

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance (BOF)**  
**Zoom Call January 10, 2022**

*Call recording available under BOF on Town Website*

**Members Present:** Ryan Anderson, Chris Childs, Michael Haines, Eric Harrington, Dr. Ann Huntington, Brian Kost **Members Absent:** None **Alternates Present:** Tom Frenaye, Mark Sinopoli, J Michael Stevens **Alternates Absent:** None

**Also Present:** First Selectman Colin Moll, Assistant Finance Director Sahel Shwayhat, Treasurer Jack Henrie.

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

**Citizen Comment/Correspondence:**  
None

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Haines motioned to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2021 Regular BOF meeting as written. Mr. Childs seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 6:0.

**LOTICIP Funding Authorization – Karen Isherwood, Town Engineer**

The Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is inviting municipalities to submit proposals for Transportation Improvement Projects for funding under the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Project (LOTICIP). Each municipality may submit materials for project proposals, with a maximum limit of award of \$3.2 million per municipality. The RFP submission deadline is January 19, 2022.

The request before the Board is for a motion to allow the Town Engineer to appropriate approval from the Board of Finance to apply for LOTICIP funding, and upon authorization, to submit all required documentation for the RFP for the projects chosen by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

Ms. Isherwood reviewed the three options that were presented to the BOS: Thompsonville Road (Rt. 190) Pavement Rehabilitation, Bridge Street Pavement Rehabilitation and Farmington Valley Greenway Bike Trail Rehabilitation. The projects involve various degrees of work to address drainage issues, sidewalks, widening pavement, general maintenance. The BOS selected the Thompsonville Road project and the Farmington Valley Greenway projects for submission. While the BOF does want to obtain the funding for the Town, their concern was using it to repair State roads for which the State is responsible for managing directly. As such, the Thompsonville Road project discussion focused on engagement with the State to understand their future plans and coordination which has yet to be conducted.

After much discussion of possible alternatives, Chairman Anderson summarized that the Board's purview is not determining road quality beyond requesting funding be applied to those most in need, but their focus is project financing and their concern is using these funds for State roads. Because this action is not consistent with the BOS decision, First Selectman Moll may need to hold a special BOS meeting before January 19<sup>th</sup> when the application is due to alter their proposal. Mr. Kost made the motion to apply for LOTICIP up to \$3.2M for the Bridge Street Pavement project and Farmington Valley Green Way project. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. The motion passed 6:0.

Chairman Anderson requested that Ms Isherwood provide any updates on road status, ranked list of roads needing repair, status on any other projects through the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) portion of BOF budget meetings.

### **Small Cities Community Development Block Grant – Bill Hawkins, Director of Planning and Development**

Mr. Hawkins is seeking approval to apply for grant funds through the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) to assist The Suffield Housing Authority with modernization and safety improvements to its public senior and disabled housing complex on Bridge Street. He reviewed the types of improvements to be made and indicated there would be no financial impact to the Town beyond time from himself, and the Town Attorney. and the BOS has approved the application. Mr. Childs made a motion to approve the submission of a grant application in the amount of \$2,000,000 to the 2022 Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program for improvements to the public senior housing operated by the Suffield Housing Authority. Dr. Huntington seconded. All were in favor, none opposed, the motion passed 6:0.

### **Discussion on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – First Selectman Moll, Town Attorney Derek Donnelly**

First Selectman Moll updated the Board on the latest Federal guideline updates and what was discussed at the BOS meeting regarding options for the use of these funds. Other towns have streamlined their recommendation process by having a small working group made up of Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen members to serve as a steering committee (SC). The SC would bring their recommendations back to the full BOS and BOF Boards. The Town has until Dec. 31 2024 to authorize the use of all funds.

The BOS would like to adopt the SC approach with possibly 3 members each from BOS and BOF. They are seeking input from BOF on that approach and level of participation. Chairman Anderson requested members let him know if they are interested and he will get that information to First Selectman Moll.

