

Town of Hampton  
Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, June 11, 2019  
7:00 pm  
Hampton Town Hall

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Chair Perry Matchinis.

Members/alternates present: Nick Brown, Lisa Sanchez, Ed Adelman, Perry Matchinis, Kathy Donahue, Alyssa Languth, Stan Crawford, Kathi Newcombe.

Members/alternates absent: Rick Matejka.

Other present: First Selectman Allan Cahill, Selectman Bob Grindle, Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez, Board of Education member Mark Becker.

Citizen comments: None.

Approval of minutes:

**MOTION: Lisa Sanchez moved and Kathy Donahue seconded to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2019 Public Hearing with the following amendments:**

**Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez noted that the fund balances needed to be corrected; the unassigned to \$901,196, the assigned to \$20,678 and the Capital Non-Recurring to \$552,369.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION: Lisa Sanchez moved and Kathy Donahue seconded to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2019 Regular Meeting with the following amendments:**

**Perry Matchinis noted under the First Selectman's report, the extension on the permit for the solar field should state "3-year extension to 2021";**

**Perry Matchinis noted under the Tax Collector's report that the approval of the Dairy Abatement should be added as "granted to Eva Sol Farm LLC and Clark Woodmansee for a total of 50%";**

**Ed Adelman noted under the First Selectman's report that the clarification should be made concerning the large donation to Fletcher Memorial Library that it will "complete the funding of the addition".**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Alternate Kathi Newcombe was seated for Rick Matejka by Chair Perry Matchinis at Rick's request. New alternate to the Board Alyssa Languth was also introduced and invited to take part in the Board's discussion.

Presentations: None.

Reports/Action:

- a. First Selectman: Allan Cahill reported that the State has passed a budget, and the latest version of the Regional District #11 budget passed at referendum; the latest town budget reflects the town's new reduced RD11 assessment as well as the actual cut in the Educational Cost Sharing grant for the upcoming fiscal year and the removal of the funds previously set aside as the town's contribution to the Teacher's Retirement Board pension fund. The Board of Selectman has set the date for the annual town meeting for Tuesday, June 25 at 7pm in the lower level of Town Hall, with a social, coordinated by the two major political parties, starting at 6:30. Items on the call include approval of the General Government and Hampton Elementary School budgets, a question on the retrieval from the General Fund of the cost of paving Kenyon Road budgeted in the 2018 fiscal year but not completed until this year, a question on the creation of a municipal CNR reserve fund to fund a new generator and various paving projects at Hampton Elementary School among other projects, a question on the purchase of a parcel of land in the Little River watershed whose cost would be covered by the Open Space CNR funds, a question on an ordinance setting up parameters for town purchases, a question on an ordinance to make the office of the Tax Collector an appointed rather than an elected position. The two budget questions, the municipal reserve fund questions, the land purchase question, and the two ordinance questions will be adjourned to referendum on Tuesday, July 9, from Noon to 8pm. In response to questions from Board members, Allan clarified that the municipal reserve fund would allow the setting aside of already received funds to apply to needed projects without going over the 2.5% increase limit that the State Office of Policy & Management (OPM) has placed on municipalities, and any funds not spent would remain in the fund for the following fiscal year, and that the Tax Collector changing to an appointed position would allow the Board of Selectmen the option to either appoint a qualified person or to outsource the position to another town, hopefully with the option of having someone in town at least once or twice per month to receive tax payments.

In addition, the Small Cities Grant Consultation and the First Selectman are applying for an extension to the grant which to prevent the funding from expiring, since several projects have recently come forward.

- b. Tax Collector: Approval of the Tax Collector report was tabled at the suggestion of First Selectman Cahill, due to a questions about the totals collected; this was also tabled at the latest Board of Selectmen meeting.
- c. Treasurer: Ellen Rodriguez presented an updated transfer request. Questions about the paving overrun were answered by the paving of Kenyon Road whose funds had been swept into the General Fund.

