

Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 7:30 pm
Via Webex
And
Joseph S. Elias Fire Training School, Classroom B11
205 Richard White Way
Fairfield, CT 06824

A recording of this meeting can be found here: [BOF Regular Meeting 4/9/24.](#)

Backup documents for this meeting can be found here: [BOF Regular Meeting Backup Packet.](#)

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairwoman Lori Charlton, Vice Chair John Mitola, Secretary Craig Curley, Shane Pendley, Amy Ruggiero, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary LeClerc

OTHERS PRESENT: Conservation Director Tim Bishop, Human & Social Services Director Julie DeMarco, Interim CFO David Becker, Community & Economic Development Director Mark Barnhart, Interim DPW Director John Marsilio, Bond Counsel Attorney John Stafstrom, Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Controller & BOF Clerk Caitlin Bosse, 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
Jack Testani led the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was no public comment.

- 3) To hear, consider and act upon a request recommended by the Board of Selectmen to withdraw \$19,000 from the H. Smith Richardson Conservation Fund Trust for the purposes of seeding the meadow at Hoydens Hill. (*requires RTM approval*)

Amy Ruggiero made a motion to bring this item before the BOF. John Mitola seconded the motion.

The backup is on page one of the additional backup. Conservation Director Tim Bishop stated for the record that the correct amount requested to be withdrawn is \$19,780. This request has been approved by the Conservation Commission and BOS. Mr. Bishop would like to plant a pollinator meadow at the open space. The invasive species Mugwort has been removed and is under control and the area is ready to be seeded. This is being done with the Tucker Fund. There was a discussion about the contractor and the amount of the project. Mr. Testani would like to have a copy of the estimate.

Ms. Charlton made a motion to amend the amount requested in Item 3 to \$19,780 from \$19,000. Mr. Testani seconded the amendment which carried 7-0-1 (James Walsh abstained).

The main motion, as amended, carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Walsh abstained).

- 4) To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen: “RESOLVED, that, as part of the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities’ Five-Year Bus Replacement Plan, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount of \$136,990.00 to purchase a handicapped-accessible, 12-seat bus with a wheelchair lift to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities, 80% of said purchase, or \$109,592.00, to be funded by a Traditional 5310 Capital Senior Bus Grant under Section 5310 of the Federal Transit Act’s Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program as administered by the State of Connecticut. The federal subsidy of \$109,592 will be matched using senior center donation funds of \$27,398.00; and FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William A. Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.” *(requires RTM approval)*

Mr. Testani made a motion to put Item 4 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

The backup is on page three of the additional backup. Human and Social Services Director Julie DeMarco said this is a grant that comes up every two years. The last grant was 100% match to the cost of the bus. This year the match is 80%. There was no discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 5) To hear an update on an agreement between the Town of Fairfield and PKF O'Connor Davies to provide services to the Town of Fairfield, including review of policies and procedures and related internal controls for Human Resources/payroll functions; review of MUNIS system rights for payroll module; review of payroll change process/forms including payroll change reports; and review and recommendations regarding manual processes, including payroll process. The services are anticipated to commence on or around April 22, 2024 and the estimated fee for said services is \$8500 to \$9500. *(for information only; approved by BOS on 04/03/24)*

The backup for this item begins on page one of the original backup link. During the Audit Subcommittee meeting on March 26, 2024, internal audits were reviewed and there were questions about payroll processes and roles. It was decided that this would be a good idea for the Town’s external auditor to look into it. Joe Centofanti is very familiar with the Town and payroll processes so he would be the right person to perform the audit. This will focus on internal controls and putting a better process in place. There was a discussion about what the BOF would like to see as a result of the audit. Funding for this will come out of the BOF budget.

- 6) To hear, consider and act upon the following Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen:
WHEREAS, on August 1, 2023, the Town of Fairfield received a donation from the Stratfield Village Association (SVA) in the amount of \$150,000 for the Stratfield Streetscape (Four Corners) Project; and
WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield accepted the \$150,000 donation; and
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the First Selectman be, and hereby is, authorized to accept said \$150,000 donation from SVA and expend the donation to fund project costs associated with Stratfield Streetscape (Four Corners) Project. *(requires RTM approval)*

Mr. Testani made a motion to put Item 6 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

The backup is on page four of the regular backup documents. Community and Economic Development Director Mark Barnhart and Engineering Manager Bill Hurley explained this item which they said was presented to the BOF in 2022. They are only asking for approval to accept the SVA donation. The funds have already been received and Mr. Barnhart would like to apply them toward the project. There was no discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 7) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$2,760,480 for the costs to replace the Fairfield Beach Road Pump Station Force Main and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

Mr. Testani made a motion to put Item 7 before the BOF. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion.

The backup is on page 30 of regular backup. This is part of the capital plan that has been reviewed before and is included in the backup.

Interim DPW Director John Marsilio said there are WPCA projects and DPW projects included in the next few items. This is a pipeline project that is continuous with the Fairfield Beach Road Pump Station project. The environment is harsh with salt and sea water. This is budgeted for 2025. It will be replaced in kind and there is confidence that the budget for this is accurate. There are three parts to WPCA: pipes, pump station and the facility which all work together. Mr. Marsilio referred to a report in the backup from Wright & Pierce. There was a detailed discussion about the estimated cost as well as the backup included.

Attorney John Stafstrom said Items 7 & 11 are eligible for the Clean Water Fund program through the state. Each of the four resolutions anticipate a supplemental resolution in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the WPCA. WPCA agrees to pay with its funds. All projects are on a debt service line of the WPCA budget.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 8) To hear, consider and act upon the following Supplemental Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen:
WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield (the “Town”) has adopted, at the request of the Water Pollution Control Authority (“WPCA”), a Resolution entitled “A resolution appropriating \$2,760,480 for the costs to replace the Fairfield Beach Road Pump Station Force Main and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation” (the “Resolution”); and
WHEREAS, the Resolution appropriated \$2,760,480 for costs to replace the Fairfield Beach Road pump station force main (the “Project”) and authorized the issuance of bonds (the “Bonds”) and/or Clean Water Fund obligations (the “CWF Obligations”); and
WHEREAS, while the Town is liable for the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations, for internal accounting purposes, it is appropriate that the costs of the Project including debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations be allocated to the WPCA; and

WHEREAS, the Town's WPCA has agreed to pay for the costs of the Project and the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations authorized by the Resolution; and
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED, That the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations as it becomes due shall be paid by the WPCA from its own funds and the obligation of the WPCA shall be set forth in a memorandum of understanding (the "MOU") with the Town satisfactory to First Selectman; and That the First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the MOU on behalf of the Town.
(requires RTM approval)

Mr. Mitola made a motion to waive the reading and put Item 8 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

This is an MOU between the Town & WPCA. The backup is on page 34. There was no discussion,

The motion carried unanimously.

- 9) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, "A resolution appropriating \$4,500,000 for the costs of Phase V of the Water Pollution Control Facility Inflow and Infiltration Improvements Program and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation". – 20 YEARS
(requires RTM approval)

Mr. Mitola made a motion to put Item 9 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

This is for the design of the facility for Inflow and Infiltration improvements for nine million gallons of water per day. This is an ongoing project. This item is for a three year program 2025, 2026, and 2027, but could take longer than that. The design will be done as testing is being performed in Town with the manhole monitors. Overall, the improvements will take seven years and this is for the first three, but it has to be done as there is too much stress on the system.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 10) To hear, consider and act upon the following Supplemental Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen:
WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield (the "Town") has adopted, at the request of the Water Pollution Control Authority ("WPCA"), a Resolution entitled "A resolution appropriating \$4,500,000 for the costs of Phase V of the Water Pollution Control Facility Inflow and Infiltration Improvements Program and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation" (the "Resolution"); and
WHEREAS, the Resolution appropriated \$4,500,000 for costs associated with Phase V of the Water Pollution Control Facility inflow and infiltration improvements program (the "Project") and authorized the issuance of bonds (the "Bonds") and/or Clean Water Fund obligations (the CWF Obligations"); and
WHEREAS, while the Town is liable for the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations, for internal accounting purposes, it is appropriate that the costs of the Project including debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations be allocated to the WPCA; and
WHEREAS, the Town's WPCA has agreed to pay for the costs of the Project and the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations authorized by the Resolution; and
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED, That the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations as it becomes due shall be paid by the WPCA from its own funds and the obligation of the WPCA shall be set forth in a memorandum of understanding (the “MOU”) with the Town satisfactory to First Selectman; and That the First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the MOU on behalf of the Town.
(requires RTM approval)

