

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
October 12, 2022
7:00 PM

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01PM.

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

Seating of Alternates

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Diane Gagnon, to seat Stan Crawford for Joan Fox and Kathi Newcombe for Judy Buell. Motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Comments: none.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Kathi Newcombe, seconded by Nick Brown, to approve the Minutes of the August 10, 2022 Regular Meeting with the following amendment: Under Treasurer's Report, "...to approve the following FY 2021-2022 transfers..." Motion carried unanimously, Ed Adelman and Nick Brown abstaining.

Reports/Actions

First Selectman: First Selectman Allan Cahill reported that a summons in the Solar Park court case has been received, stating that he is less confident in the Town prevailing as these cases are trending against municipalities. Selectman Cahill also reported that the audit and enumeration continue, and that Kathi Newcombe has been named the enumerator. To date, she has not received the October 1 enrollment reports from the school. With respect to the advisory vote on Hampton and Scotland forming a Cooperative Agreement to merge the two schools, which passed in Scotland, with a vote of 196-73, and failed in Hampton, with a vote of 154-258, Selectman Cahill said that it was a missed opportunity to collaborate on solving the issue of declining student enrollment, adding that the report of the committee charged with researching the issue could be used in the future. Nick Brown asked why the advisory vote wasn't included on the November ballot; it was explained that questions must be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval approximately two months prior to an election. Diane Gagnon asked if the family of two students who were attending school in Hampton for several years, rather than in Scotland where they live, would be charged tuition; Selectman Cahill said a decision was still pending. Chairman Donahue explained that the students, who are now at Scotland Elementary, had been attending Hampton Elementary, and that while the family owns a small parcel of land in Hampton, their house is in Scotland and their real estate and personal property taxes have been taxed to Scotland. Ms. Gagnon also asked if the Town Clerk was still residing in town and whether or not she was receiving a full salary while she is working full time for Regional District #11, noting that the amount budgeted for the Assistant Town Clerk is nearly spent with most of the year remaining. Chairman Donahue asked if a precedent was set with the prior Town Clerk and Tax Collector, whose salaries paid for assistants when they weren't working in their Offices. Selectman Cahill said the Town Clerk plans on resigning November 1.

Tax Collector: Chairman Donahue distributed the September report, which reported net collections of 2,039,192.78, or 53.1% to date.

Treasurer: Treasurer Rodriguez distributed information on the status of Certificates of Deposit, two of which matured in September and one in October. Chairman Donahue suggested that decisions on renewal occur after the discussion on the Length of Service Award Program (LoSAP) investment.

Boards of Education:

Hampton Elementary School: no report.

Regional District #11: no report.

Board of Finance Committees

Policies and Procedures Committee: The committee is still waiting for a response from the Hampton Elementary School on its financial procedures. Chairman Donahue reported that the new superintendent will be reviewing the policies and procedures with the Business Coordinator.

Correspondence: Chairman Donahue received the Tax Collector's September Report, Regional District #11's and Hampton Elementary's financial reports, Hampton Fire Department Flushing Bank Statement, and correspondence from Bob Sagistano of Hometown Firefighter and EMS Services regarding the LoSAP investments.

Old Business:

a. Discussion of Approved Length of Service Award Program Investment

Chairman Donahue distributed annuity rates received from Mr. Sagistano who provided information on current rates with Massachusetts Mutual Life and Nationwide Life Insurance. She is also trying to reach, at Mr. Crawford's suggestion, Fidelity Life Insurance, though the representatives she has spoken with there deal only with individual, not group, annuity plans; she suggested other members research other companies. By general consent, it was agreed to hold a special meeting with Mr. Sagistano on October 20 at 3PM, pending his availability.

New Business:

a. Discussion on Planning & Zoning Commission's Request for Additional Funding for FY2021-2022 (Town Meeting Required)

Selectman Cahill reported that the Special Town Meeting previously scheduled to approve the funding did not occur as he didn't bring the information from the Treasurer necessary to conduct the meeting, which he consequently canceled. Chairman Donahue suggested that the town reschedule the meeting; both she and Nick Brown concurred that the 2019 auditor's response to the question of whether the \$20,000 threshold that necessitates approval by the legislative body is an aggregate amount, or from one department, is unclear. First Selectman Cahill contacted the Town attorney who conveyed that there were different interpretations of the relevant statute. Some members stated that the amount in question, \$610, is too small to justify spending money on another legal notice, which, according to Selectman Tillinghast, costs approximately \$700.

Motion: Stan Crawford, seconded by Nick Brown, to approve the Planning & Zoning Commission's request for additional funding for FY2021-2022.

In Favor: Stan Crawford, Nick Brown, Diane Gagnon, Ed Adelman

Opposed: Kathy Donahue, Kathi Newcombe.

Motion carries, 4 – 2.

Additions to the Agenda: Mr. Adelman asked for a discussion on conducting hybrid meetings. Chairman Donahue said she would contact the Freedom of Information Commission to find out the most recent legislation concerning public meetings.

Citizen Comments: none.

Suggestions for Next Agenda: Discussion of competitive interest rates for the Length of Service Award Program annuities.

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting: November 9, 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 7:41PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Secretary

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