

Town of Hampton  
Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, February 12, 2013  
7pm  
Hampton Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm by Chair Rheo Brouillard.

Members present: Rheo Brouillard, Penny Newbury, Luciann Norton, Paul Wakely; alternates present: Dan Meade.

Members/alternates absent: Margaret Haraghey, Stan Crawford , Thayne Hutchins, Jeff Clermont.

Others present: 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Al Cahill , Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez, Selectman Bob Grindle, HES Board of Education Chair John Burnham, HES Superintendent Paul Graseck, Recreation Commission Secretary Gay Wagner, and Board of Finance Recording Clerk Kathi Newcombe, as well as numerous audience members.

Dan was seated for Margaret.

**Approval of Minutes:** Penny moved and Dan seconded to approve the minutes of 1/8/13; motion passed unanimously.

**Citizen Comments:**

- Dayna McDermott-Arriola spoke about her conviction that there were other space alternatives to splitting the room the HES Superintendent currently shares with the Business Coordinator, after taking a tour of the building with Kathy Donahue and Board of Finance member Stan Crawford to examine available space. She stated that the server needs seemed to be legitimate but there was plenty of already existing under-utilized rooms that could be used for conference space.
- Kathy Donahue agreed that there was plenty of other space in the school that could be used for confidential meetings, and made several suggestions for changes.
- Board of Finance member Stan Crawford, although absent for the meeting, wrote an email concurring, stating that the school should "install the A/C as requested" but should also "remove all the paper supplies that share the server room." He also felt that the servers were outdated, suggested "junking" them, calling them "clunky," and recommended that the school have EastConn install current hardware. He agreed that there were many spaces that were not being "utilized to their potential." He had high praise for the library/media center, calling it "well laid out, friendly, and not overwhelming" to any size student, but also mentioned that "every classroom.... is burdened with stuff/clutter... to the point of distraction."
- 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Al Cahill had a dialogue with the EastConn Executive Director suggesting receiving some services or a discount on services in lieu of taxes in response to a query by Penny as to whether EastConn provides services for free. As the largest entity in town (valued at \$17,000,000), receiving town services but paying no taxes, he feels they could do something for the town as other non-profit schools provide some free services for the towns in which they

reside. He also pointed out that it's not only real estate that is not taxed, but also countless vehicles including school buses and vans that are tax-exempt.

- Gay Wagner defended EastConn as one of the branches of the State Department of Education and feels their services are a bargain. State Resource Centers are by statute not responsible for paying taxes in the towns in which they reside.

## **Presentations**

**Recreation Commission:** Recreation Commission Secretary Gay Wagner gave a presentation on behalf of Chair Mark Davis who was ill. She distributed a document outlining how the Commission meets the five criteria for controls suggested by Town Auditor Marcia Marien during her recent visit to the BoF. She talked about how the Recreation Commission operates under the authority of a town ordinance. She stated that the town stipend allows the Commission keeps the cost of events down and offers some for free. The Commission also offers recurring programs only if the Commissioners feel there is enough interest and commitment from attendees to have a reasonable expectation of at least break-even status. Ms Wagner also explained how the responsibility for youth sports had been taken from the Recreation Commission by the previous administration and given to a newly appointed Youth Sports Committee, without an ordinance authorizing its existence or a charge to the committee.

**Youth Sports:** No one was present from Youth Sports to present, nor had the BoF been contacted in the last month about a presentation. It was noted that a meeting of the Youth Sports Committee was taking place the same evening, 2/12, at the elementary school, and the presentation was on their agenda.

## **Reports:**

- First Selectman:  
1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Cahill reported that he had received a copy of the governor's budget; he and Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez noted that many grants had been re-configured, resulting in a net gain of \$54,000 to the town should the budget pass as is, with the exception of the elimination of property taxes on vehicles assessed at less than \$20,000 for which the town would take a \$360,000 or two-mil plus hit. The Board of Selectmen has scheduled a town meeting for Tuesday, 2/19:
  - to consider the purchase from the open space fund of the Edwards/Vadnais property on Cedar Swamp for \$210,000, for which the Conservation Commission had applied for and received a grant for \$101,500 from the State DEEP,
  - to consider the purchase of several acres behind Town Hall for \$75,000 to add to the town campus and to satisfy a tax lien on the property, transferring \$100,000 from the general fund to cover the purchase, and
  - to consider the transfer of \$100,000 from the general fund to the Capital & Non-Recurring fund to use as operating capital to complete renovations to the downstairs of the Town Hall, to fund the work for installing the new air-conditioning system, and to prepare the Town Hall for installation of the generator for which the town will be reimbursed \$100,000 from the State as a STEAP grant; this would allow the Town Hall to be used as the Emergency Operations Center as well as allow other uses of the Town Hall.

Paul asked how long the parcel behind Town Hall had been in arrears with a tax payment; 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Cahill responded two years. Rheo asked about the intention of the use for the rest of the Town Hall. 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Cahill responded that besides its use as an Emergency Operations Center, the frequent loss of power was wreaking havoc on all the technology equipment

including the server; this would provide auxiliary power for the Town Hall. Paul asked the size of the generator being considered; 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Cahill responded that he is looking at a 100kw generator estimated at about \$75,000; in addition, the electrical installation, currently still containing fuses, would have to be reconfigured. Rheo wondered if there would be an impact on the upcoming budget to complete these purchases and projects, especially with the State budget being proposed.