There is less guidance available on what is required for spending approval. The best consensus is that appropriations of these funds should be treated the same way as appropriations under the Town's budget (i.e. Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance must both approve, with major expenses also going to Town meeting approval). Attorney Donnelly agrees we should follow our specified appropriation process as the best way to be in line with the Federal Compliance requirements. The fourth guidance document set a new deadline which will allow us to appropriate the funds now and allocate them by 2024.

### **Review of Draft Budget Review Calendar**

Chairman Anderson reviewed the proposed BOF Budget Meeting Calendar, noting the weekly meetings would begin with the Selectman's budget on February 28<sup>th</sup>. He noted the schedule can be modified if a department requests to do so. Human Resource Director Karin Ziemba noted an upcoming meeting with our pension administrator, Hooker & Holcomb, and will ask them to support the Retirement Commission and target the March 14<sup>th</sup> budget meeting to present the valuation report. They would also like an update on Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB).

### **Director of Finance – Assistant Director Sahel (Sal) Shwayhat**

Mr. Shwayhat introduced himself to the BOF and provided his background and past experience. He started in the position in December 2020 after a career in Health Care financial operations.

- The audit report was submitted to state at the end of December, with the Auditors planning to attend the February meeting. Chairman Anderson will notify members if the February 14<sup>th</sup> meeting is rescheduled to February 15<sup>th</sup>. Copies of the audit report will either be mailed out to members or may be picked up in advance of the meeting.

- The Fire Equipment Acquisition fund has a balance of \$112,439 which the Bond Counsel confirmed we can use for other items so the funds were transferred to the General Fund.
- **Financial Trend Report Review:** The Assistant Director reviewed revenue and expense actual to budget variances and trends YTD, noting that we expect further revenue from FEMA for Storm Isaias which is not in our trending report and represents just under \$100K.
- Mr. Childs asked if the CNRE is all invested now. Mr. Henrie noted the 3<sup>rd</sup> tranche has not been invested yet, based on the schedule established with GYL Synergies, but he will follow up to see about accelerating that given current favorable market conditions.

#### **First Selectman Update – Colin Moll**

- Covid test kits - The second Covid test kit roll out this past weekend was successful and addressed feedback from the first distribution. They asked residents not to apply for the second if they received a kit in the first one. They may do a few smaller roll outs and will keep some for seniors and first responders.
- Kentucky donations update – The Town collected many supplies and monetary donations and would be sending a full tractor trailer load later in the week.
- Police update – He welcomed new Chief Cannon and new Captain Palmer who were sworn in last Thursday. The arbitration agreement was awarded and will be up this summer so they are starting work on the new agreement. A significant retroactive payroll amount was processed today to be paid January 13<sup>th</sup> with funds that were accrued for this purpose.

#### **Executive Sessions – Personnel Issue and Pending Litigation**

Mr. Harrington made a motion to move into Executive Session. Mr. Childs seconded. All were in favor, none opposed and the Board moved into Executive Session at 8:42pm. The BOF exited executive session at 9:45pm

Mr. Childs made a motion to amend the regular meeting agenda to take action on town personnel matters. Dr. Huntington seconded, all approved and the motion passed 6:0.

Mr. Childs made a motion to increase (on a prorata basis) the salary of the First Selectman's executive assistant by 8.5%; to increase the HR Department's executive assistant's hourly rate by 4.8%; to transfer \$2,500 from the First Selectman's budget to the HR Department budget to account for the HR executive assistant salary increase, with each action subject to BOS approval. Mr. Kost seconded the Motion. It was noted that this adjustment is being made in recognition of increased workload due to a recent job elimination. The BOF expects to see these changes reflected in the upcoming fiscal year's Selectman's proposed budget. All were in favor, none opposed. The motion passed 6-0.

#### **Adjourn**

Mr. Childs made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Harrington seconded. All approved and the meeting was adjourned at 9:51pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kris Kelliher

*These minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.*