

February 25, 2015

The Board of Finance held a special meeting on this date at the Police Department meeting room. Members present were Glenn Frishman, Chairman; Dudley Wheeler; Tim O'Brien; Sandy Grimes; Bryan Bentz and June Strunk, Secretary. Also present Town Hall and Police staff and residents.

Mr. Frishman called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Comments from the Public – None

Previous Minutes – Mr. Grimes made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2015 meeting. Mr. Wheeler seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Budget Transfers

Tabled to March meeting.

Budget Hearings

- **Human Services** – Leanne Theodore provided handouts for the members highlighting present year operations. Mrs. Theodore introduced Human Services staff present and new Recreation Director Rich Ward was introduced. A goal of the department has been seeking input from the residents to identify gaps in program offerings and needs within the community. The four divisions within the department are Recreation, Senior Services, Social Services and Youth and Family Services.
- **Non-Profit Agencies** – Mr. Frishman asked for any representatives of these agencies to come forward. Selectman Crouse interjected at this time asking if members had received the change to the proposed budget. Members had not – the adjustment is to the Stonington Free Library increasing from \$137,500 to \$140,000. Margaret Victoria of the Stonington Free Library thanked the Town for their support. Mr. Grimes asked if it was true that this is the first time full time employees have been offered health insurance. Mrs. Victoria replied yes. Lois Hillard of the Mystic & Noank Library thanked the Town for their support. They have increased services for all residents. Safe Futures Inc., formerly the Women's Abuse center if SECT is a new line for Domestic Violence via 24 hotline, police, and support groups etc. Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center, Vicki Anderson and Charles Young were present to thank the Town. Mrs. Anderson stated that the PNC has grown in both Human Services and Senior Services.

They have many volunteers and some paid staff. Mr. Young stated they anticipate continued growth. He spoke to the need for a generator at the center. This is currently in the CIP budget. There are thousands of meals in the freezers and refrigerators that would be lost with a power outage. Mr. Bentz asked about the cost and size of the generator requested. Mrs. Anderson guessed that is around \$30-35,000. She did not have the kilowatts. Mrs. Strunk stated that the entire center could operate on the natural gas generator requested. Mr. Grimes asked if numbers of people struggling are slowing down. Mrs. Anderson and Mr. Young stated no, CT. is one of the last states to recover from the great recession. Beth Ann Stewart spoke for the Stonington Community Center, which is turning 70 this year. They have been in the current building for 40 years. They have had no budget increases for fifteen years. Critical floor tile replacement in CIP. She stated that the Como offers space to Non-profits that do not have their own space. Some organizations that use their space – Stonington Players, LUNCH, Prom Shop, Boy Scouts, AA, Avalonia as well as the Boro stroll.

Kelly Sullivan spoke for the Stonington Ambulance. She stated that they are experiencing serious issues with the ground underneath their building, this will need to be addressed in order to continue their operations. Frank Soscia provided the members with a breakdown of the Mystic River Ambulance budget. He stated that a continuing problem is the payer mix, they are not getting full payment for services provided. Also with the new Masonicare facility they anticipate increased calls. He added that expenses are incurred anytime an ambulance is called, about 20% of the time people refuse the transport to the hospital and there is no payment. Mike Brancoto, Westerly Ambulance added that they are experiencing the same problems with payment for services. Currently purchasing new equipment-very expensive and short life. Westerly Ambulance covers a large area of Stonington including Pawcatuck Fire District and the lower end of Wequetequock in addition to Westerly.

General Government – Mr. Crouse stated that there are two new lines for a Director of Economic Development and a Grant Writer. Selectman Rob Simmons is working on this to promote Stonington to commercial, industrial and housing. It has been discussed to bring these positions in on a consultant basis, or these could be combined. This will increase the budget. Mr. Bentz asked about the line #7 *Examination of Indices*. Mr. Crouse was unaware and stated he would check.

Director of Administrative Services, Vincent Pacileo stated that his department oversees Human Resources administration, Labor relations and manages Information Technology function and CIP planning. In previous negotiations, a Defined Contribution pension plan along with a High Deductible Health plan. Improvements to IT to accommodate enhanced server and data backup and disaster recovery operations. \$2000.00 increase for Professional Services, this is 1099 assistance for the Town Sanitarian based on her needs due to increased

activity in the town. Mr. Pacileo explained that the Community Development line #56 was added by the First Selectman. He pointed out to the members that this added position brings with it an increase to Social Security, as well as effects on the Pension plan. The employees of the Town have been cautious with their use of the Health plan but with added employees this could change.

Mr. Crouse gave a positive rating to Interim Director of Finance Jim Sullivan.

At this time Mr. Frishman asked Town Assessor Marsha Standish if she would come before the Board and present a brief synopsis of the Grand List and what it means to have growth in the Grand List just before deliberations.

