

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
June 8, 2022
7:00 PM

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

Roll Call: Kathy Donahue, Diane Gagnon, Ed Adelman, Nick Brown, Joan Fox, Stan Crawford
Staff and Others Present: Selectmen Allan Cahill, Bob Grindle, and John Tillinghast, Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez,
Recording Secretary Dayna McDermott-Arriola.

Seating of Alternates

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Joan Fox, to seat Stan Crawford for Judy Buell. Motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Comments: Ellen Rodriguez expressed disappointment in the finance board's vote against the Selectmen's proposal that awarded her a \$5000 salary adjustment. Stating that the Minutes contained no references to discussions regarding the documentation she submitted to the board, she offered the following information: she has earned a Bachelor's Degree; she hasn't received a raise other than a cost-of-living adjustment for over 15 years; she earns 15% less than the Town Clerk, 17% less than the Town Assessor, and 58% of what Treasurers/Finance Directors earn in area towns. She also noted that our unassigned fund balance is substantial enough to pay the Treasurer a fair salary and criticized the board for not establishing a committee to research employee compensation. In support of her statement, First Selectman Cahill said that the Treasurer's salary has not been handled equitably compared with other officials in Town Hall.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Ed Adelman, seconded by Nick Brown, to approve the Minutes of the April 13, 2022 Regular Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Joan Fox, seconded by Ed Adelman, to approve the Minutes of the May 20, 2022 Public Hearing. Motion carried unanimously, Nick Brown abstaining.

Motion: Joan Fox, seconded by Diane Gagnon, to approve the Minutes of the May 20, 2022 Special Meeting. Motion carried unanimously, Nick Brown abstaining.

Motion: Joan fox, seconded by Diane Gagnon, to approve the Minutes of the May 24, 2022 Special Meeting. Motion carried unanimously, Ed Adelman and Nick Brown abstaining.

Reports/Actions

First Selectman: First Selectman Cahill reported that the dates for tax collection have been extended to August 1 – September 1 and that the legal notice for the June 16 Town Meeting and the June 28 referendum were published on June 8. He stated later that a decision on the court case involving the Town's Assessor and the solar park assessments is expected July 12.

Tax Collector: The monthly report has not yet been received.

Treasurer: Treasurer Rodriguez distributed the requests for transfers.

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Stan Crawford, to approve the following transfers: \$304 to #6003-04 Town Clerk Assistant from #6003-03 Town Clerk Assistant Training; \$80 to #6003-05 Town Clerk Mailing from #6003-08 Education; \$1,060 to #6004 Town Counsel from #7000 Contingency; \$200 to #6006-05 Assessor Professional from #6006-02 Assessor Clerk; \$275 to #6006-11 Assessor Web Hosting from #6006-02 Assessor Clerk; \$700 to #6007-04 Town Hall Fire Extinguisher from #6007 -03 Town Hall Maintenance; \$60 to #6009-04 Election Postage from #6009-01 Election Registrars Pay; \$620 to #6010-00 P & Z Clerk from #6010-01 P & Z Enforcement Officer; \$116 to DEP Land Use Fee from #6010-06 P & Z Training; \$80 to P & Z Legal/Engineering from #6010-06 P & Z Training; \$1000 to #6013-04 Town Hall Oil from #6015 Health Insurance; \$1,600 to #6013-08 Town Garage Oil from #6015 Health Insurance; \$170 to #6013-09 Town Garage Telephone from #6015 Health Insurance; \$80 to #6013-11 Community Center Oil from #6015 Health Insurance; \$430 to #6013-13 Fire Department Oil from #6015 Health Insurance; \$777 to #6100-05 Paramedic

from #7000 Contingency; \$115 to #6100-10 Building Inspector Clerk from #6100-12 Burning Permits; \$481 to #6201-07 Town Garage Maintenance from #6201-03 Road Maintenance Payroll OT; \$923 to #6201-09 Equipment Maintenance from #6201-03 Road Maintenance Payroll OT. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Rodriguez also apprised the board of Certificates of Deposit maturing in May and June.

