

*These minutes have not yet been approved*

**BOARD OF FINANCE**

**Town of Essex  
29 West Avenue  
Essex, CT 06426  
Via Remote Attendance Only – 7:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday – January 21, 2021**

In attendance via zoom: Keith Crehan, Chairman, Edward Tedeschi, Mary-Louise Polo, Vin Pacileo III, Ethan Goller and Campbell Hudson

Others in attendance: Norman Needleman, First Selectman  
Tracey Celentano, Finance Director  
Kelly Sterner

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Keith Crehan.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

***Keith Crehan moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mary-Louise Polo. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

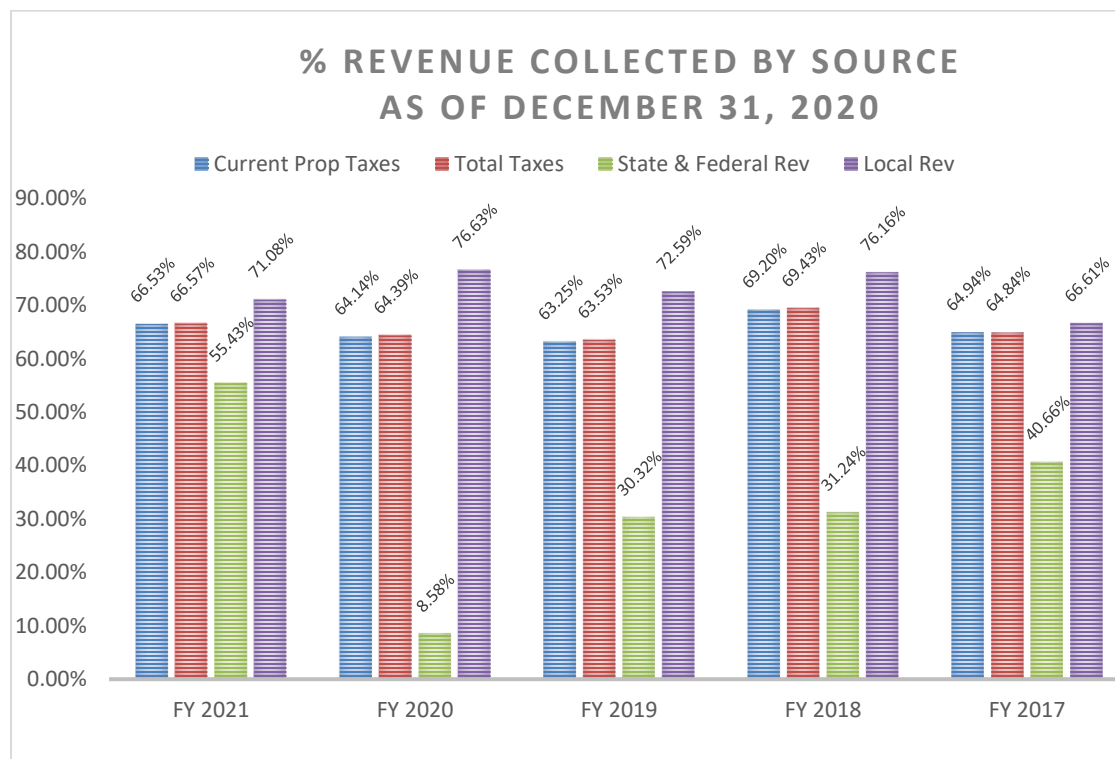
**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

***Keith Crehan moved to approve the minutes of November 19, 2020, seconded by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

**REVENUES**

Current property tax collections totaled \$2.94K for December 2020 which compares favorably to December 2019 which reported collections of \$1.78K. This brings the collection rate to 66.53% which also compares favorably to historical rates. Prior years' collections and interest and liens accounted for \$10.3K.



As of December month-end, the YTD total tax collections were \$15,537,164 or 66.57% of the fiscal year total compared to 64.39% as of December 2019 and 63.53% as of December 2018. State Revenue in December consisted of \$23.4K for Veterans Tax Relief funds and COVID related grants totaling \$69.4K. Total COVID grants received year-to-date amounted to \$80.6K which is a welcome offset to the unbudgeted COVID related expenditures. Local revenues totaled \$78.7K in December and \$473K (71.1% collected) YTD, which are slightly below 2019. Interest income continues to trend lower while Town Clerk Fees and Conveyance Taxes are trending significantly higher. As of the end of December, Conveyance Tax Fees has already exceeded the full budget amount by \$72.3K. Town Clerk Fees collected are at 67% of budget in December with very positive trending of collections in January 2021. Total revenues collected came in at 66.58% of budget versus 62.2% for December 2019 and 62.8% for December 2018 month end.

## **EXPENDITURES**

Expenditures for the month of December totaled \$1,928,027 bringing spending YTD to \$11,342,867 or 54% of budget. Selectmen's budget expenditures made up \$541,736 of the total spending. As of December month-end, the Selectmen's budget spending YTD is \$3,702,972 or 57.1% of budget compared to 59.6% as of December 2019 and 57.5% at December 2018 month-end. This compares particularly well given the anticipated COVID costs. For the month, payroll and fringe benefits accounted for \$289.9K of the monthly spending. This makes up 54% of the Selectmen's budget spending for the month.

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**Annual Audit** – Communication from Mahoney Sabol was positive and determined as a “clean audit.”

Unassigned Fund Balance is very healthy at \$3,723,978 (15.1%)

Printed copies of the audit were distributed to the First Selectman’s Office and the Town Clerk’s office. Electronic copies were distributed on December 28, 2020.

**Budget Update** – Requests are coming in. Based on the R4 ADM Allocation increase of 1.63% (41.38% from 39.75%), we can expect \$340,902 increase. Net change of the Grand List is 1.02% or \$10,986,689 prior to Board of Assessment Appeals changes.

First Budget Meeting will be held on – **February 17, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.**

***Keith Crehan moved to accept the financial report, seconded by Campbell Hudson. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

#### **SELECTMEN’S REPORT:**

Norman mentioned that we may be looking at a bump up in ADM (see above) and then watching it go down which will be below where we are now. As ADM goes down it would allow for more spending which is not a good idea.

Real estate is hot and busy right now. We’ve had some resales which have been unexpectedly high.

Another COVID release should be forthcoming from the government.

We are in need and will be ordering another police vehicle due to high maintenance costs for the earlier versions of the Explorer. Also, the Crown Victoria is approximately 13 years old and does not have the necessary equipment needed in today’s police fleet.

#### **a. Low Interest Property Tax**

We offered a 3% low interest rate, and no one has taken advantage of it. We have left this in place for another 6 months.

**b. Supplemental Appropriations**

<b><u>Supplemental Appropriations</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
Bridge/Infrastructure Sinking Fund	\$50,000
Ambulance Sinking Fund	10,000
Police Vehicle Sinking Fund	35,000
Fire Department Sinking Fund	100,000
Supplemental Appropriations	<b><u>\$195,000</u></b>

***Keith Crehan made a motion to approve and recommend to Town Meeting supplemental appropriations to the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget in the amount of \$195,000 as recommended by the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Ethan Goller. Passed. Motion carried.***

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

***Keith Crehan moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.***

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne Roziak  
Recording Secretary