

Board of Finance Organizational Meeting
Tuesday, December 6, 2022, 7:30 pm
Via Webex
And
In Person in the BOE Conference Room, #295A/B
501 Kings Hwy E., Fairfield, CT

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Bum-l20Txg&t>

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairwoman Lori Charlton, Vice Chair John Mitola, Secretary Sheila Marmion, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, Joint Retirement Investment Board Member Tom Collimore, CFO Jared Schmitt, WPCA Superintendent John Bodie, WPCA Project Manager Christine Pacelli, WPCA Vice Chair Joe D'Avanzo, FairTV

- 1) Call to Order
First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick called the meeting to order at 7:45pm.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
First Selectwoman Kupchick led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3) To hear, consider and approve 2023 Officers
Sheila Marmion made a motion to bring Item 3 before the board. Jack Testani seconded the motion.
Sheila Marmion nominated Lori Charlton to be the Chair of the BOF for 2023. John Mitola seconded the nomination. Ms. Marmion said the Board had benefited from Ms. Charlton's leadership over the past year and Ms. Charlton ruled with integrity. Jack Testani said he echoed Ms. Marmion's comments and his goal in future meetings is to continue with camaraderie and respect. James Walsh agreed with all the comments.
The nomination carried unanimously.

Lori Charlton nominated John Mitola to be the Vice Chair of the BOF for 2023. Christopher DeWitt seconded the nomination.
Craig Curley said Mr. Mitola is one of the most level-headed individuals and is very important for this board. Sheila Marmion said it has been a pleasure serving with Mr. Mitola. James Walsh said Mr. Mitola was a great person and they always stay friendly even though they are on opposite sides of the aisle. Ms. Charlton said she has really enjoyed working with Mr. Mitola and she would be happy to serve with him again.
The nomination carried unanimously.

John Mitola nominated Sheila Marmion to be the Secretary of the BOF. Kevin Starke seconded the nomination.
Mr. Mitola said he has served with Ms. Marmion and appreciates her commitment to the Town of Fairfield.
The nomination carried unanimously.

Chairwoman Charlton thanked everyone and spoke about the challenges ahead with the upcoming budget. Ms. Charlton looks forward to working with the BOF and the elected officials.

BOF Officers 2023

Chair-Lori Charlton

Vice Chair-John Mitola

Secretary- Sheila Marmion

- 4) To hear, consider and approve members of the BOF subcommittees (Audit, Budget, Fund Balance and Debt Policy Committee, Purchasing Policy, Senior and Disabled Tax Relief Committee)

Chairwoman Lori Charlton asked the Board to reach out to her as to what committees they would like to be assigned and she will put them together.

- 5) To hear, consider and approve 2023 Schedule

Sheila Marmion made a motion to put Item 5 before the board. Christopher DeWitt seconded the motion.

Sheila Marmion asked to go over the Budget Sessions. Chairwoman Charlton said they were consistent with prior years but they omitted the snow day option because even with a snow day, the Board can meet remotely. She added that CFO Jared Schmitt and Budget Director Frank Magneri are committed to working with the BOF to make the meetings efficient. Christopher DeWitt was confident they will be able to reduce the number of meetings or make the scheduled meetings shorter. There was a discussion about budget meetings and start times. James Walsh made a motion to add one more evening budget meeting. Jack Testani seconded the motion.

Ms. Marmion said there was a discussion about asking questions to department heads prior to meetings to help limit time. Mr. DeWitt said he agreed with Mr. Walsh and doesn't want time constraints on the meetings already scheduled. They all agreed there would be no need to see departments if there is no problem with their budget request.

Jack Testani made a motion to amend Mr. Walsh's motion to move meetings to 7:30pm and add one more night. Craig Curley seconded the motion.

The discussion continued. Chairwoman Charlton suggested adding March 9.

Mr. Walsh then amended Mr. Testani's motion to include adding March 9, 2023 to schedule and change all meeting start times to 7:30pm. Mr. Testani seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Craig Curley made a motion to add a meeting September 26, 2023 for a Capital Planning workshop. John Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2023 BOF Meeting Schedule (Locations will be confirmed and posted online)

January 10	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
January 31	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Capital Plan Workshop
February 07	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
February 21	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Quarterly Review Mtg
March 01	Wednesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
March 8	Wednesday	7:30 pm	Public Budget Session #1
March 9	Thursday	7:30pm	Public Budget Session#2

March 14	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Public Budget Session #3
March 15	Wednesday	7:30 pm	Public Budget Session #4
March 22	Wednesday	7:30 pm	Public Budget Session #5
March 23	Thursday	7:30 pm	Public Budget Session #6
March 25	Saturday	9:30 am	Public Budget Comment Session
March 27	Monday	7:30 pm	Follow-Up If needed
March 30	Thursday	7:30 pm	Budget Vote-Public Executive Session
April 04	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
May 04	Thursday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting – Set Mill Rate
May 23	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Quarterly Review Meeting
June 06	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
September 05	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
September 19	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Quarterly Review Meeting
September 26	Tuesday	7:30pm	Capital Planning Workshop
October 03	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting
November 1	Wednesday	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting (Election Day is 11/7)
November 21	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Quarterly Review Meeting
December 05	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Organizational/Regular Meeting