Mr. Mitola made a motion to waive the reading and put Item 10 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

The backup is on page 65. There was no discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 11) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$5,681,988 for the costs of the Fairfield Beach Road Pump Station Replacement and Upgrades and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS *(requires RTM approval)*

Mr. Mitola made a motion to put Item 11 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

The backup for this Item is on page 118. The pump stations are in flood zones and must adhere to FEMA regulations and approvals through DEEP. Pump stations need to be hardened to sustain storms. Interim DPW Director John Marsilio is comfortable with the expense as this pump station is above ground and easier to evaluate. It is past its useful date and needs replacement.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 12) To hear, consider and act upon the following Supplemental Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen:
WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield (the “Town”) has adopted, at the request of the Water Pollution Control Authority (“WPCA”), a Resolution entitled “A resolution appropriating \$5,681,988 for the costs of the Fairfield Beach Road Pump Station Replacement and Upgrades and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation” (the “Resolution”); and
WHEREAS, the Resolution appropriated \$5,681,988 for costs associated with upgrades to the Fairfield Beach Road pump station (the “Project”) and authorized the issuance of bonds (the “Bonds”) and/or Clean Water Fund obligations (the “CWF Obligations”); and
WHEREAS, while the Town is liable for the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations, for internal accounting purposes, it is appropriate that the costs of the Project including debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations be allocated to the WPCA; and
WHEREAS, the Town’s WPCA has agreed to pay for the costs of the Project and the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations authorized by the Resolution; and
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:
RESOLVED, That the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations as it becomes due shall be paid by the WPCA from its own funds and the obligation of the WPCA shall be set forth in a memorandum of understanding (the “MOU”) with the Town satisfactory to First Selectman; and That the First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the MOU on behalf of the Town.
(requires RTM approval)

Ms. Ruggiero made a motion to waive the reading and put Item 12 before the BOF. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion.

The backup for this Item is on page 122. There was no discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 13) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$18,670,000 for the costs of water pollution control facility plant equipment improvements and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

Mr. Mitola made a motion to Item 13 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

The backup is on page 150. Part of the WPCF audit identified items in the plant beyond useful life and other components within the facility. The items were prioritized to high/medium/low. Mr. Marsilio is asking for high/medium items to be fixed. All designs are in the backup and the request is over a three-year period. The full funding will be spent as the project progresses. This is half of a seven year plan and was approved by the BOS as an MOU with the WPCA. The initial debt service is in the WPCA budget. There was a discussion regarding long term WPCA funding. James Walsh is uncomfortable voting for this as it will increase user fees and since it is for the main facility, Mr. Walsh said it should be paid for by all taxpayers and not just users. There was a discussion about funding.

The motion carried 7-1-0 (Mr. Walsh opposed).

The BOF will discuss the WPCA and a schedule at a special meeting.