**MOTION: Kathy Donahue moved and Perry Matchinis seconded to approve the following transfers as requested by Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez:**

<b>Amount</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
\$40	6000-05 Selectman Mileage	6000-06 Selectmen Supplies
\$854	6001-01 Tax Collector Salary	6001-02 Tax Collector Assistant
\$27	6003-08 Town Clerk Conference	6003-06 Town Clerk Mileage
\$15	6005-02 Treasurer Computer Supplies	6005-06 Treasurer Mileage

\$85	6006-03 Assessor Mileage	6006-05 Assessor Professional Expense
\$2397	6009-01 Election Registrars' Pay	6009-02 Election Workers' Pay
\$406	6010-08 P & Z Legal/Engineering	6010-02 P & Z Legal Notices
\$227	7000 Contingency	6012-01 Board of Finance Administration
\$5550	6201-03 Road Maint. Payroll OT	6201-01 Road Maintenance
\$1272	6300-00 Sanitation Transfer Station	6300-03 Sanitation Tipping Fees
\$127	7000 Contingency	6600 PHHS
\$1281	7000 Contingency	6100-10 Building Inspector Clerk

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- d. Board of Education: Board of Education member Mark Becker provided an updated proposal on needed projects at the school, with additional quotes, including a generator replacement and paving/playground repair. It would be the intention of the Board of Education to use the HES CNR account balance to help fund these projects. Lisa Sanchez asked about the status of the paved path around the outskirts of the field. Mark Becker responded that he would check the status of the pavement there. Allan Cahill asked how the school's 5-year plan would be funded. Mark Becker replied that funding for some of the items would be built into their budget. Kathy Donahue asked about the status of the teacher retirement incentive. Mark Becker replied that no teachers were interested in taking advantage of it. Kathy Donahue asked about what the anticipated surplus was for the current fiscal year. Mark Becker replied that he did not have that information and would discuss it at the BoE's next meeting. Kathy Donahue asked about the status of receiving the function budget as well as the object budget document. Mark Becker said he would follow up on that. Kathy Donahue asked about the student count anticipated for the upcoming fiscal year, based upon how many potential students counted on enumeration will be attending the Mennonite School rather than Hampton Elementary. Mark Becker said he would follow up on that.
- e. Board of Finance Committees
  - a. Human Resource: Kathy Donahue reported that the committee met and pulled information in various configurations off the CT Council of Municipalities (CCM) website using the Treasurer's user id. She also said the Town Assessor came forth with a wealth of information on Assessors in CT. There was discussion of the Board of Finance having its own user id for CCM instead of using the Treasurer's, and Ellen offered to follow up on that.
  - b. By-laws: Perry Matchinis reported the committee had met twice and had reviewed the first seven sections of the by-laws.
- f. Other: None.

Correspondence: None.

Old Business:

- a. Discuss and Act on Town Government FY2019-2020 budget: Lisa Sanchez asked about how and when the recommendations for salary adjustments from the Human Resources committee would be implemented. Kathy Donahue suggested that a special town meeting be held, regardless of the total amount that would be appropriated in the interest of full transparency. Nick Brown asked if OPM looked at the total budget when limiting the increase to 2.5% or if the

2.63% General Government budget would exceed the threshold. Allan Cahill responded that the threshold applies to the town budget as a whole.

