

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL MEETING - VIDEOCONFERENCE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2020
5:00P.M.**

The Westbrook Board of Finance Special Meeting was held on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at 5:00pm by videoconference. In attendance were Chairman Paul Connelly, Tony Cozza, Gary Gavigan, Chris Ehlert and Kate Gilstad-Hayden. Also in attendance were Noel Bishop, First Selectman, Donna Castracane, Director of Finance, Carol Hess, Finance, Patricia Ciccone, Westbrook Schools Superintendent, Lesley Wysocki, Westbrook Schools Business Manager and Kelley Frazier, Clerk. Absent: Jim Dahl

CALL TO ORDER

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

**BUDGET PRESENTATION-BOE OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS
OPERATING**

Ms. Ciccone explained the budget in detail. Possible reductions were discussed. Unanticipated expenses were also discussed. There may be a need to increase the time for Summer School due to the pandemic. Declining enrollment was discussed. Ms. Ciccone also discussed staffing and the MBR billing. Ms. Wysocki gave two possible options available for reduction. Ms. Castracane will confirm the process as to whether a budget can be increased or decreased after the virtual public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza to approve a budget of \$18,257,623 for the Westbrook Board of Education and seconded by Kate Gilstad-Hayden for discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding the reduction. Ms. Wysocki noted that with the proposed options staffing and students will not be affected.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Kate Gilstad-Hayden the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to approve a budget of \$18,257,623 for the Westbrook Board of Education for Fiscal Year 20-21.

The proposed Capital expenditures were discussed.

There is \$306,000 of capital projects for next year. This is in a CNR which has a \$320,000 surplus. Using the funds in this account will deplete it for future years. Discussion was held regarding spreading this expense over two years. The playground is needed because the Pre-K program is growing. This is being relocated and cannot be done over two years.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Gary Gavigan the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to approve the Westbrook Board of Education Capital Improvement Plan for Year One in the amount of \$306,000 to be appropriated at a later date.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Tony Cozza the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to approve the Westbrook Board of Education Capital Improvement Plan for Years Two through Five as presented.

FY 19-20 GENERAL BUDGET DISCUSSION

Discussion held regarding a possible spending freeze for non-essential items. Ms. Castracane reached out to all departments about changes to expenditures or revenue. Mr. Bishop noted that the Tax Collector will have additional unanticipated legal fees in excess of \$20,000. Refunds will also be a major financial exposure. This could be covered by Contingency. Tax Collections could be delayed for 90 days. This will be addressed will be addressed at an upcoming BOF meeting. Mr. Bishop is consulting with the attorney to see how this will affect the town. Would the Town be able to delay payment of payables? Mr. Bishop will find out this information and forward it to the BOF members. Mr. Ehlert feels that Departments should not spend money other than what was budgeted. A memo will be sent by Ms. Castracane to Department Heads regarding this. Discussions were held regarding the Contingency. Mr. Bishop discussed personnel issues. The person hired in the Town Clerk's office and the new hire in Land Use will not begin work until the Town Hall is open. There is potential savings in this area.

FY20-21 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Electricity costs were discussed. Other municipalities did not budget decreases because credits must be built up. The reduction from Public Works is for the streetlights. Mr. Ehlert recommended a \$15,000 reduction.

The Board of Finance discussed a possible zero mill rate increase. Ms. Castracane asked members to send potential reductions to her by Noon on Thursday, April 9th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Comment

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 7:14pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley S. Frazier, Board of Finance Clerk