



# BOARD OF FINANCE

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

## MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, January 11, 2011  
7:00 p.m.

CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

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**PRESENT:** William Slifkin, Chairman, J. Philip Gallagher, John Dietter, William Kingston, James Roden and Timothy Draper. **Absent:** Gary Regan

**Call to order/Pledge of Allegiance:** William Slifkin called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Public Comments:** Jane Bickford – letter – attached, and Larry Craybas spoke

J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by Timothy Draper, to add to tonight’s agenda, Preliminary consideration of Old Town Hall. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**Minutes of December 14, 2011 Regular Meeting:** William Slifkin made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, to amend the minutes of December 14, 2011 to include a full copy of the Comptroller’s year end transfers for FY 2009-2010 (portions had been omitted from the December 14, 2010 minutes and to expand J. Philip Gallagher’s comments under Chairman’s Report to include “in the budget years from 2006 to 2010 the town had an average appropriation of \$507,010 which was more money than in any previous 5 year period in Bethel’s history”. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**Presentation - Economic Outreach Report:** Michael Boyle, Chairman of the Economic Outreach Committee gave a progress report on the activities of their commission. They have held several meetings and have created subcommittees established to explore, among other things, marketing products to promote what Bethel has to offer, improving detail as to current businesses, preparing a survey for existing businesses, website development, involvement with Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC), and many other tools. He spoke to the involvement of the marketing classes at the High

School; the students have proven to be a tremendous asset, utilizing their many skills to identify opportunities for the promotion of Bethel. Mr. Boyle did speak to the need for funding (in the future) for signage, a comprehensive survey and CERC participation.

**Chairman Report:** none

**Comptroller Report:** Comptroller Robert Kozlowski presented the monthly status report, noting that most accounts are on target. He did follow up on a previous Board of Finance request regarding asphalt and sales tax and advised that the town does not pay sales tax for our asphalt purchasing. He also noted that a CT town received a bond rating down grade due to a number of factors, one of which was that the town in question only funds about 35% of their pension obligation, Bethel, he noted, funds about 60-70%.

**Review of State D-9 information:** Comptroller Robert Kozlowski noted that not all information is back from the auditors; Board of Finance members agreed to discuss this report in more detail at the next meeting.

**Discussion of 2011-2012 Budget:**

Timothy Draper suggested that he would not only like to see a zero percent increase but also a five % decrease to budgets to find some savings for taxpayers. Others felt that that was too steep. J. Philip Gallagher reiterated his concerns over the unknown funding we will receive from the state.

John Dietter made a motion, which was seconded by James Roden, to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen, a recommendation that all town departments and Board of Education submit a zero percent increase to their budgets for FY 2011-2012. Voting in favor of the motion: J. Philip Gallagher, John Dietter, William Kingston, William Slifkin and James Roden. Voting against the motion: Timothy Draper. Motion passed.

**Consideration of recommendation from Board of Selectmen – Land Donation on Dodgingtown Road**

Town Counsel Martin J. Lawlor, Town Planner Steven Palmer and First Selectman Knickerbocker explained the history of this donation. The Board of Selectmen had recommended that the Town of Bethel accept the offer to obtain ownership of seven certain pieces or parcels of land currently owned by James Anthony Hoyt, Janet M. Hoyt and Walter E. Whitton Trustee located on northerly side of Dodgingtown Road,

containing 16.41 acres of land, more or less, with five parcels having an address known as Dodgingtown Road and two parcels having addresses of 110 Dodgingtown Road and 114 Dodgingtown Road respectively, collectively known as the "Dodgingtown Road Properties"; and, that this matter be referred to the Board of Finance for approval of the same pursuant to C6-4.C. of the Charter, with an anticipated Special Town Meeting date of Tuesday, February 15, 2011, if so approved by the Board of Finance.

The Board of Selectmen had also referred this pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes and C6-4.C of the Charter to the Planning & Zoning Commission for its comment and report.

Town Planner Steven Palmer spoke to the proactive benefit to the town by accepting this property and that Bethel can maintain control over it.

Town Counsel Martin J. Lawlor advised that a title search will reveal whether there are any encumbrances on the property and he noted that he is not aware of any restrictions to the property donation by the family.

William Kingston made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, to approve the Board of Selectmen recommendation on the Dodgingtown Road property. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

#### **Consideration of recommendation from Board of Selectmen – Old Hawleyville Road – Road Widening**

The Board of Selectmen has recommended that the Town of Bethel accept the offer to obtain ownership of a certain strip of land from Anna Franc, Sophia Shail, John Franc, Ambrose Franc, Jacob Franc and the Estate of Frank Franc located on easterly side of Old Hawleyville Road, commencing at the intersection of Old Hawleyville Road and Plumtrees Road and continuing south on Old Hawleyville Road, containing 9,791 Sq. Ft. plus or minus; and, that this matter be referred to the Board of Finance for approval of the same pursuant to C6-4.C of the Charter, with an anticipated Special Town Meeting date of Tuesday, February 15, 2011, if so approved by the Board of Finance.

Town Counsel Martin J. Lawlor offered that this donation has been time consuming in that there were a lot of family members involved as well as the Probate Court, but that all have come together to make this donation. This will allow Public Works to widen the roadway. Work will commence in the springtime to finish the project paid through ARRA

funds. James Roden requested Town Engineer Andrew Morosky provide the Board of Finance an accounting of the project finances.

J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, to approve the Board of Selectmen recommendation to accept the offer to obtain ownership of the land. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

### **Discussion of Old Town Hall**

After discussion, J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, that the Board of Finance would be opposed to tearing down the old town hall and instead would recommend selling the building "as-is". Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

### **Adjourn**

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, William Kingston made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "W" and "S".

Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary