

**Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 6, 2023, 7:30 pm
Via Webex And In Person at the
BOE Offices, Room 295 A/B
501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, CT**

A recording of this meeting can be found here: [BOF Regular Meeting 6.6.23](#).

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: Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Assistant DPW Director John Cottell, WPCF Superintendent John Bodie, Tax Assessor Ross Murray, Budget Director Frank Magneri, CFO Jared Schmitt, Police Chief Robert Kalamaras, Fairfield Museum and History Executive Director Mike Jehle
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 an Update from the Tax Assessor on the BAA Results and Status of Court Cases

Tax Assessor Ross Murray gave a summary of the 2023 Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA), which is also the first page of the back up documents. He said there were 53 appeals filed; six failed to appear or were withdrawn and 11 were commercial appeals of less than \$1million. Mr. Murray said that of the 11 commercial appeals not heard by the BAA, 7 have appealed to Superior Court. He said the 36 appeals that were heard by the BAA totaled \$33,687,485 and the total amount reduced was \$6,110,030. He said the next revaluation is in 2025 and site inspections will begin in Spring of 2024. There was a discussion about the different appeals and the process.

Follow up: a cumulative report of prior years BAA appeals and results.

- 4) ENGINEERING DIRECTOR (*pending BOS approval on 6/5/23; requires RTM approval*)
WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield, Connecticut (the 'Town') will receive grant funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (' FEMA') in the amount of \$ 256,335.95 (the 'Grant Funds') as reimbursement for money to be spent by the Town's Department of Public Works and their Contractor in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 related to infrastructure repair caused by storm IDA; and
WHEREAS, the Town desires to appropriate the Grant Funds to the Department of Public Works to be used for said infrastructure repairs;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: the Town hereby appropriates the Grant funds to the Department of Public Works and authorizes the grant funds to be used for infrastructure repair purposes."

James Walsh made a motion to put Item 4 before the BOF. Christopher DeWitt seconded the motion.

The backup for this Item is on page 4 of the backup documents. Engineering Manager Bill Hurley explained that Hurricane Ida caused damage to the Town's infrastructure. He said FEMA has agreed to repair this. He said the permits are in review and the Town received an 18-month extension. Mr. Hurley said all projects are to be completed this summer.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 5) **CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER (*pending BOS approval on 6/5/23; requires RTM approval*)**
To hear, consider and adopt a resolution appropriating \$148,000 for the costs related to uses of Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund

Craig Curley made a motion to put Item 5 before the BOF. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion.

The backup for Item 5, starts on page 38 of the backup documents. Police Chief Robert Kalamaras talked about the Safe Corridor Program (\$108,000). He said in this program, surveillance cameras are placed throughout the Town for early detection of possible situations. He said dispatch has access to these cameras and can notify officers on duty should there be an incident or risk with the schools. Chief Kalamaras said he would like to have 18 additional cameras placed in areas surrounding the schools for early detection. He said the Fairfield Police Department has been working with Bridgeport Fusion Center which also monitors the cameras. He said no cameras are placed where privacy would be violated. Chief Kalamaras said the cameras have AI which will help solve crimes in the area. There was a discussion as to placement of cameras. Sheila Marmion said she would like there to be more public discussion about this program and to see more statistics about the program's success in other towns.

Follow up: Explanation of the early warning system and how it works.

The backup documents for Item 5, Fairfield Museum is on page 29. Fairfield Museum and History Executive Director Mike Jehle said he has been working over the last decade to conduct research on the Town's history. He said the museum draws 30,000 people yearly and has programs for Fairfield's public and private schools. Mr. Jehle said the museum will have this program for 10-15 years and it is in the final month of completion. Chairwoman Charlton suggested a more definitive explanation of the plan for the RTM as well as funds eligibility.

There was a discussion about ARPA funds that are still available and how much of the unallocated funds were left after these programs are deducted. CFO Jared Schmitt said there will still be \$1.35 million available.

Ms. Marmion made a motion to separate the two items and vote separately. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion which carried 7-2-0. (Walsh, Testani opposed).

The first item to adopt the resolution with respect to the Safe Corridor proposal carried 8-1-0 (Marmion opposed).