- 6) To review the current status of the Town’s Pension and OPEB Funds
 John Mitola made a motion to put Item 6 before the Board. Mary LeClerc seconded the motion. Chairwoman Lori Charlton directed everyone to page 2 of the posted backup. Tom Collimore presented this item and went over all the slides on the printed presentation which is included in the backup documents. Mr. Collimore reviewed current allocations for the Town Pension and OPEB. There was a discussion about the recession and returns. The full discussion can be heard by accessing the link at the top of this document.
- 7) To hear, consider and act upon a request from the Board of Selectmen* to appropriate \$1,750,000 from the WPCA Fund Balance to finance the repair of the primary digester. *(*pending BOS approval on 12/05/22; requires RTM approval)*
 John Mitola made a motion to put Item 7 before the Board. Jack Testani seconded the motion.
 WPCA Vice Chair Joe D’Avanzo explained the current situation with the Digester Tank. It has been down since March 2022. Mr. D’Avanzo explained that the cleaning and repair work went out to bid last April; the resulting bid was deemed too high. The WPCA then went out with a bid for the cleaning portion only, with an accepted bid. The tank was cleaned as of November 23 for a cost of \$531,000. The Digester repair bid encompasses four items: lining will be removed; pressure valves and gauges will be replaced and the 45-ton cover will need to be lifted and bolts will be replaced. Mr. D’Avanzo noted there is a time constraint to get the repair work done, as neighbors are complaining about the significant odor resulting from this Digester Tank being broken and cleaned. The BOS approved this item at their meeting on December 5th. Mr. D’Avanzo is asking for the money prior to the bids (due on 12/15/22) being opened so they can proceed immediately with the repairs. Mr. D’Avanzo noted there was an insurance claim that settled for \$1million and after fees were taken out, the WPCA received \$948,000. There was a discussion about the funding and from where the money will be disbursed. Mr. D’Avanzo noted that the secondary digester will be cleaned as soon as the primary digester is fixed to avoid any issues in the future. Cleaning the Digesters will also be added to a WPCA list for required maintenance/cleaning every ten years. Mr. Dewitt asked for clarification on the person

responsible for ensuring this occurs; Mr. D'Avanzo stated it is the Plant Manager's responsibility.

Public Comment: Christine Brown, RTM D-9 said the plant is in her district and the raw sewage odor reaches as far as Sherman School. Kids cannot play outside and some have reported headaches from the odor. Ms. Brown would like the Board to approve this item as it is urgent.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 8) To hear an update on capital projects (ARPA and regular)
(postponed from 11/22/22 meeting)
CFO Jared Schmitt presented this item. The backup is on pages 31 and 35. There are 70 different projects. There is an online system application for department heads to fill out with updates on the cost amounts of the projects and the status and next steps if needed. The Board went through the lists of projects and they discussed some items. The Duck Farm Road Bridge has had delays caused by the utility companies. The Town is in constant contact with the state and has been given an extension so there would be no loss of grant funding. It is estimated to be complete by Fall 2023. Chairwoman Charlton would like the report to include open Capital Projects and their status in the next quarter. The discussion continued for the ARPA projects. ARPA has two years to fund the projects and Mr. Schmitt noted that money that is not used on specific projects because of timing and supply issues will be re-allocated. Chairwoman Charlton thanked Mr. Schmitt for his report and asked that there be a column added to show re-allocation of funds as well as de-authorized projects and where funds were transferred.
- 9) To hear, consider and act upon the draft minutes of November 1, 2022 and November 22, 2022
Mary LeClerc made a motion to put Item 9 before the Board. James Walsh seconded the motion.
November 1, 2022 - approved unanimously.
November 22, 2022 - Christopher DeWitt made a motion to add "pending Waterfall documents" to Mr. Walsh's comments in the last paragraph of Item 3. John Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.
Chairwoman Charlton made a motion to strike the last sentence in Item 8, "this item will be on the agenda for the next meeting in January." As well as add, "Town Controller Caitlin Bosse presented this item. The balance in the Internal Service Fund is approximately \$6 million as of June 30th, 2022, which is consistent with the estimate discussed with the BOF during the budget hearings." Christopher DeWitt seconded the motion which carried unanimously.
The amended minutes of 11/22/22 carried 8-1-0 (Testani opposed)
- 10) To hear, consider and act upon any communications
CFO Jared Schmitt said the auditor ask for and received an extension on the Annual Financial Report to January 31, 2023. In October, there was a vote to allocate the surplus at that time and the number could be different when the audit is complete. Mr. Schmitt will let the Board know if numbers are different before the audit is finalized.
There was also a discussion on the WPCA Waterfall and project plan, which will be presented on January 31, 2023. Various Board members also discussed the capitol plan working group, and the desire to have a presentation on the Capitol Plan overall that includes an updated Waterfall.

Public Comment

Dana Kery- 7 Green Acre Lane – Ms. Kery wanted to know if there was a Townwide inventory of all assets, by department, that would tie into Capital Planning. If so is it updated on a regular basis?

Jared Schmitt said there is an inventory record, but it is not centralized. He will speak with his staff about putting it into one document.

Craig Curley mentioned a letter the BOF received from the Flood and Erosion Control Board that was also copied to Tom Bremer and Mr. Curley wanted it noted for the record. Mr. Bremer said there is a presentation ready to take to the Boards regarding the issues at Penfield. Mr. Bremer is waiting for approvals from EPA and FEMA. DEEP approved the plans already but the First Selectwoman would like to wait until all the approvals come in. Mr. Bremer is also waiting to hear from FEMA whether or not they will give the Town the \$4 million if all the requirements are met. The Notice of Violation has to be responded to and the administration has looked at many different options. The administration has had meetings with the FECB and their concerns will be part of the presentation to the Boards.

Chairwoman Charlton said this will be a sizeable expense that deserves public input and wants to have adequate time for public input. Ms. Charlton does not want the BOF to be rushed into a vote before any public hearing feedback. The discussion about FEMA and Penfield continued, including costs and the timing related to fix the existing building, potential FEMA requirements and reimbursement, and flooding concerns.

11) Adjourn

Craig Curley made a motion to adjourn. James Walsh seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary