the mixer. The prior engineer did not address the beams properly, the tank cover did not fit. The change orders total \$247,000, and there is \$250,000 budgeted for the project now, so the project is now \$500,000. There are support beams and baffles to make the mixer work properly, OSHA guidelines for safety handrails and guardrails. This was all overlooked by the last engineering. N. Nau noted that procurement is so important for these projects, so that they are bid properly. Kovacs Construction will need cranes and rental equipment to get their work completed. The project is doubling in size. The digester will need to be cleaned again. A memo will go to the WPCA, and we have been using the SWWT Fund to date. We can utilize ARPA funds, and we need to determine how much of the ARPA funds to dedicate to this project. It will be a decision point very soon. The saving grace will be that will bring the operating costs down once it is completed and it is a step in the upgrade of the plant. It was not engineered properly, and with SLR as the new engineer, they have turned over every leaf to get the project to move forward.

#### 7. Finance Manager's Report

- a. Financial Accounting Software: N. Nau noted we are continuing to move forward with Capital projects software. We are piloting Slate Pages for an asset tag system to label all the town's assets.
- b. Interns: Street Logix is another software which will be updated as an intern project.
- c. 2021 Audit: The 2021 Audit will be presented next month at the regular Board of Finance meeting.
- d. The Cyberinsurance policy has increased significantly, and the policy is expiring this month. N. Nau has quotes ranging from \$14,000 to \$34,000. The town's retention has increased to \$25,000 for \$1M in coverage. The entire cyber market is out of control right now and markets do not want to cover municipalities. W. Hopkinson asked if we participate in cyber training? N. Nau noted that DEMHS has provided a few licenses for guided trainings online and our IT provider has offered cyber training at a cost.
- e. Procurement/Contracts:
  - RFQ 21-4: Professional Engineering Services has been finalized.
  - SCBA Air Compressor (21-5): Air Compressor Engineering installed the new air compressor, and this work is complete.
- f. Pent Road: The court project is completed, and the fencing vendor has been paid. The engineer was satisfied, the warranty on the fence has been validated. The LOCIP grant will be closed out.

- g. Budget Workshop: 2/22/22 is the next workshop. G. Smith noted that the Police Department is seeking a new vehicle in this budget. They are looking at a pick-up truck rather than an SUV.
- 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:
  - Generator project: Estimate from Public Work and Fire on generator replacements is forthcoming. Service calls may be an issue with the vendor on the HGAC contract.
  - Excavator trailer has been delivered and added to the insurance policy.
  - The Revaluation is almost done.
  - Carport – On hold until spring
  - Vehicle Research – FY2023 budget
  - Engine & Tanker: All in the vehicles cost \$1.2M Gross, the net with discounts is \$1.1M and they are ultimately \$100,000 over budget. Pinnacle has almost finalized the performance bond and the financing is being completed. The truck that is being traded in has a trade in value of \$42,000. The Pierce engine was \$678,000 gross, with a \$42,000 trade in. The trade in condition was certified, however the trade in value is estimated, so there is potential to receive slightly less monies for the trade.
  - Town Hall Roof – Using State Contract pricing for the Town Hall roof which will be addressed this spring.
- j. Grants:
  - Main Street Connectivity – We received a \$600,000 grant for Main Street Connectivity improvements. There is a town match of \$200,000. The entire grant was from Rte. 42 South. G. Smith would like to make North Main Street a little better. G. Smith wants to connect North and South Main, and he is meeting with the engineer to give them a vision and make the connectivity to South Main. He would like to use bonded funds for our match and to expand the project to North Main. This will be mainly cosmetic, above ground work; sidewalks, etc.
  - Ambulance Financing – The current vehicle lease should be part of the FY2023 budget discussion.
  - AFG: N. Nau submitted an AFG grant for extrication equipment totaling \$67,000.
  - Fire Extinguisher Grant program: This is another FEMA grant which N. Nau is writing which will be submitted shortly.
  - Housatonic Valley Stream Crossing Grant: We received the study for the grant that we participated in. The research will be reviewed at an IWWC meeting, and the next phase of the grant will be design work, should we choose to participate in the next steps.
  - ARPA Grant – Finance has provided an Expenditures report showing disbursements for the EKG machines and for Cook Lane Drainage work.
  - Grand List: The Assessor provided the finalized Grand List data showing a new Grand List total of \$617M which represents a 22.5% increase.
  - Sludge Processing: This line item will be significantly overbudget and will require a Town meeting to complete the transfer needed to cover costs through year-end.

## **8. Old Business:**

- a. Finance Policy Manual – No revisions this month.

- b. VFIS Service Award Program – J. Carroll: No update this month.
- c. Master Fee Schedule: The Land Use boards, and Police Department are looking to restructure their fees, which will all require ordinance changes to proceed.

9. **New Business:**

- a. FY2023 Budget: The next meeting is 2/22/2022 @ Senior Center; This will be a round table discussion.
- b. T. Pratt would like to review the status of the Public Works truck: Public Works had 2 trucks that needed replacement at the same time. The Town replaced the oldest truck, but it wasn't the worst truck. He would like to know the condition of the oldest truck and how long it will last. Do we have the opportunity to apply for a DERA grant or VOX grant for truck replacement or will those grants be dedicated for EV projects this round?

10. **Adjournment: K. Brennan made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 PM. D. Fennell seconded the motion. All ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz

Finance Office