



BOARD OF FINANCE

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8501

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, November 9, 2010
7:00 p.m.

CJH Municipal Center - Meeting Room "A"

RECEIVED

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: J. Philip Gallagher, Chairman, John Dietter, William Kingston, William Slifkin, James Roden, Gary Regan and Timothy Draper. Also in attendance were First Selectman Knickerbocker and Comptroller Robert Kozlowski.

Call to order/Pledge of Allegiance: J. Philip Gallagher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by William Slifkin, to add to tonight's agenda, under New Business, Consideration of Annual Review of Elderly Tax Benefit program. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Presentation by Mike Guarco of the Connecticut Municipal Consortium for Fiscal Responsibility and consideration of endorsing the goals of their mission:

Michael Guarco, Jr. and George McLaughlin were present at tonight's meeting to share the mission of their organization and solicit support from the Board of Finance. They explained that the goals of the consortium are to solicit legislative change to the benefit of municipalities and taxpayers by raising the cost thresholds on prevailing wage, level the playing field in binding arbitration and prohibit new mandates until the legislature meets its own funding commitment for mandates already on the books.

William Kingston made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, to endorse the mission of the Connecticut Municipal Consortium for Fiscal Responsibility. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Public Comments

William Hillman, William Michaels, Robert Crnic, Frank Islip, Nany Ryan, Alice Hutchinson, Duncan Hume, Michael Duff, Donald Goodrich, Linda DeLeo, Michelle

Belansky, Ms. Monda, Richard Straiton, John Romano, Jenny Tesar, Joan Reynolds, Mary O'Leary, Ken Wales, Carolyn Blanch, Robert Burke, Robert Shriver, Letters - Robert Legnard, Daniel Spinella and David Olson.

Correspondence: None that was not already on the agenda.

Minutes of October 12, 2010: John Dietter made a motion, which was seconded by William Kingston, to approve the minutes of October 12, 2010 as presented. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. James Roden abstained from voting as he was not present at the meeting.

Chairman's Report: J. Philip Gallagher reiterated his concerns on possible reductions to ECS funding.

Comptroller's Report: Comptroller Robert Kozlowski advised that it appears that town ended the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2010 with approximately \$300,000 and that all anticipated revenues from various sources have been received.

Old Business

1.) Consideration of Road Renewal Plan (previously tabled)

J. Philip Gallagher advised that a canvas of Board of Finance members does not support the Board of Selectmen recommendation of the Road Renewal Plan.

J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, that in lieu of the current poor economic conditions both locally and statewide and the anticipated further loss of state educational cost sharing and other revenue, the Bethel Board of Finance remands to the Bethel Board of Selectmen, for further consideration and study, their \$8.5 Million Dollar Bond Proposal for road repair. Voting in favor of the motion: J. Philip Gallagher, John Dietter, William Slifkin and James Roden. Voting against the motion: William Kingston, Gary Regan and Timothy Draper. Motion passed.

Finance board members all echoed the same concerns as to the reason they would not support the Board of Selectmen recommendation to appropriate \$8,500,000 to fix 31 miles of our worst roads, i.e. questionable state revenue, cost of debt, overall economic uncertainty, etc.

First Selectman Knickerbocker requested the Board of Finance commit, at least on an advisory basis, an amount that they would commit to appropriating for road repair.

William Kingston made a motion, which was seconded by Gary Regan, to advise the Board of Selectmen, that the Board of Finance would commit to a \$2,000,000 appropriation. Timothy Draper amended the motion which was seconded by Gary Regan, to add an additional \$500,000 from the road construction account from the 2011-2012 budget, Timothy Draper withdrew his amendment and Gary Regan withdrew his second. Voting in favor of the motion: J. Philip Gallagher, John Dietter, William Kingston, Gary Regan and Timothy Draper. Voting against the motion: William Slifkin and James Roden. Motion passed.

First Selectman Knickerbocker will present this advisory motion to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance members agreed to hold a Special Meeting on October 18th to readdress the issue.

New Business:

1.) Consideration of Annual Review of Elderly Tax Benefit Program:

Tax Collector Ann Scacco presented the annual information to the Board of Finance, noting that the State did not raise the income guidelines. She pointed out that since this program began, and with the increases to the income limits, the program now costs the taxpayers of Bethel \$414,408 for 320 applicants, up from 292/\$354,962 the previous year; she noted that this is in addition to the benefits received from the State plan.

TABLES FOR FISCAL YEAR - JULY 1, 2011 TO JUNE 30, 2012

OVER	INCOME NOT EXCEEDING	CREDIT*
\$0	\$16,100.00	75%
\$16,101.00	\$21,700.00	60%
\$21,701.00	\$27,100.00	45%
\$27,101.00	\$32,300.00	30%
\$32,301.00	\$39,500.00	15%
\$39,501.00	\$48,000.00	10%

J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by William Slifkin that based on the Tax Collector's report, to leave the Elderly Tax Benefit program at the current income levels. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

2.) Consideration of Library Board Minutes and Salary transfers

William Slifkin expressed concern about the Library Board of Directors redirection of savings in the full time salaries to part-time salaries and wondered how much this was. Jane Bickford, Chairman of the Library Board of Directors was present and was requested to provide the Board of Finance, this information as well as information on the financials of the library, the fundraising efforts, project costs, etc. Board of Finance members also expressed concern that the Library spent the funds left in their account on June 30th instead of turning it back to the town.

3.) Consideration of budget information for 2011-1012 budget (w-2's & 1099's etc.)

James Roden made a motion, which was seconded by William Slifkin, to request from the Comptroller and the Board of Education, the W-2's, 1099 list, strategic student profile and related information that they would like for the budget process. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, William Slifkin made a motion, which was seconded by Gary Regan, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary