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**BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING**

**Town of Essex
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426**

**Via Remote Attendance and in person – 7:00 p.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kefZJi0iwo>**

MINUTES

Thursday, June 10, 2021

In attendance: Keith Crehan, Chairman, W. Campbell Hudson, Vice Chair, Edward Tedeschi, Mary-Louise Polo, Ethan Goller and Vin Pacileo III

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

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Keith Crehan

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL AGENDA:

Vin Pacileo moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mary-Louise Polo. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

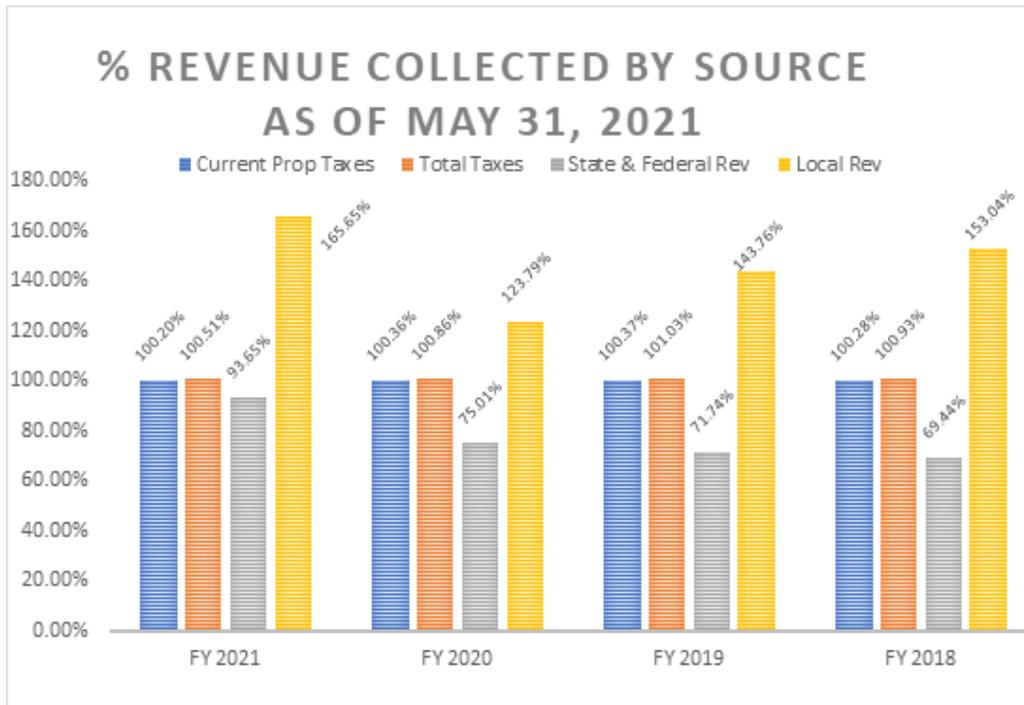
APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Ethan Goller moved to approve the minutes of May 10, 2021, seconded by Ed Tedeschi. Passed unanimously. Motion carried. Two abstains: Campbell Hudson and Mary-Louise Polo.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

REVENUES

Total Tax collections for the month of May totaled \$51K which is not quite as strong as we would normally see. The current property tax collection rate has reached 100.2 percent at the end of May. As can be seen from the chart below, all categories of tax collections are comparable to prior fiscal years.



As of May month-end, the YTD total tax collections were \$23,458,526 or 100.51% of the fiscal year total compared to 100.86% as of May 2020 and 101.03 % as of May 2019. We did not receive any state or federal grants for the month of May; however, totals for the State and Federal revenue year-to-date compare favorably to prior years at 93.65% of budget. Total local revenue is at 165.65% of budget and includes the reimbursements for the following: FY19-20 Surplus Distribution for R4 (\$125,671) and Supervision District (\$69,082). In addition, Town Clerk Fees (\$56.5K above budget) and Conveyance Taxes (\$196K above budget) continue to be strong. Total revenues collected came in at 100.65% of budget versus 100.48% for May 2020 and 101.20% for May 2019 month end (note – Total includes budgeted deficit of \$168,933 + \$195,000 Supplemental Appropriation. Our revenue forecast has been increased to \$353K at fiscal year-end based on the strong revenue numbers.