- 14) To hear, consider and act upon the following Supplemental Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen:
WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield (the “Town”) has adopted at the request of the Water Pollution Control Authority (“WPCA”) a Resolution entitled “A resolution appropriating \$18,670,000 for the costs of water pollution control facility plant equipment improvements and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation” (the “Resolution”); and
WHEREAS, the Resolution appropriated \$18,670,000 for costs associated with the Water Pollution Control Facility plant equipment improvements (the “Project”) and authorized the issuance of bonds (the “Bonds”) and/or Clean Water Fund obligations (the CWF Obligations”); and
and
WHEREAS, while the Town is liable for the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations, for internal accounting purposes, it is appropriate that the costs of the Project including debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations be allocated to the WPCA; and
WHEREAS, the Town’s WPCA has agreed to pay for the costs of the Project and the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations authorized by the Resolution; and
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:
RESOLVED, That the debt service on the Bonds and the CWF Obligations as it becomes due shall be paid by the WPCA from its own funds and the obligation of the WPCA shall be set forth in a memorandum of understanding (the “MOU”) with the Town satisfactory to First Selectman; and
That the First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the MOU on behalf of the Town.
(*requires RTM approval*)

Ms. Ruggiero made a motion to waive the reading and put Item 14 before the BOF. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion.

The backup for this Item is on page 154. Mr. Walsh said he supports these projects, but cannot support the motion without additional information. There was no further discussion.

The motion carried 7-1-0 (Walsh opposed).

- 15) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$1,923,000 for the costs of the tidegates repair and replacement project and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

Ms. Charlton made a motion to amend the resolution to remove the wording, “and/or Clean Water Fund obligations” and put Item 15 before the BOF. Mr. Mitola seconded the amendment which carried unanimously.

The backup is on page 232. Tide gates will be replaced by the Engineering department and maintained by the Conservation department. There are 36 tide gates within the Town; 30 have been elevated and six have been left because they are not working and need to be dug out. It is a robust budget for the next three years: \$893,000 – 2025, \$836,000 – 2026, and \$217,000 – 2027. Currently, there are no grants available, but the Town is always looking for any. Mr. Walsh requested a breakdown of funds the Town has requested for these projects.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 16) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$3,770,000 for the costs of traffic signal improvement project and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

Mr. Mitola made a motion to put Item 16 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

Ms. Charlton made a motion to amend the resolution to remove the wording, “and/or Clean Water Fund obligations”. Mr. Testani seconded the amendment which carried unanimously.

The backup for this Item is on page 256. This is another three-year request (2025-2027) initially through ARPA funding that was recommended by the consultant. Traffic lights will have a backup battery system. Every light in Town will be affected by this program.

The motion carried 7-0-0 (Shane Pendley was out of the room at the time of the vote).

- 17) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$4,760,000 for the costs of sidewalk accessibility upgrades project and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

Ms. Ruggiero made a motion to put Item 17 before the BOF. Kevin Starke seconded the motion.

Ms. Charlton made a motion to amend the resolution to remove the wording, “and/or Clean Water Fund obligations”. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the amendment which carried 7-0-0. (Mr. Pendley was out of the room at the time of the vote).

The backup is on page 263. The sidewalk evaluation is a prioritized program and the needs have been put into the budget. Sidewalks must be ADA compliant and must be met with the newly paved roads. This program will also be for three years – 2025-2027 and then again in 2028 and 2029.

The motion carried 7-0-0 (Mr. Pendley was out of the room at the time of the vote).

- 18) To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$4,921,761 for the costs of the roadway accessibility upgrades project and authorizing the issuance of bonds and/or Clean Water Fund obligations to finance such appropriation”. – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

Ms. Charlton made a motion to amend the resolution to remove the wording, “and/or Clean Water Fund obligations”. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the amendment which carried unanimously.

Mr. Mitola made a motion to put Item 18 before the BOF. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion.

This is also a three-year program: \$1,776,956 -2025, \$1,649,138 -2026, \$1,495,670 -2027. In the third year of the program, the expenses are down. This plan also follows the increase in asphalt pricing. There was a discussion about the ARPA funds that included Rooster River.

Mr. Testani made a motion to postpone this item until the May 9, 2024 meeting. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

- 19) To hear, consider and act upon the draft minutes of March 5, 2024

Mr. Mitola made a motion to approve the minutes of March 5, 2024 as written. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

- 20) To hear committee updates
There were no committee updates.

- 21) To hear, consider and act upon any communications
There were no communications.

- 22) Adjourn
Ms. Ruggiero made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Testani seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O’Brien
Recording Secretary