Mr. Crouse stated that the largest increase is to line #55, Property & Liability. Mr. Frishman asked why this happened. Mr. Crouse replied that he did not know but would look into it.

Mr. Grimes asked about line #58, Safety Programs and what it is. Mr. Pacileo stated he believed this was a Standard Operating procedure for employee safety, classes, etc.

Mr. Crouse has added a line for a Director of Planning. He also added a \$20,000 line item --this was not on budget submitted to Board of Finance. He stated this was for Planning & Zoning to start rewriting the rules and regulations. This is a checklist or operation to expedite to save time and energy. He stated this is increasing the budget.

Capital Improvements-

Roger Kizer explained the new line Network Intrusion Detection. He stated that all Town areas are connected much better, this would be similar to a firewall, a gateway device. The current system is set it and forget it, the new system would be active and include alerts. Human Services particularly has extremely private data. Mr. Bentz asked why connect Town data and say, Human Services data, is it wired to the internet? Mr. Kizer did not know and stated he would check. Mrs. Strunk added that Human Services information is shared with other organizations, for example United Way, so outside access would be necessary. Mr. Kizer said hackers are now delving into systems, this new system would alert them. He has broken this into a three-year plan - penetration, education, remediation and recommendations. Mr. Bentz felt that there is a lot more to talk about.

Police --

Chief Stewart introduced Officers and BOPC members present. He provided a mileage handout for the members. Considerable revenue for vehicles on Outside Service jobs but they are required to keep running which puts wear on the engine. The K9 vehicle has the remote door opener. New items -- Public Information Message Board, MDT Replacement and surveillance program. Radio and communication issues are ongoing.

Public Works -

Director McKrell stated that the Town is getting \$109,956 in LOCIP reimbursements. She also discussed the two new dump trucks on order (then there will be 10 large trucks) these have spreader calibration for placement of salt based on condition of the road. She added that the department has been very prudent with placement of salt this winter. The Selectmen feel it is critical to upgrade the fleet.

Town Engineer Scott Deledda spoke to the Athletic Fields ADA accessibility. He performed a preliminary assessment of the fields. For now the focus is on the lower fields (soccer and field hockey) which are the least compliant. He looked at accessibility routes and seating. Because of the bleacher areas a lot more research is required. Mr. Bentz asked if Mr. Deledda had looked at other towns, Mr. Deledda has not but that is a good idea. Mr. Grimes asked if this could mushroom, not being compliant. Mr. Deledda stated that with new renovations must meet all safety guidelines.

Mr. Frishman asked about the performance bond litigation process and how this will affect the ADA compliance. Will there be monies available to complete this work? The answer is no. Mr. Grimes as Subcommittee liaison for the fields stated that the whole bond is spent. Two storage sheds were purchased (by one or two people?) but he does not think the Committee approved this, it was Mr. Crouse's understanding that they had. Mrs. McKrell added they have met and are still in legal discussions, payment has been withheld and the bond can be pulled if the contractor fails to comply. Mr. O'Brien asked if this wouldn't fall under the Director of Finance. Mr. Frishman replied that he just wants to keep up on status.

PNC Generator – Mr. Frishman mentioned the generator that was removed from the High School because it wasn't big enough to meet FEMA guidelines, a discussion ensued as to whether this could be used at the Neighborhood center.

Jeff Callahan, Borough Warden was present to discuss the CIP request for Public restrooms at the Town dock. There are current restrooms at the WPCA building that were closed down. He and WPCA Director Tom Gilligan put together a conceptual plan and cost estimate to renovate the current restrooms and make them public. A two-year plan, design then construction. Discussed security issues that could be addressed with new technology. Close down after hours.

Correspondence - None

Subcommittee reports –

Mrs. Strunk spoke to the K-12 Building committee. They have a recommendation for school renovations. Chairman Marsiglia would like a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance March 10. There is a timeline to follow with June 30 as the deadline. Mr. Frishman stated that he wants to ensure that the architect has all pertinent information so a decision can be made on March 10. Mrs. Strunk ensured the members that they would get information Prior to the meeting. Recommendation - Renovate WVS and DMS, addition to WVS tear down and rebuild new addition at DMS close WBSS, move Central Office, new roof at PMS. Elementary schools will now be K through 5th grade. Total cost after reimbursement - \$46-47 million dollars

-these are 2015 numbers and it is a two year project. Three years of construction inflation need to be added – about 5% per year or total of \$52 million. Mr. Frishman asked Interim Director of Finance for a debt amortization schedule showing tax increase. Mrs. Strunk stated that they have addressed school year and placement of students, etc.

State informed the Committee the reimbursement for each type of project.

Mr. Wheeler asked about the roof at DMS and Mr. Bentz replied that it looks good.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Grimes made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wheeler seconded the motion and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



June Strunk
Secretary