

Minutes of the Special Meeting and the Budget Review Meeting
Feb. 25, 2008 – Police Station Conf. Room – 7 p.m.

Members present: Justin Donnelly, Joanne Sullivan, Joseph Sangiovanni, David Tagliavini, Dennis Kreps, Sam Fuller; alts. Tom Frenaye, James Lennon
Also present: Selectmen S. Lingenfelter, B. Fitzgerald, Treasurer C. Davidson, Director of Finance D. Cerrato, Chairman, Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) C. Horrigan
Chairman Justin Donnelly called the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 7 p.m.

Grant Submission – Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP)

Mr. Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic and Community Development was present, and explained in detail, the Town's application for \$500,000 for three projects. After a review of the request for the planning study for the relocation of the Highway Garage, the Board had questions:

- 👉 Mr. Tagliavini asked if the Town could spend STEAP funds for other higher priority projects? Why would you want to move the Highway Garage to the far east southern part of Town, almost on the Windsor Locks border? He noted that this is not the center of Town, it will cost more fuel and time for the Highway operation. He does not understand why the Town would want to make this change. Mr. Tagliavini did not receive a response.
- 👉 Mr. Donnelly asked what about the big Salt shed?
- 👉 Mr. Kreps asked where does this project fit into the Selectman's Long Range Planning Priority List? Mr. Kreps did not receive a response.
- 👉 Mr. Lennon asked for a Cost Benefits Analysis? How would the Town benefit?
- 👉 Mr. Donnelly stated that he thought this was not the right project, and not the right time. When is this application due?
- 👉 Had the Board of Selectmen approved this Project?

Mr. McMahon noted that the Board of Selectmen had approved of the proposed application, and stated that the Public Works Director likes this new proposed location for the Highway Garage. To have the Highway Garage relocated, would fit into the redevelopment of Ffyer Place as a mixed use as noted in the Town Center Project studies. STEAP has specific criteria for applications. He also reported that the deadline for the STEAP applications was Feb. 29. It has not been decided what will happen to the big salt shed since the process has changed from a sand and salt mixture to salt only. Mr. Lingenfelter informed the Board that the Public Works Director and Highway Foreman were in agreement with this change and with the new process for salting the roads there are fewer trips back to the garage to refill. The Highway crew does not spend a lot of time at the garage.

The Board had questions about Project 2 and Project 3. How much was the operation of new lighting going to cost? It would help to have a Fields Maintenance Plan. Ms. Sullivan spoke in favor of Project 2 and Project 3. The new lighting would extend the playing time on the fields. Mr. Donnelly noted that he would have liked to see the support of the Schools, Travel Soccer Clubs, and Parks/Recreation at this meeting showing support of these Projects. It was noted that Project 2 would be \$60,000 in grant funds, and \$7,000 in kind services from the Town. Project Three would be \$190,000 in grant funds and \$10,000 in kind services from the Town and donations possibly from sport clubs. The Board was also concerned that the increase in operational costs were not provided.

The Board noted that the proposed project, relocation of the Highway Garage could cost the Town millions; for new construction, possible environmental cleanup, etc. The Board of Finance has not made that commitment.

After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Fuller moved that a moratorium be placed on new projects, until a long range plan has been accepted and in place. There was no second. The motion failed.

Ms. Sullivan moved that we approve items 1-4, (\$36,000) on Project 1, a planning study for the relocation of the Highway Garage, and approve Project 2, \$60,000 for an additional field at Sullivan Field and approve Project 3, \$190,000 for lighting of Packard Field, as the STEAP application. There was no second. The motion failed.

Mr. Tagliavini moved that the Town proceed with Project #2, \$60,000 for an additional field at Sullivan Field, as the Application to STEAP. Mr. Sangiovanni seconded. The motion passed: 4 votes in favor, Ms. Sullivan abstained, and Mr. Kreps voted against the motion.

Correspondence -

Members had received copies of an email sent by BF member Mr. Sam Fuller. Mr. Fuller stated he would like to add the following to his email, sent Feb. 12, 2008. He read the following: "While on this subject, I would like to add that the Long Range Plan is the key to Suffield's future and future annual budgets will be built upon that plan. Thus it is vital that the plan be well done and well worth the expenses of a professional consultant – why reinvent the wheel when in all probability, without professional guidance it will end up with a few missing spokes and take us wobbling in to the future."

The **Special Meeting** adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Chairman Donnelly called the **Budget Review Meeting** to order at 7:58 p.m. He called for Citizen Comment: no response.

Budget Review – The Budget Binders were distributed. It was noted that the recommendations from the Selectmen were not included at this time. Tab page numbers will be placed on the future agendas.

First Selectman Scott Lingenfelter distributed to the members, a Budget Overview for the 2008 – 2009 Operating Year. State Revenues were noted. The Grand List has increased 1.4% to \$1,125,477,955. The budgets submitted to the Board of Finance (budget books) reflected the requests of the departments, boards, and commissions. These requests would reflect a 8.93% increase. It was noted that this percentage figure does not take into consideration WPCA, Board of Education, or Capital Expenditures. The First Selectman highlighted the areas of major changes for the expenditures and the requests for new staff. In his summary, Mr. Lingenfelter stated the 8.93% increase in the general government operating budget is too much for him to recommend. The Board of Selectmen is attempting to schedule a special meeting to review requests, and propose any modifications in an effort to get to a more reasonable and accepted budget. He also distributed a spread sheet showing the requests of each department.

The Board of Finance reviewed the following budgets: Probate, Board of Finance, ZBA, Historic District, Cemeteries, and Civil Preparedness.

In the review of the **Civil Preparedness budget**, it was noted that the salary for the Emergency Management Director was increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000. The BF noted that it had been only a year or so, that the First Selectman had requested an increase from \$10,000 to \$10,000 for this position. This request had been granted. The BF requested an accounting of hours, description of duties and justification for this large increase.

The **Budget Review Meeting** was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling, Secretary to the Board of Finance

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