

**Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
February 21, 2013  
Meeting Room A  
Town Hall**

Present: James Francis, Lee Rowley, Campbell Hudson, Jeffrey Woods

Absent: Keith Crehan, Frederick Vollono

Others Present:        Robert Dixon, Treasurer  
                              Kelly Sterner, Finance Director  
                              Yvonne Roziak, Recording Secretary

Region 4:                Mary Beth Harrigan  
                                  Chris Riley

James Francis called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Lee Rowley recommended that the following changes be made to the agenda:

- A. Move “Report from Region 4” under New Business to follow the “Treasurer’s Report” on the agenda.
- B. Norman Needleman requested an item “D” be added under Selectmen’s Report, requesting appropriations from the sinking fund for a police cruiser.

*Motion was made by Lee Rowley to accept and approve the amended agenda with regards to these two items. Jeffrey Woods seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

*A motion was made by Campbell Hudson to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 01/17/13 with the following changes:*

Page 2, under Treasurer’s Report, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph – first sentence, replace “recent” with “recently”. Second sentence – replace “the” with “this audit”. Third sentence add “this” to we will put “this” on the BOF plate”

Page 2, under Selectmen’s Report, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph – first sentence add the following after “discussed request from Parks & Recreation to the Board of Finance for approval to take \$5,000 from their sinking fund for treatment needed as reported at Clarks Pond”.

Page 2, third paragraph – first sentence following Dave add “Royston”, replace appropriations “and” over the (delete “next”) course of the year (delete. and Then), come up with a standard ordinance of what the parameters should be that (delete “governs), govern these requests from sinking funds (delete – “and any government appropriations”). The BOF would then review and (delete “put”) add “recommend” an ordinance be put in place.

Page 3, under New Business, Item B – motion should read as follows:

Campbell Hudson made a motion to authorize a withdrawal (not to exceed \$5,000 from the Parks & Recreation sinking fund to be transferred to (add – “the”) Parks & Recreation (add – “Commission”) to be used for their request (add – “for the treatment at Clarks Pond”).

*Motion was seconded by Lee Rowley, passed unanimously. Motion carried.*

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**

Finance Director Kelly Sterner, distributed draft copies of a proposed Town of Essex, Fund Balance Policy in Accordance with GASB Statement No. 54. The creation of such a policy for the Town is in response to a recommendation after the recent audit to define the regulations regarding the Town’s fund balance and reserve policies. It was decided at this meeting that the Board of Finance will review the draft policy and discuss further at the next meeting.

Treasurer Robert Dixon distributed the YTD results through January 2013 along with the full year forecast. Robert indicated that revenue continues to track with forecast; property taxes YTD were slightly below last year; however, large payments were received in early February which should bring us back in line with prior year levels. Highway expenses have been increased by \$50,000 reflecting costs associated with the blizzard. We may, however, receive some FEMA reimbursement to offset the forecasted variance.

Campbell Hudson inquired about the \$50,000 costs surrounding the current storm. Norman Needleman responded that just one bill for subcontracting work was \$25,000. It was a massive storm to clean up and every available service was used for this storms effort.

Jim Francis inquired as to whether or not we foresee any additional large legal bills and Norman Needleman responded there should be no more significant line items.

*Jeff Woods motioned to accept the Treasurer's report and it was seconded by Campbell Hudson. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Region 4 representatives Chris Riley and Mary Beth Harrigan presented their budget highlights for Essex. The Region wants to maintain a good school system and do not want to ask for more than they need. After the second Region 4 budget workshop, the budget stands at 2.54% above last year's budget. This resulting in an increase for Essex of \$474,000 over the current fiscal year. The goal in the next Region 4 budget workshop is to come in under 2%. Reductions include no increase in health benefit costs, however, there is an increase for a position in Special Ed as well as an increase of 3.87% in salary increases. They are also discussing sinking funds for capital needs which include a new storage building.

Campbell Hudson inquired about the schools security plan since the Newtown incident. Chris Riley responded that Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent, will be initiating a safety audit. State and Federal funds may be available for new cameras, locks, etc., and hopefully smaller dollar fixes can be made and the larger improvements be paid for by grants. A lockdown test will be performed in March with advance notice to parents.

First Selectman Norman Needleman indicated a Town Committee is also being formed to review safety measures and this may require hiring a security consultant for a thorough review.

**SELECTMEN'S REPORT:**

A. Request for additional funding of \$10,000 for Human Resource Consultant for re-writing employee manual.

*A motion was made by Campbell Hudson to approve a transfer of \$10,000 from the Board of Finance contingency budget line (10409-508400) to the fringe benefits budget line (10494-502600). Seconded by Jeff Woods. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.*

B. Request for additional funding of \$8,000 for purchase of over-the-rail mower.

*A motion was made by Campbell Hudson to approve the transfer of an amount not to exceed \$7,000 from the Board of Finance contingency budget line (10409-508400) to the capital equipment budget line (10496-508125) for the remaining payment for the over the rail mower. Seconded by Jeff Woods. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.*

- C. Request additional funding of \$4,000 for installation of plexi glass windows for Emergency Operations Center.

*A motion was made by Lee Rowley to approve the transfer of an amount not to exceed \$4,000 from the Board of Finance contingency budget line (10409—508400) to the Emergency Management-Safety Equipment budget line (10427-507300). Seconded by Jeff Woods. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.*

- D. Request from First Selectmen to release \$36,636 from the sinking fund to purchase a new 4WD/ SUV police cruiser.

*Campbell Hudson made a motion to approve the appropriation of an amount not to exceed \$36,636 from the police cruiser sinking fund for the purchase of a 2013 Police Utility vehicle. Seconded by Jeff Woods. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.*

First Selectman Norman Needleman also discussed the need to review the Town's inventory of snow removal/storm equipment. There was discussion as to who is responsible for cleaning the Village sidewalks. The Town may consider an ordinance addressing this topic as many other municipalities have done. Mr. Needleman will look to the public for input on this topic.

Treasurer Robert Dixon commented that the increase so far for next year's General Government budget currently stands at 1.7%.

First Selectman Norman Needleman also discussed a potential major disaster was luckily averted last week when the Town auditorium duct work came loose from ceiling. This was a result of the work performed in the 1970's that was done improperly and/or not to code. Riggio Contracting came and repaired the duct work as well as the light fixtures. This damage has since been reported to CIRMA, the Town's insurance carrier.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**COMMUNICATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Jeff Woods made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 pm. Seconded by Campbell Hudson, Passed unanimously. Motion carried.*