**MOTION: Lisa Sanchez moved and Kathi Newcombe seconded to approve the General Government budget of \$1,675,184.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. Discuss and Act on Hampton Elementary School FY2019-2020 budget: Kathy Donahue distributed some information from the CCM website and the State statutes concerning the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR), showing that the MBR can be reduced for drop in student census (not applicable this year to HES) and for a cut in ECS funding. The ECS funding cut to Hampton passed in the State budget was \$53,196, and she suggested that the elementary school absorb a percentage of that cut based upon the percentage of students at HES (93) compared to the total number (154) of Hampton students at HES and RD11, that percentage calculating to 60% of the ECS funding cut or \$31,916. She also suggested items in the HES budget that could be cut or reduced (funds for teacher retirement incentives and an additional half-time pre-K teacher no longer needed) to meet or exceed that percentage reduction without adversely affecting educational programming. Ed Adelman clarified that the suggestion was to ask the HES Board to reduce its budget by only its share of students, not by the entire \$53,196. Nick Brown clarified that the suggestion was to reduce the HES budget while the student count at HES had not dropped. Kathy Donahue went on to say that she as well as members of the fiscal authorities in Chaplin and Scotland had approached the RD11 Board and asked them to consider cutting their budget to account for the inevitable cut in ECS funding, but the RD11 Board declined to do so, and now their budget has passed without being reduced as much as it legally could per the MBR statute. Nick Brown clarified that the total reduction in education funding in Hampton would be about \$83,000. Allan Cahill noted that the immediate purpose of the municipal reserve fund was to spend several hundred thousands of dollars on projects for the elementary school. Kathy Donahue noted that the mid-year cut last year was over \$100,000 and that was totally absorbed by the town with no impact to the school budget. Ed Adelman asked if there could be a middle ground, and Mark Becker pointed out that the suggested cut was already a compromise, since HES was not being asked to absorb the entire ECS funding cut. Ed Adelman then asked if RD11 could take their fair share of the cut for next year. Kathy Donahue suggested that the Board of Finance could make such a resolution but could not force the RD11 Board to do so. Allan Cahill pointed out that the RD11 Board in fact increased their budget against the recommendation of their Superintendent. Kathy Donahue suggested that our Board of Finance work with the fiscal authorities of the other two towns to pressure the RD11 Board next year. Nick Brown objected to this approach to funding education, and Kathy Donahue countered with the total of well over \$600,000 in ECS funding cuts over 10 years, including the mid-year cut last year. Kathi Newcombe pointed out that Hampton is in the top 20 school districts in the State in cost per pupil spending. Mark Becker stated that the next regular meeting of the HES Board of Ed is June 26<sup>th</sup>, one day after the town meeting, so a special meeting may need to be convened to adjust their budget.

**MOTION: Lisa Sanchez moved and Perry Matchinis seconded to direct the Hampton Elementary School Board of Education to reduce their proposed budget by \$31,916 to \$2,104,318.**

**Motion carried 4-2, with Kathy Donahue, Perry Matchinis, Lisa Sanchez and Kathi Newcombe voting in favor, Nick Brown and Ed Adelman opposed.**

New Business:

- a. Retention of Records: After a discussion about how and where to keep the records both in paper form and electronically, the Board decided to table this item to the next meeting.
- b. Preparation of Materials for Meetings: The Board held a discussion on getting as much information as possible in advance of the meeting, and the impossibility of mandating usage of electronic means as the only means of communication.

Citizens Comments: Ed Adelman, speaking as a citizen, feels that the Board of Finance was significantly changed by the filling of the recent vacancies on the Board, which were seen as an opportunity to seize control and pursue some kind of agenda, without any input from the electors in town. Also, the Selectmen's choices of alternates should pay more attention to party, as they often become regular members. He recognizes that this was all done legally but he sees it as a power grab. In the majority of towns bound by charter, the newly appointed board member is by charter to be of the same political party as the former member being replaced; Ed feels that this board should be bound by that spirit as well, although not specified as such in the statutes. He also feels that the spirit of consensus he has felt on the Board will be destroyed by this. Allan Cahill pointed out that the last four alternates appointed were one Unaffiliated, two Democrats, and one Republican, and that the current makeup of the Board is evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans, and feels Ed's feelings are unwarranted. Kathi Newcombe asked how Ed could feel the outcome could have been any different as the Board appointed the only two volunteers whose names were submitted, one a Democrat and one a Republican. Alternates Stan Crawford and Kathi Newcombe had both been approached by current members to see if they would be interested in serving as full members, and both declined. Lisa Sanchez said she was offended by Ed's comments that the filling of vacancies was a power grab.

Suggestions for next Agenda:

- a. Updated Board of Finance member/alternate contact information
- b. Retention of records
- c. Set the mill rate.

Date, time and place of next meeting: Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Town Hall Lower level (Community room will be used for the referendum).

**MOTION: Kathi Newcombe moved and Ed Adelman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:57pm.  
Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathi Newcombe