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EXPENDITURES

Expenditures for the month of May totaled \$1,995,823 bringing spending YTD to \$23,092,734 or 92.3% of budget. Selectmen's budget expenditures made up \$747,275 of the total spending. Of these expenses, \$332,500 was for the fiscal year sinking fund allocation. For the month, payroll and fringe benefits accounted for \$236,425 or 31.6% of the Selectmen's budget spending for the month. As of May month-end, the Selectmen's budget spending YTD is \$7,895,876 or 89.45% of budget compared to 85.11% as of May 2020 and 88.01% at May 2019 month-end. The Essex BOE Expenditures are forecasted to include a \$50K surplus which is a conservative number based on the April 30, 2021 financial report.

Combining the current forecasted revenue and expenditures, the overall surplus is revised to \$300K.

Keith Crehan made a motion to accept the Financial Report, seconded by Campbell Hudson. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT:

Norman opened by saying we are working on a couple of things. The first item is that we received the permit to finish the sidewalk under the highway by Valley Railroad. We also need to have a good system for these zoom meetings etc., without cameras etc. Norman also mentioned the research is ongoing related to the uses for the American Rescue Plan Act. One use is being presented later in on the agenda to support the fire department with a consultant to bring the group together during this stressful time of COVID to get them through these unique times. The Fire Department also needs new air packs and hopefully these can be covered by these grant funds as the useful life of this equipment decreased significantly due to COVID. There is potential expense of \$1m to replace these air packs in the upcoming years. Mary-Louise inquired about any interest in the old IGA. He indicated someone may be interested however, it is 18,000 square feet. Norman mentioned that he wants to get rid of the last two Crown Victorias Cruisers (2004 and 2007) and order the new 2021 police cruiser with cameras and a purchase price not to exceed \$75K. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony this Saturday for the new fire boat at the Town Dock. 75% of the boat costs were funded by the grant acquired with the help of Congressman Courtney and John Planas.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Set Mill Rate – Discussion ensued looking at the Mill Rate Impact Analysis. Norman is considering a new mill rate somewhere between 22.33 and 22.43.

Vin Pacileo made a motion to set the mill rate for the Town of Essex fiscal year 2021-2022 at 22.43 mills, seconded by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

- b. Banking Resolutions

Ethan Goller made a motion to authorize the Treasurer to invest any portion of the General Fund, as specified amounts that may be available, in direct obligations of the U.S. or certificate of deposits or specified regular savings accounts for the fiscal year 2021-2022; and to approve Bank of America, Essex Savings Bank, TD Bank, Liberty Bank, Key Bank, Webster Bank, Washington Trust for regular checking accounts for the fiscal year 2021-2022. Seconded by Keith Crehan. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

- c. Appropriation (Fire Department Coaching to be funded by the American Rescue Act)

Keith Crehan made a motion to approve and recommend to Town Meeting an appropriation in the amount of \$35,000 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds for the Fire Department for the coaching, training, team building and counseling due to the impact of the Covid pandemic, seconded by Mary-Louise Polo. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

- d. Appropriation – Police Vehicle Sinking Fund

Ed Tedeschi made a motion to approve and recommend to Town Meeting an appropriation to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds for an amount not to exceed \$75,000 for the purchase of a 2021 Ford Utility Interceptor vehicle and all necessary computer, radio, and lighting equipment contingent upon eligibility of use of ARPA funds. If ineligible, an appropriation will be allocated from the Police Vehicle Sinking Fund, seconded by Campbell Hudson. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

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ADJOURNMENT:

Vin Pacileo moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m., seconded by Ethan Goller. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne Roziak
Recording Secretary