TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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BOARD OF FINANCE

REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 1, 2022

MINUTES

Members Present: Michael Purcaro-Chair, Peggy Busse-via Zoom, James Fay, Douglas Harding, Barry Pinto.

Members Absent: David Olender

Others Present: Lori Spielman-First Selectman, Tiffany Pignataro-Finance Officer/Treasurer, EVFD Chief Jack Rich II, Assistant Chief Carl Neubecker, Tom Palshaw, Elizabeth Phelps, State Representative Jaime Foster

Call to Order

Chairman Michael Purcaro called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked Lori Smith for her years as recording secretary and welcomed Elizabeth Phelps as the new secretary.

He stated that now that the budget process is over, there is concern regarding the low voter turnout and the Town is looking to further efforts to engage voters. One thing they are working on is that through CT Voices Channel there will be videos shot, 6 total, outlining the budget process to help educate and engage the public. If there is anything more the Board members or citizens feel they should be doing, please let a board member know. Out of this year's budget we heard from Senior Citizens that they are looking for options to keep people in Ellington as they retire. There will be discussions between the First Selectman, Board of Finance and town agencies to work on how to accomplish this.

Mr. Purcaro stated that there had been meetings with Mark Boughton regarding infrastructure and investment jobs act funding. There are no formal proposals received yet. They are looking for shovel ready projects that serve a regional purpose and require the community provide a
match. He also informed the Board that through the Finance Office and Mr. Greenleaf and working with our state representative, there have been some changes in the budget language which will save the Windermere Project a large amount of money.

Presentations
a. Legislative Update

State Rep. Jaime Foster asked to be on the agenda to bring the Board up to date on what has been happening during this last legislative session for the Town of Ellington. A cost decrease was realized for the Windermere School in increased reimbursement from the State in the amount of $9,000,000. An additional $50,000 based on bond request by the First Selectman has been allocated to Crystal Lake Beach improvements and Tedford Park for 2023. $25,000 has been allocated for the Library meditation and reading garden, $57,000 for the Senior Center outdoor fitness equipment and exercise area, $25,000 for the Nellie McKnight Museum, $224,000 for Main Street improvements including lights and fitness stations in Arbor Park and $24,000 for body cams and dash cams for the police department. A high school junior Kate Santini gets the credit for a grant that was applied for in the amount of $1.4 million for the Police Department that includes license plate readers as one of the items in the grant. Representative Foster was very impressed with the quality of the work done by this student in the grant application and is optimistic about it. In summary, she stated that there is a long list of good benefits for the Town that came out of the last legislative session.

Mr. Purcaro asked about infrastructure investment and she stated that she has been concentrating on the water well contamination. She confirmed that they are looking for regional and a match but also that the work that has been done by the Public Works Director on this can be submitted as in-kind service. Mr. Harding asked about Parks and she stated that funding for parks is not high on the State’s priority agenda for bond proposals. She stated that she needs more information about the lighting project. Mr. Harding asked about the diesel tax and she stated that it is not a simple legislative policy. Regarding the highway use tax, she was able to carve out the dairy sector.

There will be another bond agenda in July.

Citizen’s Forum

None one came forward.

Financial Report

Tiffany Pignataro stated that from now going forward she will be reporting on the procedures that her department does each month. The revenues are over budget at 101.3%. Mr. Purcaro asked what the process is for reconciling with the BOE. She stated that each side has a different chart of accounts but they have developed a manual crosswalk to convert them. They make sure the BOE ledger is matched to the Town’s. This was done at year end in the past, now it is being done on a monthly basis. Mr. Purcaro stated that he hopes doing this will result in better and earlier projections. Ms. Pignataro stated that she hopes so in the future. He asked if the full excess cost was received and confirmed that the Town can keep it if the BOE doesn’t need all of it.
She pointed out that revenue from nip sales are to be earmarked for recycling efforts. This revenue was budgeted at $20,000 but it looks like the Town will receive more than budgeted. Mr. Purcaro felt that picking up the nips on the roadsides should be a priority.

Ms. Pignataro stated that the second tranche of ARPA funds will be forthcoming. She indicated that there is more information coming from OPM. Regarding the expense side of the financials, there are small overages in some accounts and the overages that Chief Seitz informed the Board about previously are starting to show up.

New Business

PFAS Proposal-Ellington and Crystal Lake Fire Dept.

Chief Rich stated that the foam that was outlawed last July by DEEP is still in one truck of both Crystal Lake Fire and Ellington Volunteer Fire Departments. They each have 30 gallons on a truck that still needs to be disposed of. The time frame for DEEP funding ran out. He is estimating that it will cost approximately $3,000-$3,500 to clean it out and dispose of it. Mr. Purcaro and Ms. Pignataro both felt it was an important item that needs to be done. The members of the Board of Finance support it and it will be funded through the operating budget.

Assessment Appeals

This is a snapshot of the current appeals and since there is litigation involved, they cannot be discussed.

Tax Office Suspense List FY 2021-22

This is an annual request. The Tax Collector continues to try to collect these funds. Mr. Purcaro asked specifically the process followed for the invalid addresses. The Finance Officer will get that information to the members.

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (FAY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE TRANSFERS TO SUSPENSE OF 262 ACCOUNTS TOTALING $66,841.60 AS REQUESTED BY THE TAX AND REVENUE COLLECTOR, ANN MARIE CONTI, SUBMITTED IN MEMO DATED MAY 26, 2022.

Salary Adjustment Transfer Request

This is for the Emergency Management Director position to move it out of salary adjustment account as approved by the Board of Selectmen.

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF $20,000 FOR FY2021-22 FROM ACCOUNT 1065-SALARY ADJUSTMENT TO 350-EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AS RECOMMENDED BY THE FINANCE OFFICER AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.
Closeout of Capital Projects FY22

This is a housekeeping item to liquidate the balances. The portable radio amount represents a rebate received.

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (FAY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO CLOSE OUT THE FOLLOWING CAPITAL PROJECTS TO THE GENERAL FUND UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE FOR FY 2021-22, LOCIP $99.91, DPW-SNOW PLOW/DUMP TRUCK $3.11, LAND PURCHASE 72 MAPLE STREET $15,323.27, EVFD-SECURITY SYSTEM UPGRADE $639.26, ACCOUNTING SYSTEM CONVERSION $49,263, FIRE MARSHAL VEHICLE $(663.21), DPW BRUSH CHIPPER $185.64, EMERGENCY SERVICES PORTABLE RADIO REPLACEMENT $7,225.03, CLFD DIESEL EXHAUST REMOVAL SYSTEM $19,674, CLFD SERVICE VEHICLE REPLACEMENT $110.21 AND PHONE SYSTEM-MERAKI ETHERNET SWITCHES $490.12.

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO CLOSE OUT THE FOLLOWING CAPITAL PROJECTS TO THE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR FY 2021-22, PURCHASE OF 80 MAPLE STREET $705.80 AND EVAC AMBULANCE ROOF REPLACEMENT $3,216.

Committee Updates

American Rescue Plan Act

The task force prioritized items and recommended to the Board of Selectmen the priority one items. All of them passed the Town Meeting; those under $100,000 only need to be approved by the Board of Selectmen. Money was saved by waiving the bid process for the fire truck in order to purchase it sooner.

Shared Services

Mr. Purcaro stated that they have been meeting regularly and moving forward. They are mostly in the data analysis phase.

Deferred Compensation

No update.

Emergency Services

Mr. Harding stated that the inoreased incentive is to become effective January 1.

Permanent Building

Mr. Fay stated that the construction attorney was introduced and there was discussion regarding construction manager versus general contractor.

Unfinished Business
None

Approval of Minutes

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED (BUSSE ABSTAINED) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2, 2022 REGULAR MEETING, MARCH 9, 2022 BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET HEARING AND MARCH 15, 2022 BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUDGET HEARING AS WRITTEN.

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (FAY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 12, 2022 PUBLIC HEARING, APRIL 14 AND APRIL 20, 2022 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS AND MAY 24, 2022 REGULAR MEETING AS WRITTEN.

Adjournment

MOVED (HARDING) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

[Signature]

Lori Smith, Recording Secretary