

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
BOARD OF FINANCE (BOF) REGULAR MEETING
WESTBROOK BOARD OF FINANCE REGULAR MEETING
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 17, 2021 6:30PM**

The Westbrook Board of Finance Regular Meeting was held on Wednesday, February 17, 2021. In attendance were Paul Winch, Jim Dahl, Tony Cozza, Chris Ehlert, Kate Gilstad-Hayden and Gary Gavigan. Also in attendance were Donna Castracane, Director of Finance, Ken Butterworth, IT, Jill Brainerd, Facilities, Human Resources, Hiram Fuchs, Selectman, Ben Borelli, Resident State Trooper, Carol Hess, Assistant Director of Finance and Kelley Frazier, Clerk. Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:33pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Tony Cozza the Westbrook Board of Finance **VOTED** to approve the minutes of January 15, 2021 as written.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The STIF rate is higher than Citizens. Trends are higher at this time.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Chris Ehlert the Westbrook Board of Finance **VOTED** to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.

APPROPRIATIONS

Resolved that a Sum Not to Exceed \$2,442 from Undesignated Fund Balance to the Police Cruiser Capital Project to Pay for the Cost of a New Police Car.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Paul Winch the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously

RESOLVED: That a Sum Not to Exceed \$2,442 from Undesignated Fund Balance to the Police Cruiser Capital Project to Pay for the Cost of a New Police Car. (From Account 010.0310.0000.3020 to 010.9910.9911.0870.5 and 101.2020.1601.0422.5)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

FY 19-20 Expenditures and Revenues and Status of Contingency and Fund Balance

Expenses and revenue are tracking as expected. It is difficult to plan what the Covid expenses will be going forward, but hopefully there will be a clearer picture in the next couple of months. Legal expenses are higher than anticipated. Mr. Gavigan voiced concern that these expenses are over budget. In March or April an appropriation or transfer will need to occur once the number is finalized. Executive orders are due to expire at this time. Mr. Gavigan would like a monthly update on the status of the legal expenses. Ms. Castracane noted that the audit will be complete at the end of this month. Reimbursement of Covid expenses were discussed. Mr. Ehlert asked the Board of Education (BOE) to provide a status on their Covid reimbursement.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Paul Winch the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to accept the Director of Finance report as discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Comment

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion regarding the Capital and Operating Budget Process occurred. Mr. Bishop noted that the Health Director is not in favor of a town meeting for budget approval due to Covid. Discussions will occur on how to move forward with a referendum or to have the BOF approve the budget. The Registrars are aware of a possible referendum. The cost is between \$3,000 and \$4,000. The Citizen's Guide cost is much less. If we go to referendum we are unable to publish a Citizen's Guide.

Mr. Cozza noted that he prefers having a referendum so the residents have input. Mr. Winch feels that we should not have a referendum due to Covid and have the BOF set the mill rate. Ms. Gilstad-Hayden would like the residents of the town be involved. Mr. Dahl stated that the Board acted appropriately and responsibly last year. There was no negative feedback from residents regarding the processes used last year. Mr. Cozza asked that additional notices be sent to residents to they are aware of the process. Mr. Ehlert asked what referendum options are available. Do residents have the option to vote absentee? Mr. Bishop will research. The Tax Collector would prefer to have a decision by May 4th but a referendum after that would be acceptable. The BOS submitted a budget with a .6% increase. The Board of Education tentatively approved a budget which was a 1.4% increase. The BOS will prioritize the Capital projects during their Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) review. Funding projects outside of the operating budget will need to be discussed and prioritized. All BOF members are encouraged to listen to the Board of Selectman (BOS) discussion next week. The CIP will be discussed after the regular meeting.

Upon a motion made by Kate Gilstad-Hayden and seconded by Tony Cozza the Westbrook Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to table this item until the March Meeting.

OPERATING BUDGET DEPARTMENT REVIEW

Overview of FY20-21 Budget Requests and BOS Approved Budget

Ms. Castracane discussed the budget as approved by the Board of Selectmen.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

The Assessor will meet next week and answer questions regarding possible hearings because of the revaluation.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Kate Gilstad-Hayden it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$386 for the Board of Assessment Appeals.

FIRST SELECTMAN

Ms. Castracane discussed the terms of longevity.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Jim Dahl it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$206,224 and Revenue of \$100 for First Selectmen.

HUMAN RESOURCES

This includes the labor attorney fees.

Upon a motion made by Paul Winch and seconded by Jim Dahl it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$27,500 for Human Resources.

GENERAL ENGINEERING

Costs are monitored closely. Mr. Ehlert asked Ms. Castracane to follow-up with Land Use and Public Works for upcoming projects which will require engineering.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Jim Dahl it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$48,000 for General Engineering.

LEGAL SERVICES

Discussion held regarding having these services go out for bid. A RFP was done recently, but this can be done annually. Mr. Ehlert suggested having the BOS discuss this. Mr. Fuchs suggested having a Fee Structure presented to the BOS.

Upon a motion made by Kate Gilstad-Hayden and seconded by Chris Ehlert for discussion to approve the budget of \$20,500. Discussion ensued.

Upon a motion made by Kate Gilstad-Hayden and seconded by Chris Ehlert it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$20,500 for Legal Services

TREASURER

This will be put on the open item list for additional discussion if needed.

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Chris Ehlert it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$14,067 and Revenue of \$30,000 for Treasurer.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Ehlert suggested that sharing a person with the BOE may be a possibility. Mr. Butterworth will discuss this with the school IT personnel.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Paul Winch it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$152,727 for Information Technology.

ENERGY

Upon a motion made by Tony Cozza and seconded by Jim Dahl it was:

RESOLVED: to appropriate the sum of \$1,235 for Energy. Ayes: Ms. Gilstad-Hayden, Mr. Winch, Mr. Dahl, and Mr. Cozza. Abstentions: Mr. Ehlert and Mr. Gavigan.

POLICE, HARBOR PATROL, POLICE ADVISORY

Police Services

Trooper Borelli answered various Board questions. The Police is fully staffed. Constables volunteer to work on the weekends. This is currently working.

Upon a motion made by Chris Ehlert and seconded by Paul Winch it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$641,320 and Revenue of \$37,750 for Police Services.

FINANCE

An upgrade to the Finance software will occur by January 1, 2022. There is an increase in the maintenance fee because it is a cloud based system.

Upon a motion made by Paul Winch and seconded by Kate Gilstad-Hayden it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$186,348 and Revenue of \$17,500 for Finance.

BOARD OF FINANCE

Upon a motion made by Jim Dahl and seconded by Paul Winch it was:

RESOLVED: Unanimously to appropriate the sum of \$45,351 for the Board of Finance.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Finance unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 8:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelley S. Frazier, Board of Finance Clerk