

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Special Meeting
May 10, 2021
7:00 PM
Zoom Meeting

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

Roll Call: Kathy Donahue, Diane Gagnon, Ed Adelman, Nick Brown, Jessie Samios, Kathi Newcombe, Stan Crawford.

Staff and Others Present: First Selectman Allan Cahill, Selectman Bob Grindle, Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez, Hampton Elementary School Board of Education Chairman Rose Bisson, Superintendent Frank Olah, Business Coordinator Sally Lehoux, Recording Secretary Dayna McDermott-Arriola.

Seating of Alternates:

Motion: Diane Gagnon, seconded by Jessie Samios, to seat Kathi Newcombe for Judy Buell. Motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Comments: none.

Presentations:

Hampton Elementary School Board of Education: Chairman Bisson presented the school's budget proposal, \$13,900 over the current year with the following line item increases: one additional tuition to STEM Academy; extra house-keeping expenses due to Covid guidelines which federal grants might not fund; two special education students receiving outplacement services; a 4% insurance increase. To Diane Gagnon's request for a comparison of the student census from 2019-20 to 2020-21, Chairman Donahue reported that, according to the State Department, there were 90 students attending in October 2019, and 73 in October 2020. Ms. Bisson reported that there are currently 19 students in grades 1 & 2, 15 students in grades 3 & 4, 18 students in grade 5 & 6, and 15 students in kindergarten. Though the school anticipates some students returning in September, there are only five students enrolled in next year's Pre-K class and eight students in Kindergarten. Superintendent Olah detailed the staffing as follows: along with full-time certified teachers in five classes, special education and SRBI/technology, there are eight full time paraprofessionals, one in each classroom and in special education, a .5 Art Teacher, a .8 Physical Education teacher, and a .4 Music Teacher, each of whom co-teach in the classrooms and cover classrooms for contracted teacher planning periods. The part-time guidance counselor position will extend to full-time if needed using funds from the American Rescue Plan. Chairman Donahue reported that the State Appropriations Committee decided to evergreen the Minimum Budget Requirement and to continue the adjustments on Education Cost Sharing, with Hampton facing a \$56,681 reduction; she will forward the information to Dr. Olah. To Chairman Donahue's request for plans on expending anticipated grants, Dr. Olah stated that the \$15,000 in Title I funds reduce current costs, \$10,000 in Title IV funds will renovate the playscape for ADA compliance, and \$10,000 in REAP funds is slated for the Social Studies curriculum. The \$151,000 from the American Rescue Plan, which ends in 2024, will cover summer school, implementation of increased technology networks, building repairs, and installation of air-conditioning in the Pre-K, Kindergarten and Special Education classrooms. To Ed Adelman's question on summer school, Dr. Olah stated that in previous years, special education students participated, and that this year, the program is expanded to include regular education students. To Diane Gagnon's question, Dr. Olah replied that the school plans on 12 – 15 students participating in summer school, though there are no actual enrollment figures. Ms. Gagnon also asked if there were volunteers at the school. Dr. Olah said that normally there are four senior citizens who volunteer every day, or week, but Covid prevented people from volunteering this year. At Chairman Donahue's request, Kathi Newcombe explained that the

finance board has ten days to respond in writing to the school board's request. Chairman Donahue encouraged everyone to send concerns and suggestions, which will be forwarded to the Board of Education. She also asked Business Coordinator Lehoux to contact the State Department for the district's MBR calculations.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Ed Adelman, seconded by Diane Gagnon, to approve the Minutes of the April 28, 2021 Special Meeting. Motion carried 4-0, Nick Brown and Kathi Newcombe abstaining.

Reports/Actions

First Selectman: First Selectman Cahill reported that the Selectmen approved a municipal budget proposal which includes a 5% increase to energy accounts, a 4% increase in health insurance, double the amount in the Fire Department Length of Service Award Program, and funds reinstated to the Capital & Non-recurring accounts. Mr. Cahill reported that the first phase of paving on Station Road is complete, and that a fund for Department of Public Works Supervisor Don Sholes, who sustained extensive injuries in an accident with a deer, has been established at the Jewett City Savings bank. In response to Diane Gagnon's question, Selectman Grindle stated that donation funds are not taxed. Mr. Cahill announced that there will be no assembling on Memorial Day, and that Town Hall will be closed until July 1. The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee for Inter-district Education Cost Sharing is on June 3.

