

These minutes have not yet been approved.

Board of Finance

Town of Essex
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426
Via Remote & In Person- 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Thursday February 15, 2024

Members in Attendance:	Campbell Hudson, Chairman
	Mary-Louise Polo
	Ethan Goller
	Brian Weinstein
	Vincent Pacileo II
Others in Attendance:	Norman Needleman, First Selectman
	Jim Francis, Treasurer
	Tracey Celentano, Finance Director
	Danielle Schumacher, Board Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairman Campbell Hudson.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION made by Brian Weinstein to approve the agenda as submitted. **SECONDED** by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: REGULAR BOF MEETING ON JANUARY 18, 2024

MOTION made by Ethan Goller to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2024 Regular Board of Finance Meeting with the following amendments:

- Under New Business B&C- 4th change to "recruitment and retention tool"
Second scenario (attached actuarial)
- 2nd sentence under John Winthrop- "The R4 Board of Education is looking to reschedule."

SECONDED by Mary-Louise Polo. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

a. ESTIMATED JANUARY YTD UPDATE

REVENUES

The current tax collection results at the end of January is an early indicator of how our tax collections will finish the year. For FY 2024, January current property tax collections totaled \$7,158,643 which brings us to a collection rate of 94.40% and compares below prior fiscal years. Prior years' collection rates and interest and liens accounted for \$37.4K for the month.

% PROPERTY TAX REVENUE COLLECTED AS OF JANUARY 31, 2024



As of January month-end, the YTD total tax collections were \$23,937,228 or 94.72% of the fiscal year total compared to 95.17% as of January 2023 and 95.50% as of January 2022. February 2nd was the last day to pay without penalty and added another \$439K of tax collections versus \$333K prior year. State and Federal Revenue in January included the following: Education Grant (\$42.9K), Town Aid Road Grant (\$108K) and Early Voting Grant Funds (\$10.5K). Local revenues totaled \$86.4K in January and \$535K (97.60% collected) YTD, which is above prior three years. Conveyance Taxes and Building Permits continue to trend positively. As of the end of January, Conveyance Tax Fees and Building Permits have exceeded the full budget amount by \$69.4K and \$38.4K, respectively. Total revenues collected came in at 93.91% of budget versus 94.04% for January 2023 and 93.57% for January 2022 month end. These totals reflect the budgeted deficit amount of \$226,580.

EXPENDITURES

Expenditures for the month of January totaled \$2,263,414 bringing spending YTD to \$16,791,840 or 63.31% of budget. Selectmen's budget expenditures made up \$636,822 of the total spending. As of January month-end, the Selectmen's budget spending YTD is \$6,177,170 or 66.24% of budget compared to 67.23% as of January 2023 and 67.80% at January 2022 month-end. January expenditures include audit fees (\$17.5K), semi-annual Fire Department allocation (\$183.2K), and bond payment (\$27.4K).

GENERAL FUND

FY 2023-2024 – IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES/SAVINGS & RISKS/OVERRUNS (As of 1/31/2024)

Opportunities/Savings

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---|
| • Selectmen Office | \$75K +/- | Elected Payroll/Full Time Payroll Net |
| • Municipal Revenue Sharing Grant | \$102.6K | Not budgeted – did not expect to receive. |
| • Conveyance Taxes | \$85K +/- | Real Estate Activity |
| • Building Permits | \$50K +/- | |

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Risks/Overruns

- Animal Control \$18K +/- Regional ACO – Full Time Position
- Local PILOT \$16.4K Essex Place
- Budgeted Deficit \$226.6K
- Elections TBD Early Voting – Appropriation Request
- R4 Board of Education TBD

MOTION made by Vincent Paciello II. **SECONDED** by Brian Weinstein. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

b. AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) SUMMARY

Town of Essex American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Summary List of Projects

Project #	Description	Amount	First Selectman	BOS	BOF	Town Meeting	Amount Approved	Amount Spent	Balance O/S
1	Fire Department Coaching	\$35,000	x	5/19/2021	6/10/2021	7/21/2021	35,000.00	30,386.00	4,614.00
2	Police Vehicle	\$75,000	x	6/2/2021	6/10/2021	7/21/2021	75,000.00	68,913.66	6,086.34
3	Town Hall Antenna	\$25,000	x	6/21/2021	7/15/2021	7/21/2021	25,000.00	24,696.46	303.54
4	Shoreline Soup Kitchen	\$10,000	x	7/21/2021	8/19/2021	9/1/2021	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
5	Community Fire Safety Knoxbox	\$26,000	x	7/21/2021	8/19/2021	9/1/2021	26,000.00	16,592.28	9,407.72
6	Ambulance (New)	\$285,000	x	7/21/2021	8/19/2021	9/1/2021	360,000.00	341,536.84	18,463.16
		\$40,000	x	8/2/2023	8/17/2023	9/6/2023			
		\$35,000	x	10/25/2023	11/16/2023	11/20/2023			
7	Tri-Town Youth Services	\$39,820	x	12/1/2021	12/16/2021	1/5/2022	67,568.00	67,568.00	0.00
		\$27,748	x	4/12/2023	4/20/2023	5/3/2023			
8	Fire Rescue Vehicle	\$775,000	x	12/15/2021	12/16/2021	1/5/2022	775,000.00	775,000.00	0.00
9	Fire Marshal Vehicle	\$85,000	x	12/15/2021	12/16/2021	1/5/2022	85,000.00	84,921.77	78.23
10	Thatchbed Island	\$30,000	x	3/9/2022	3/24/2022	4/6/2022	70,000.00	54,435.54	15,564.46
		\$40,000	x	10/25/2023	10/25/2023	11/1/2023			
11	Essex Ambulance & Essex Fire Engine #1	\$10,000	x	5/5/2022	5/9/2022	n/a	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
12	Town Hall Meeting Rooms A & B	\$35,000	x	5/5/2022	5/9/2022	5/18/2022	35,000.00	34,322.27	677.73
13	Employee Premium Pay	\$13,750	x	5/5/2022	5/9/2022	7/6/2022	20,000.00	19,250.00	750.00
		\$6,250	x	5/18/2022	6/16/2022	7/6/2022			
14	Essex Veterans Memorial Hall	\$30,000	x	6/1/2022	6/16/2022	7/6/2022	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00
15	Estuary Council of Seniors	\$2,000	x	7/6/2022	8/8/2022	n/a	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
16	Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	\$10,000	x	8/3/2022	8/8/2022	n/a	10,000.00		10,000.00
17	Document Digitization Project - Land Use	\$65,000	x	8/3/2022	6/15/2022	10/5/2022	80,000.00	63,609.07	16,390.93
		\$15,000	x	9/20/2023	9/21/2023	10/4/2023			
18	Auditorium Technology Upgrade	\$20,000	x	9/7/2022	6/15/2022	10/5/2022	20,000.00	14,650.72	5,349.28
19	Social Services Assistance Fund	\$25,000	x	12/7/2022	12/15/2022	1/18/2023	25,000.00	25,000.00	0.00
20	Public Works Ground Maintenance - Trees	\$25,000	x	1/18/2023	1/19/2023	2/15/2023	75,000.00	43,600.00	31,400.00
		\$50,000	x	11/1/2023	11/16/2023	11/20/2023			
21	Novus One-Time Technology Projects	\$17,500	x	2/15/2023	2/16/2023	n/a	17,500.00	14,010.00	3,490.00
22	Police Department Technology	\$11,000	x	3/1/2023	3/16/2023	n/a	11,000.00	9,756.60	1,243.40
23	Transfer Station Wall Refacing	\$12,000	x	8/23/2023	9/21/2023	n/a	12,000.00	9,473.30	2,526.70
24	Public Safety Complex Study	\$50,000	x	1/3/2024	1/18/2024	2/7/2024	50,000.00		50,000.00
25	Land Use Multi-Function Printer	\$13,000	x	2/7/2024	2/15/2024	n/a			0.00
Funds Obligated		\$1,939,068					1,926,068.00	1,749,722.51	176,345.49
Total Funds Received		\$1,973,399							
Unused Funds		\$16,280							
Remaining Balance		\$50,610							

Finance Director Tracey Celentano said that the town is doing well obligating these funds in a timely manner. December 31, 2024 is the deadline for being obligated. The funds must be spent by 2026.

First Selectman Norman Needleman said that some of these things need to be completed. Am RFP will be distributed to hire an architect for the Public Safety Complex study. The goal is to complete the Document Digitization Project and Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations this Spring.

Vincent Pacileo II asked about the amount of the remaining funds so that we could redeploy them.

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Mr. Needleman said that if there are any funds left over, some can be applied to the work that needs to be done at the Centerbrook Meetinghouse.

5. SELECTMEN'S REPORT

First Selectman Norman Needleman said that the grand list has gone up 35%. The requests from the Tri-town Youth services, the Animal Control Officer, and Ambulance Association are significant. There is also going to be a budgetary number for the Centerbrook Meetinghouse. Ryan Welch and Mr. Needleman have been reviewing upcoming Road Maintenance and the Town may include Road Maintenance in the next bonding opportunity. The Town has 2 to 4 roads that need a major rebuild.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. JOHN WINTHROP UPDATE

The minutes from the February 6, 2024 Board of Education Special Meeting were included in the packet.

The two options presented by Arcadis were:

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
HVAC / Controls	\$1,000,000	Not included
Dehumidification Services	\$325,000	Not included
New Insulation & Ceiling Tiles	\$1,327,000	\$1,327,000
Demo & Abatement	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
General Conditions	\$824,350	\$824,350
HARD COSTS	\$4,476,350	\$3,151,350
PM & Engineering Fees	\$783,361	\$695,000
Owner's Contingencies	\$447,635	\$496,500
Escalation	\$111,909	\$82,500
TOTAL COSTS - Rounded	\$5,800,000	\$4,500,000

There was a vote to schedule a District Meeting and Public Hearing on February 21st at Valley Regional to discuss option number 1.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. ARPA REQUEST – LAND USE MULTI-FUNCTION PRINTER

This is a request to replace the current printer, which is 12 years old.

MOTION made by Vincent Pacileo II to approve and recommend an appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$13,000 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds to be used to

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acquire a multi-function printer and related supplies for the Land Use Department. **SECONDED** by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

b. APPROPRIATION – REGISTRAR BUDGET

First Selectman Norman Needleman said that this is an estimate for the increased costs due to Early Voting requirements. Next year's budget will include a significant increase for the registrar.

MOTION made by Mary-Louise Polo to approve and recommend a fiscal year 2023-2024 supplemental appropriation for \$10,000 to be allocated to Elections to offset the costs associated with the Early Voting in Connection Elections and Primaries. **SECONDED** by Brian Weinstein. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

No communications and correspondence

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION made by Vincent Pacileo II to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM. **SECONDED** by Brian Weinstein. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Schumacher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.