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## Board of Finance

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

### MINUTES

Wednesday April 3, 2024

<b>Members in Attendance:</b>	Campbell Hudson, Chairman
	Terry Stewart
	Vincent Pacileo III
	Ethan Goller
	Mary-Louise Polo
	Brian Weinstein
<b>Others in Attendance:</b>	Norman Needleman, First Selectman
	Tracey Celentano, Finance Director
	Kelly Sterner
	James Francis, Treasurer
	Brian White, Region 4 Superintendent
	Robert Grissom, Region 4 Finance Director
	Lon Seidman, Essex Board of Education Chair

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Campbell Hudson

#### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

***MOTION made by Terry Stewart to approve with the following amendments: 7. JWMS Mold Remediation Building Committee, 8. ARPA Request Mack Lane Dock and modify Adjournment to be #9. Seconded by Brian Weinstein. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

#### 3. 2024-2025 ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET PRESENTATION

Essex Board of Education Chairman Lon Seidman presented the budget to the Board.

The proposed Essex Board of Education 2024-2025 budget shows a \$367,504 or 4.39% increase. Expenses per pupil total \$28,244 versus \$27,330, which reflects a 3.34% increase.

Most of the budget increase is for Essex Elementary School's share of Supervision District, which reflects an increase of \$348,002 or 13.63% from the 2023-2024 budget. Supervision District budgetary proposals included Pre-K expansion, the position of a Facilities Director, and Facilities Master Planning.

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#### **4. 2024-2025 SELECTMEN'S BUDGET AND BOE BUDGET APPROVAL TO PUBLIC HEARING**

The proposed Selectmen's 2024-2025 budget shows a \$335,833 or 3.60% increase.

***MOTION made by Vincent Pacileo III to move the Fiscal Year 24-25 Selectmen's budget back to the BOS to reduce the overall total by one percent along with Essex Board of Education budget back to the BOE to reduce the overall total by one percent. Second – none. Motion fails.***

***MOTION made by Terry Stewart to submit for review and discussion at the Public Hearing the 2024-2025 Board of Selectmen's Budget in the amount of \$9,660,797 and the Essex Board of Education 2024-2025 budget of \$8,745,676. Seconded by Mary-Louise. Vote: 5 – Yes (Campbell Hudson, Ethan Goller, Mary-Louise Polo, Terry Stewart, and Brian Weinstein) , 1 – No (Vincent Pacilleo III). Motion carried.***

#### **5. EES SINKING FUND REQUEST**

***MOTION made by Ethan Goller to approve and recommend to Town Meeting an appropriation from the EES Capital Improvement Sinking Fund in an amount not to exceed \$26,000 as requested by the Essex Board of Education. SECONDED by Brian Weinstein. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

#### **6. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR & PROPOSAL**

The current market for municipal auditing firms is not very competitive due to limited capacity and expertise with the industry. Mahoney Sabol has been operating at capacity and has focused their efforts on retaining clients with favorable pricing to support long-term relationships. To ensure stability for both Mahoney Sabol and their clients they are asking for a three-year commitment to continue providing services. Proposed fees are: FY2024 - \$55,000, FY2025 - \$57,250, and FY2026 \$59,500.

***MOTION made by Brian Weinstein to appoint Mahoney Sabol & Company, LLP as audit firm for the Town of Essex for the audit of the fiscal year from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2024. SECONDED by Vincent Pacileo III. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

***MOTION made by Vincent Pacileo III to commit to Mahoney Sabol & Company, LLP as audit firm for the Town of Essex for the fiscal years 2024, 2025 and 2026. SECONDED by Brian Weinstein. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

#### **7. JWMS MOLD REMEDIATION BUILDING COMMITTEE**

The Region 4 Board of Education (BOE) is creating a building committee for the mold remediation project at John Winthrop Middle School. Members are to be appointed from the Region 4 BOE, each town's Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. These appointees will attend the building meetings and update each Town's leadership regarding progress.

***MOTION made by Brian Weinstein to appoint Lon Seidman as the Town of Essex Board of Finance representative on the John Winthrop Middle School Mold Remediation Building Committee. SECONDED by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

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**8. ARPA Request – Mack Lane Dock**

Terry Stewart as a Harbor Management Commission representative brought forth a request to repair the Mack Lane Dock. The BOS made the decision to keep the dock as a Town asset.

***MOTION made by Ethan Goller to approve an appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$12,500 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds to be used to stabilize the public access dock at Mack Lane. SECONDED by Mary-Louise Polo. Terry Stewart abstained. Motion carried.***

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

***MOTION made by Vincent Pacileo III to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 PM. SECONDED by Terry Stewart. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Tracey Celentano  
Finance Director