

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL MEETING
WESTBROOK MULVEY MUNICIPAL CENTER –VIDEO CONFERENCE
April 2, 2020 5:00PM**

The Westbrook Board of Finance Special Meeting was held on Thursday, April 2, 2020 in the Multi Media Center of the Mulvey Municipal Center. In attendance were Chairman Paul Connelly, Tony Cozza, Chris Ehlert, Gary Gavigan and Kate Gilstad-Hayden. Also in attendance were Noel Bishop, First Selectman, Suzanne Helchowski, First Selectman's Office, John Hall, Selectman, Jill Brainerd, Facilities, Lew Daniels, Library Director, Paul Marcarelli, Council of Beaches, Donna Castracane, Finance Director, Carol Hess, Assistant Director of Finance, Marilyn Ozols, Planning Chair, Lee McNamara, WPCC, Eric Knapp, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Kim Bratz, Tax Collector, Joan Angelini, Town Clerk, Rich Annino, Director of Park and Recreation Ken Butterworth, IT and Kelley Frazier, Clerk. Absent: James Dahl

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Connelly at 5:14pm.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS ON OPTIONS REGARDING FY20-21 BUDGET

Ms. Castracane discussed meeting materials sent to members earlier and the options she recommends. Ms. Castracane discussed where the budget stands today and possible savings which may occur.

Ms. Bratz discussed splitting tax bills and the options available. There is one billing a year with two stubs for July and January. It is very costly to do a billing. The Board of Finance can adjust the millrate in the next fiscal year if you have an overage or you are under. Money from bank escrow accounts are already available. Our town is run by state statute because we do not have a charter. Ms. Bratz noted that there is not much left to decrease in the budgets. Ms. Bratz stated that her outlook for the rate of collection remains 99.5%. Mr. Gavigan asked if there are savings with the closing of the schools and town buildings. Ms. Castracane has asked all departments to look for possible reductions. She will compile the information. The Board of Selectmen will need to make a motion to delegate the Board of Finance to make the final decision for the budget.

In the next three weeks the BOF will need to finish budget reviews with the Department Heads and the Board of Education. There also needs to be a review of the Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Cozza asked if all of the departments need to be reviewed again. Kate Gilstad-Hayden and Gary Gavigan do not think this is necessary. Mr. Ehlert noted that we could get the budget to a 0% increase. He asks that the Department Heads and Board of Education review for possible decreases in their expenditures and to also review their revenue. He would like to be at a zero percent budget increase. The mill rate would be less. Revenue is still uncertain. Ms. Bratz noted that it is important to adhere to the time frames for a July 1st collection. Mr. Marcarelli thanked the Board for their hard work.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION ON NON-DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET ITEMS FY20-21

Employee Benefit Department

Workers Comp had a savings of \$21,000. The Pension savings were due to the wage assumption which was 4% a year. This has been reduced to 3%. There is also a savings of \$165,000 for covering our liability. The Pension Board has authorized the advisor to adjust the portfolio.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Chris Ehlert the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to approve the Employee Benefits Department #9900 of \$1,815,885.

Upon a motion made by Kate Gilstad-Hayden and seconded by Tony Cozza the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to table the Capital Contributions Department #9910 of \$1,815,885.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Kate Gilstad-Hayden the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to approve the Municipal Insurance Department #9920 in the amount of \$256,247.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Tony Cozza the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to approve the Debt Service Department #9950 in the amount of \$2,179,325.

Mr. Ehlert feels Contingency should be lowered to \$50,000 due to the uncertainty.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Gary Gavigan the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to decrease Contingency Department #9900 by \$20,000 and to approve the amount of \$50,000.

SETTING OF TENTATIVE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR REMAINDER OF FY20-21 BUDGET PROCESS

Monday April 6th at 6:30pm – Discuss Departments we have not discussed and vote on the budget.

April 8th – 5:00PM BOE

APRIL 15TH – 5:00pm Approval of the Operating Budget and the Capital Plan

April 16th – 5:00pm if needed

Department Heads will be invited for the 15th and 16th.

April 29th 7:00pm Public Hearing

May 5th – 7:00pm - Set Mill Rate

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Chris Ehlert the Westbrook Board of Finance **VOTED** to approve the meeting dates as presented.

Discussion regarding how to inform the public was held. A post card was discussed or possibly Everbridge and Civic Plus Mr. Ehlert feels doing a press release with the Harbor News and to run and Ad for two weeks should also be considered.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Macarelli asked that this information be put on the Council of Beaches website.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 7:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley S. Frazier, Board of Finance Clerk