The second item to adopt the resolution with respect to the Fairfield Museum carried unanimously.

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to adopt the original resolution set forth since both motions passed. Mr. Walsh seconded the motion which carried 8-1-0 (Marmion opposed).

Mary LeClerc left the meeting at 9:10pm.

6) **PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR (*pending BOS approval on 6/5/23; requires RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled “A resolution appropriating \$2,377,000 for the purchase of vehicles and equipment for the Department of Public Works and authorizing the issuance of bonds to Finance such Appropriation”

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to put Item 6 before the BOF. Craig Curley seconded the motion.

The backup documents for this Item begin on page 40 of the backup documents. Assistant DPW Director John Cottell said this is part of a three-year Capital Plan and follows the last three-year program. He said DPW is upgrading its fleet to serve the public better. Mr. Cottell said the last program was successful and there is still money left over. He said the amount of money requested will go down as the fleet is renewed. He said the larger purchases were made last year. There was a discussion about the useful life of the Town equipment vehicles.

The motion carried unanimously.

Follow up: Chairwoman Charlton would like an updated Waterfall chart in September.

7) **WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY (*pending BOS approval on 6/5/23; requires RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and approve funding of up to \$70,000 from the WPCA fund balance for the purchase of an Influent Building Transformer

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to put Item 7 before the BOF. Mr. Curley seconded the motion.

Backup documents for this Item begin on page 44 of the backup. WPCF Superintendent John Bodie explained that there are three transformers that are older. He said one was replaced and one was changed to a different type so that piece was switched out from another one that was failing. Mr. Bodie said the transformers are not easy to find, but he has found one that is refurbished and has a three-year warranty. He said he would like to purchase it to replace the older transformer that is working currently, but is 22 years old. He said the WPCA fund balance is \$14.5 million.

The motion carried unanimously.

Follow up: Update of WPCA fund balance and upcoming projects for the next meeting in September.

- 8) **WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY (*pending BOS approval on 6/5/23; requires RTM approval*)**
To hear, consider and approve funding of up to \$125,000 from the WPCA fund balance for the purchase of a Trailer Mounted Generator

John Mitola made a motion to put Item 8 before the BOF. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion.

The backup for this Item is on page 48 of the backup documents. Mr. Bodie said there are 11 generators for the pump stations in the Town. He said eight are permanent and 3 are trailer mounted. Mr. Bodie said he is requesting an additional trailer mounted generator to back up the 8 permanent generators. He said this way, the WPCA will be able to repower any of the other stations due to a generator failure. He said the rental costs and availability of emergency generators is problematic.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 9) To hear, consider and act upon a recommendation from the Board of Finance Audit Subcommittee to accept the bid and reappointment of the independent auditors for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023

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

The back up for this Item is on page 53. John Mitola said this Item was taken up at the BOF Audit Subcommittee just prior to the BOF regular meeting this evening and the subcommittee voted to continue to use PKF O'Connor Davies for this year's professional audit services. Mr. Mitola said the services this year will be the same as they were last year. He expressed the importance of getting the information to the auditors on time so the audit can be done in a timely manner. He said the goal is to have all the information and the draft report done by 12/5 and finalize by 12/31.

Mr. DeWitt gave an update on the Purchasing Policy which is still being reviewed and edited. He said when the policy is available, there will be a special meeting so everyone can have it. Mr. Curley requested a summary of changes to the document.

- 10) To hear, consider and appoint the Clerk and Assistant Clerk of the BOF for the next year ending May 2024

Chairwoman Charlton nominated CFO Jared Schmitt as Clerk of the BOF through May 2024. Mr. Walsh seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Chairwoman Charlton nominated Deputy Chief of Staff Jennifer Carpenter as Assistant Clerk of the BOF through May 2024. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

- 11) To hear, consider and act upon any communications

CFO Jared Schmitt said he emailed the BOF members pages from ARPA that defines the uses for the funds.

Mr. Walsh said he would like to have an Executive Session at the September meeting to discuss the security upgrades to Fairfield Public Schools.

Mr. Curley said he would like an update on Penfield Pavilion from CAO Tom Bremer at the September meeting.

- 12) Adjourn

Chairwoman Charlton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary