

Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 7:30 pm
Via Webex & In Person at the BOE Offices, Room 295 A/B
501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, CT 06825

A recording of this meeting can be found here: [BOF Regular Meeting 11/1/2023](#).

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: DPW Assistant Director John Cottell, CFO Jared Schmitt, Budget Director Frank Magneri, FairTV, members of the public

- 1) Call to Order
Chairwoman Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
Chairwoman Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3) To hear a presentation on the sidewalk report
Chairwoman Charlton explained that sidewalk repair projects are in the Capital Plan, but in some cases, sidewalks are being replaced or repaired when there is road paving done in the same location. DPW Assistant Director John Cottell presented the sidewalk report. He said there was a survey performed from winter of 2021 to summer 2023 of 125 miles of sidewalk in Fairfield. Mr. Cottell reviewed the materials, conditions and length of sidewalks. There was a discussion about the results and about the cost of the sidewalks and the Safe Streets ordinance. The BOF would like to know the requirements of the Town and would like the Town Attorney to explain the legal requirements. The Board would also like Engineering Manager Bill Hurley to give his estimate, how he estimated and if it includes Police, and also how it affects the operational costs in the budget.

The full discussion can be accessed through the meeting recording link above.

- 4) Discussion on Penfield Pavilion
CAO Tom Bremer had a scheduling conflict, but sent a memo regarding updates which is included in the backup documents.
The BOF members had questions they would like Mr. Bremer to address:
 - Who are the residents receiving the letter regarding Penfield Pavilion updates as mentioned in the memo?
 - What are updates regarding the 50/50 valuation?
 - What is the updated timeline of the project and how did the delay in starting the project affect the timeline?
 - What is the insured amount of the project and how much in excess is it above the original estimated cost?

- Provide detail on the originally approved plans for foundation and provide documentation change including cost and reason for change.
- When in December will the Resiliency Study start/finish?

Certain board members were disappointed that Mr. Bremer was not in attendance and requested he attend the next meeting to answer the questions above and give any other updates. Mr. Testani was not among the disappointed board members and raised an objection to which the matter was discussed.

CFO Jared Schmitt provided some updates of which he was aware. All staging around the pavilion building, sidewalk and parking lot at this point is related to remediation and not construction. Construction is still being negotiated and there was no update. Mr. Schmitt also said that Mr. Bremer has been giving monthly updates at the BOS meetings and those updates have been included in the First Selectwoman's weekly resident newsletters. The BOF discussed their concerns with the history of this project and would like to have more people involved in the project.

- 5) To hear, consider and act upon a request from the Chief Fiscal Officer to transfer \$109,132 from General Fund Contingency (01002010-58010) to various accounts in FY24 for Department Head settled contracts

There is no backup for this Item. The BOF received an email that is not available for the public. CFO Jared Schmitt said these requests are transfers and not requests for additional funds. Budget Director Frank Magneri shared his screen and report of the breakdown of the transfers. There was a discussion about Department Head increases and how they affect the budget. Mr. Magneri said the increases are estimated and put into the budget in Contingency and when contracts are settled or increases are given, it comes out of Contingency.

Christopher DeWitt made a motion approve the request to transfer \$109,132 from the General Fund Contingency to various accounts provided to the BOF and attached for the record. Craig Curley seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 6) To hear, consider and act upon a request from the Chief Fiscal Officer to transfer \$1,401,755 from General Fund Contingency (01002010-58010) to various accounts in FY24 for Fire arbitration award

John Mitola made a motion to put Item 6 before the BOF. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion.

The numbers were finalized in the last few weeks. The money is generally paid out prior to the transfer being presented to the boards for approval. Union contracts have timelines and need payout as soon as possible, including retro pay. The breakdown was available on the shared screen. Budget Director Frank Magneri also shared his overview of union contract settlements.

The motion to transfer \$1,401,755 from the General Fund Contingency to various accounts in FY 2024 carried unanimously.

- 7) To hear an update on the FY23 surplus and to review a proposal for the use of surplus

There is no backup on this item and it does not require a vote. CFO Jared Schmitt gave an update on the status of the surplus and uses. Chairwoman Charlton encouraged the BOF members to review the proposal and give their feedback for discussion at the 11/21/23 meeting. Mr. Schmitt said Auditors have been in over the last few days and the final surplus is closer to \$10 million. This is mostly due to contingency and leases. The proposal for the use of the \$10 million is:

- \$2 million – to stay with the current paving plan and do catchup work in the Spring.
- \$2 million – 1st part of sidewalk repairs
- \$3 million – BOE (bathrooms at FLHS, Phases 2-5 of HVAC plan and a boiler replacement)
- \$3 million – fill pile/remediation costs

There was a discussion about the paving project. Chairwoman Charlton would like an update on the plan. There was also a discussion about future projects at Dwight and Jennings. Mr. Schmitt said all necessary backup will be present when it is time to vote on this surplus proposal.

- 8) To hear, consider and act upon the Purchasing Policy

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to bring Item 8 before the BOF for a vote. Craig Curley seconded the motion.

Mr. DeWitt went through his presentation on the Purchasing Policy. There were questions from some of the Board members and a discussion followed. It was suggested that due to the time of the night, and comments some members had and wanted to discuss the vote for the new Purchasing Policy be moved to a special meeting.

Jack Testani made a motion to postpone the vote for Item 8 to a scheduled special BOF meeting for Thursday, November 16, 2023. James Walsh seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Board suggested involving Auditor Joe Centofanti and Purchasing Director Adam Tulin at the special meeting.

Mr. DeWitt said he will send the Policy to the board members and would like any redline edits sent back to him by 11/5/2023.

- 9) To hear, consider and act upon the draft minutes of October 3, 2023, October 19, 2023 special meeting and October 19, 2023 Capital Plan Workshop

(John Mitola left the meeting at 10:51 pm).

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to bring Item 9 before the BOF. James Walsh seconded the motion.

The minutes will be reviewed and voted on separately.

- 10/3/2023 – the motion carried 7-0-1 (Charlton abstained)
- 10/19/2023 Special – the minutes state Mr. Walsh being absent, but he did arrive and voted. His name will be added as present. The amended motion carried 7-0-1 (Testani abstained)
- 10/19/23 Regular – the motion carried 7-0-1 (Testani abstained)

10) To hear, consider and act upon any communications
There were no communications to be discussed.

11) Adjourn
Mr. Curley made a motion to adjourn. Chairwoman Charlton seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary