

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOARD OF FINANCE (BOF) REGULAR MEETING

**WESTBROOK BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2023 – 6:00PM
TOWN HALL-MULTIMEDIA ROOM – HYBRID**

The Westbrook Board of Finance Special Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. In attendance were Paul Winch, Jim Dahl, Chris Ehlert, Tony Cozza, George Pytlik, Jr. and Karl Gelotte. Also in attendance were John Hall, First Selectman, Chet Bialicki, Selectman Joe Campbell, Selectman, Donna Castracane, Director of Finance, Carol Hess, Assistant Director of Finance, Mark Chapman, Glenn Rybacki, William Cusson, Chief of Fire Department, John Riggio, Director of Public Works, Jill Brainerd, Human Resources, Facilities, Don Izzo, Consultant, John Palermo, Emergency Management, Marilyn Ozoles, Peter Gillespie, Town Planner, Heidi Wallace, Conservation, Jim Crawford, Town Center, Ken Butterworth, IT and Kelley Frazier, Clerk.

Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm.

DISCUSSION – BONDING/LONG TERM FINANCING

Mark Chapman and Glenn Rybacki provided an overview of the procedures necessary to issue bonds or notes for a project. They outline the roles and responsibilities of the Bond Counsel and Financial Advisor.

OPERATING BUDGET DEPARTMENT REVIEW

Overview of FY23-24 Budget Requests and BOS Approved Budget

The Board discussed open items in the budgeting process. All other departments remained as presented.

Human Resources

Decreased by \$10,000. No contracts will be negotiated in 2024. Labor and employee issues are in budget.

Engineering

Reduce by \$5,000 based on trends.

Information Technology

No reduction.

Elections

No additional firm direction from the state. An additional \$5,600 is requested for 10 days of extra voting which includes a ballot clerk and checker. Budgeted amount is \$73,866.

Treasurer

Wage increases for Treasurer. The corrected budget amount is \$17,229.

Assessor

Salary needed correction. The budgeted amount is \$136,690.

Tax Collector

Refunds & Judgments should be decreased by \$5,000. The budgeted amount is \$167,428.

Town Clerk

Open Item: Revenue should remain the same. Ms. Castracane will confirm.

Police Department

Discussion held regarding a possible reduction for shifts not filled. Mr. Hall suggested reducing Part Time Payroll to \$260,842 which was the funding approved by the BOS. The budgeted amount is \$873,668.

Fire

Gear will need to be purchased this year. Decrease Trim \$8,344 from budget based on trending. Clothing and Uniforms reduced \$5,000. Building Maintenance decreased \$3,344. The budgeted amount is \$862,221.

Emergency Management

Open Item: Recommendation is to reduce the Operating Budget by \$5,377 and pay for the drone, Ham radio and the weather station from ARPA funds. Mr. Crawford noted that the residents want the Town Center to move forward and the funds for that to stay whole. The Board of Selectmen need to approve any use of ARPA funds first. This will be revisited. Contingency may be considered for these purchases.

Public Works

Open Item: Building maintenance was discussed. Trends indicate budget was not used. Ms. Castracane will verify utilities. \$1,584,525 is the budgeted amount.

Facilities

Utilities is uncertain. The new position for the Facilities Director is in Contingency.

Building Official

Open Item: Reduction of \$3,000 based on trending. Ms. Castracane will confirm the Temporary Payroll and if it can be reduced.

Social Services

Payroll has changed due to increase in hours. Remove the request of \$2,000 from General Assistance. The new budgeted amount is \$85,529.

Library

Payroll and Longevity correction. The budgeted amount is \$396,987.

Grants to Outside Agencies

The Middlesex County Substance Abuse agency has not responded.

Board of Education

Open Item: Surplus of \$8,000. Discrepancy in these numbers indicate possible additional surplus available. Mr. Ehlert suggested a decrease. The BOE can keep up to 2% of a surplus. Dr. Martineau and Ms. Wysocki will be asked to attend the meeting tomorrow.

REVENUE

Ms. Castracane discussed the revenue as projected with changes. The revenue budget number is \$1,422,358.

CAPITAL PLAN – POSSIBLE ACTION

IT

Mr Butterworth discussed his Capital Plan. Capital items need replacement. There is an allocation of \$110,000 for this. The 2 sonic walls are in the operating budget request for \$5,000.

Assessor

As presented

Police

As Presented

Fire

Open Item: A target date of July 1, 2024 is expected for the radio project. It was suggested to fund this project over two years. Year 1 \$100,000 23-24 and Year 2 \$200,000 24-25. This equipment may be leased. Numbers are still not firm. Mr. Ehlert is uncomfortable with this. He suggests \$0 in the first year and \$300,000 in Year 2. Discussion ensued. Board members agree that \$100,000 for year 2023-2024 and \$200,000 for Year 2024-2025.

Public Works

As presented.

Building and Facilities

Open Item: Energy projects are complete. Reallocation of capital repair money will allow \$42,000 for Energy.

Planning and Zoning

Sidewalks discussed. There will still be gaps on Boston Post Road. Maintenance is of concern. The large subdivisions need major repair. The budget will remain at \$600,000.

Conservation

As Presented

Harbor Commission

As Presented

WPCA

As presented

Board of Education

BOE reserves will cover the capital requests.

OTHER BUSINESS

No Other Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Izzo said that the radio project estimates will be firmed up over the next 4-6 months.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – CONTINGENCY

Upon a motion duly made and seconded the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to go into Executive Session at 9:38pm. Ms. Castracane and Mr. Hall were invited to attend.

Executive Session ended at 10:22pm.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 10:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley S. Frazier, Board of Finance Clerk