- Tax Collector:

The monthly Tax Collector's reports had been distributed previously to members via email. There were no questions.

- Treasurer:

The monthly Treasurer's reported had been distributed previously to members via email. There were no questions. Treasurer Rodriguez requested a transfer of \$16 from line# 6010-03 P&Z mileage to line# 6010-04 P&Z land use fees, to cover cost overruns. Since it was such a small amount, the Board determined with the Treasurer that it was likely that the overrun would occur again during the fiscal year.

**Penny moved and Dan seconded to transfer \$90 from #6010-03 to #6010-04; motion passed unanimously.**

Penny had questions about the \$432,000 equity line on Capital and Non-Recurring fund report; Treasurer Rodriguez promised to get back to Penny with a clarification, conferring with the auditor if necessary.

Treasurer Rodriguez asked about the process for receiving and communicating the budget requests; it was determined that Kathi, as BoF Recording Clerk, will receive the budget requests in order to communicate them to the BoF, and will forward the information to the Treasurer for processing into a draft budget document.

- Board of Education:

The monthly Elementary School reports had been distributed previously to members via email. There were no questions. Chair John Burnham reported that the BoE is currently working on the first draft budget from the Superintendent and has several budget sessions scheduled, beginning with February 20<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent Paul Graseck complemented the town on its willingness to work with the school on timely snow removal and with other options for resolving the well/water drainage issue, and especially appreciated them for their availability. Chairman Burnham said that the brainstorming Shared Resources Committee meeting originally scheduled for January 29<sup>th</sup> would now be held on February 21<sup>st</sup>; any and all suggestions for collaboration and increased efficiencies would be considered; BoF Committees

HR Committee: The Committee has been working on job descriptions with four in various states of completion. It has decided to schedule three meetings to deal with rumors about the Committee's charge and to hear input, the first for paid elected official on 2/14 at 1:30pm and the next two for hired/appointed employees on 2/21 at 1:30pm and at 7pm, all meetings being held at a time the Town Hall is open and many of the invitees are already working.

- Other: None.

**Correspondence:** Audit Report.

**Old Business:**

- Audit Report: The Audit Report was distributed to Board members; it will be reviewed at the next meeting after all members have had a chance to read it. Al noted that on page 29, the year-end listed should be considered the end of the fiscal year.

- Board of Finance Bylaws: **Paul moved and Penny seconded to approve the Bylaws as revised at the last meeting; motion passed unanimously.**
- Request for Ordinance Change: Rheo will distribute the proposal for approval at the next meeting, and ask the Board of Selectmen to consider the changes at a future town meeting.
- Annual report: Further Department and Board/Commission report submissions received since the last Board meeting were distributed and reviewed. Still outstanding are reports from the Fire Department, the Ambulance Corps, and the Youth Sports Committee. Rheo and Kathi will review the status after the meeting and prepare a draft for review at the next meeting and subsequent publication, along with a message from the Board of Finance.

#### **New Business:**

- Hampton BoE request for funds from Capital/Non-recurring fund:  
Hampton BOE Chair Burnham reported that money spent from the school's budget on the request, then requested reimbursement from the Capital/Non-Recurring Fund, it would still be considered a capital expenditure which would not impact the MBR. However, the budget cannot be decreased by the same amount, since that would impact the MBR.  
He didn't think there was room in the school's budget to fund the projects. As far as other options for the space needs, he didn't want to micro-manage the administration in trying to determine other options. He stated that the server room needs are immediate; the other request is more flexible.  
He also reported that the simplest solution to the well/water drainage problem may be to simply re-grade the parking lot. Since work on the parking lot is also on the school's five-year plan, he hopes to coordinate the immediate needs with the long-term plan, and submit a plan for remediation by March 29<sup>th</sup>.  
Rheo questioned how to determine if the school's budget is on-target, since some of the line items are year-long and others are ten-month items. Superintendent Graseck responded that usually a note is placed next to a line item to flag it as off-target. A short narrative was suggested to accompany the budget.  
**Penny moved and Luciann seconded to allocate \$5,735 from the Capital/Non-Recurring Hampton School Fund to the HES Board of Education for the purpose of improving the server room; motion passed unanimously.**  
There was no action taken on the request for funds to divide the Superintendent's office.
- Treasurer transfer request: Done under Treasurer's report.

#### **Citizen Comments:**

- Gay Wagner stated that, as the person who drafted the first ordinance to create the Board of Finance, she was glad that the Board exists and feels the Board is doing a good job.
- Kathy Donahue suggested that the Board of Finance request a budget presentation from RD11 as is done for the Board of Finance of Chaplin. Rheo will call the head of the Chaplin Board of Finance for further guidance.

#### **Suggestions for next Agenda:**

- HR Committee report
- Presentation from Youth Sports Committee
- Audit report review
- Annual report approval
- Request for ordinance change

- Discussion of auditor selection/RFP

**Set the Date, Time and Place of next meeting:** The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12th at 7pm in the Town Hall Community Room.

**Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathi Newcombe,  
BoF Recording Clerk