Tax Collector: Chairman Donahue has not yet received the Tax Collector's monthly report.

Treasurer: Treasurer Rodriguez requested several transfers.

Motion: Diane Gagnon, seconded by Kathi Newcombe, to approve the following transfers: \$25 to #6006-11 Assessor Web Hosting from #6006-04 Assessor Education; \$900 to #6007-03 Town Hall Maintenance from #7000 Contingency; \$262 to #6009-02 Election/Other Workers Pay from #6009-01 Election Registrars Pay; \$850 to #6010-00 Planning & Zoning Clerk from #6010-08 Planning & Zoning Legal/Engineering; \$400 to #6013-17 to Community Center Supplies from #6013-11 Community Center Oil; \$850 to #6100-10 Building Inspector Clerk from #7000 Contingency; \$200 to #6201-07 Town Garage Maintenance from #6201-05 Diesel; \$2800 to #6300-00 Sanitation Transfer Station from #7000 Contingency. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Rodriguez reported on the current interest rates of the municipal accounts and Certificates of Deposits; Chairman Donahue stated that a discussion on investments could be added to the Agenda of the May 13 Regular Meeting. Kathi Newcombe asked why the Fire Department's Capital & Non-recurring Account decreased; Treasurer Rodriguez explained that the Scott Air Packs were purchased, though CNR Account expenditures do not appear on the monthly vendor list. At Ms. Newcombe's request, Treasurer Rodriguez said that she will provide monthly financial information on all accounts. Ms. Newcombe inquired as to the donations for the Airline Pamphlet. Treasurer Rodriguez stated that item #5200-02 contains donations, and that \$1,480 has been donated thus far for the project. Ms. Newcombe also questioned the process of approving expenses for the Community Center. First Selectman Cahill explained that the Town is responsible for all building maintenance costs. Diane Gagnon thanked Stan Crawford for repairing the drawers at the Community Center.

Boards of Education:

Hampton Elementary School: Chairman Donahue reminded members to send concerns and suggestions regarding the school's budget.

Regional District #11: Chairman Donahue reported that the school's budget was defeated at the referendum and that the board will revisit the proposal at their meeting on May 18.

Board of Finance Committees

Policies and Procedures Committee: Chairman Donahue reported that the committee has not met.

Review and Possible Action on Approval of *Budget Management Policies and Procedures for Town Agencies*: Chairman Donahue reported receipt of the auditor's comments which she is reviewing.

Correspondence: Chairman Donahue reported on a request from the Tax Collector for the mill rate after the budgets are approved, and receipt of the Hampton Volunteer Fire Department LOSAP Program Actuarial Report from Hometown Firefighter & EMS Services, who have confirmed their availability for a meeting on May 12. Hard copies are available to members. To Ed Adelman's question on the goal of the meeting, Chairman Donahue stated the Company will present, and answer questions, on the report, and the board should receive accurate information sufficient to properly fund the account in the budget.

New Business

- a. **Schedule Budget Work Session:** By general consent, it was agreed to meet on May 20, 2021 at 6:30PM. Treasurer Rodriguez will send members the current proposal for the municipal budget.
- b. **Schedule Public Hearing:** The Public Hearing will be scheduled after the budget work session.

Old Business

- a. **Discussion of Request for Proposal for Town Auditor:** Nick Brown will update and forward the previous RFP to Treasurer Rodriguez.
- b. **Update on *Accounting Policies and Procedures*:** Chairman Donahue reported that the auditor is reviewing the document.

Additions to Agenda: none.

Citizen Comments: none.

Suggestions for Next Agenda: tabled.

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting: May 12, 2021, at 7PM.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Secretary