After discussion it was decided to renew the CDs for the minimal amount of time until the market returns higher interest rates.

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Stan Crawford, to renew the CDs for three months each. Motion carried unanimously.

Boards of Education:

Regional District #11: Joan Fox announced that *U. S. News and World Reports* ranked Parish Hill High School 31st of high schools in Connecticut, and 1535th nationally. She also reported that the budget passed in all three towns, and that though there would be minimal unspent funds at the end of this fiscal year, the school's spending is not expected to exceed the budgeted amount.

Hampton Elementary School: Diane Gagnon reported that Superintendent Olah is recuperating from recent emergency surgery.

Board of Finance Committees

Policies and Procedures Committee: Chairman Donahue read the letters from the Superintendent Olah responsive to her May 12 request regarding the school's financial procedures dated May 19 and May 23, the latter indicating that the school's financial procedures are due for an update and will incorporate into revisions some of the language in the finance board's draft manual prior to the new superintendent assuming the duties after Mr. Olah's retirement.

Ad Hoc Committee for Inter-district Education Cost Sharing: Chairman Donahue reported that the Programming Committee is planning to meet June 17 to finish estimates, after which the committee's findings will be presented to the Boards of Education and the Town as the new school year commences.

Correspondence: Chairman Donahue received Regional District #11's financial reports and a communication from the Office of Policy and Management which were forwarded to members. She also reported receipt of all but two submissions for the Annual Report.

Old Business: none.

New Business

- a. **Town Meeting and Referendum: June 16 & June 28:** Chairman Donahue announced that the finance board will conduct a Special Meeting on June 28 at 8:15PM after the results of the referendum are tallied to set the mill rate. To Ed Adelman's question on raising the mill rate, Chairman Donahue stated that a discussion on increasing or lessening the mill rate can occur at that meeting.

Additions to the Agenda: none.

Citizen Comments: Selectmen Grindle expressed his support of the \$5000 Treasurer's salary increase, citing her thirty years of experience. Nick Brown, Joan Fox, Ed Adelman and Stan Crawford agreed. Mr. Brown stated that the Treasurer prepares and provides reports for the finance board and reminded members that the Treasurer addressed deficiencies identified in the audit five years ago; Ms. Fox was critical of comparisons presented which used hourly rates; Mr. Adelman, while acknowledging that different information needs to be considered, stated that the research Kathi Newcombe produced at the last meeting was confusing; and Stan Crawford suggested that salaries of Town employees should be awarded solely at the First Selectman's discretion. Chairman Donahue stated that after lengthy discussion and several motions regarding employee compensation, the decision to award all employees a 4% cost-of-living increase was approved by five members of the board, with one abstention. She reminded members that research on full compensation of all Town employees was conducted a few years ago and that she has suggested that a bi-partisan committee, in an election year, review the full compensation package, including benefits such as health insurance and IRA matches, and consider weekly hours and advanced degrees and education, for all Town employees. She also reminded members that the \$5000 proposed increase to the Treasurer's salary was based on market comparisons, not merit, and in response to the statement on audits, that the signing of a check, without the statutorily required approval, formed the basis of a material weakness cited by the Auditor in the most recent audit. To a question on personnel policies with respect to salaries and evaluative tools, the First Selectman stated that those policies were developed prior to his tenure, and Chairman Donahue

stated that there's no evaluative component in the policies, and language regarding committee review of compensation is limited to the First Selectman's salary.

Suggestions for Next Agenda: Diane Gagnon requested discussion on the Assistant Town Clerk's salary and training. Approval of the Minutes of the April 28 Meeting also needs to be included in the Agenda.

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting: July 13, 2022 at 7PM in the lower level of Town Hall.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting adjourned at 7:37PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Secretary

This is a draft version of the Minutes until approved by the Board of Finance.