

Minutes of the Special Meeting and Budget Review Board of Finance Meeting  
March 7, 2011 – Police Station Conference Room – 7 p.m.

Members present: Justin Donnelly, Joseph Sangiovanni, Dennis Kreps, Sam Fuller, Brian Kost, Ryan Anderson, alts. James Lennon, Peter Boyd, Eric Harrington  
Also present: First Selectman Tom Frenaye, Selectman Eileen Moncrief, Treasurer Christine Davidson, and Director of Finance Deborah Cerrato

Chairman Justin Donnelly called the Special Meeting to order at 7 p.m. He noted that since the Board of Finance meeting, Feb. 28, 2011, the Board of Selectmen (4) had signed the Board of Finance Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that the Board of Finance had drafted and approved. He distributed to the BoF, a copy of the resolution that the Board of Education approved unanimously. The BoE did not sign the MOU as approved by the BoF. Chairman Donnelly noted that the Board of Finance has always had the final authority to reduce the BoE's budget.

### **Town Hall Renovations and Improvements**

Mr. Kreps introduced the following resolution which was seconded by Mr. Sangiovanni:  
RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends (1) that the Town of Suffield appropriate \$1,900,000 for the design and construction of renovations and improvement to the Suffield Town Hall, contemplated to include replacement of heating, ventilation and air conditioning system, removal and replacement of non-ADA compliant bathrooms on ground floor, renovations and improvements to address ADA and building code compliance issues, removal and replacement of asbestos floor tile and pipe insulation, improvement to address office layout for better public access and related renovations, improvements and other work; (2) that the Town issue bonds or notes and temporary notes in an amount not to exceed \$1,900,000 to finance the appropriation as recommended by the Treasurer, and (3) that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting for the purpose of authorizing said appropriation and borrowing.

The Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen had signed the BoF MOU. The BoE chose not to; did not agree to any specific percentage number of increase. Mr. Kreps thinks it is the right time to go forward, we have needs to support the infrastructure. This action by the BoE may back us (the BoF) into a situation where we have to make some hard decisions down the road. We have to be willing to say stand up and say, that we cannot afford the expenditures that we do not have the revenue for; I think we can go forward. The BoF does have the authority not to agree to the expenditures of the BoE.

Mr. Fuller stated he was disappointed that the BoE did not sign the MOU. The BoF has the final say. Mr. Kreps stated that the BoF has the power to stay within our MOU. Mr. Donnelly noted that the BoF has indicated by their vote; that they would stand by their MOU.

\*The resolution was approved by unanimous vote (6) in favor and 0 opposed.

### **Road and Drainage Improvements**

Mr. Kreps introduced the following resolution which was seconded by Mr. Kost:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends (1) that the Town of Suffield appropriate \$3,108,000 for road and drainage improvement to an estimated approximately seven miles of roads, contemplated to be carried out on all or portions of the following roads: Randall Drive, Fairhill Lane, Longview Drive, Suffield Meadow Drive Extension, Warnertown Road, South Grand Street, Brookside Drive, Hickory Street, Phelps Road, Burbank Avenue, Spencer Street, Prospect Street, Kent Avenue and Mapleton Avenue; (2) that the

Town issue bonds or notes and temporary notes in an amount not to exceed \$3,108,000 to finance the appropriation, and (3) and that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting for the purpose of authorizing said appropriation and borrowing.

The resolution was approved by unanimous votes (6) in favor and 0 votes opposed.

### **Fire Trucks and Related Equipment**

Mr. Kost introduced the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Sangiovanni:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends (1) that the Town of Suffield appropriate \$1,400,000 for the acquisition of up to three fire trucks and related equipment; (2) that the Town issue bonds or notes and temporary notes in an amount not to exceed \$1,400,000 to finance the appropriation and (3) that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting for the purpose of authorizing said appropriation and borrowing.

The resolution was approved by 4 votes in favor and 2 votes opposed.  
(Mr. Anderson and Mr. Kost voted against the resolution)

### **New Library**

Mr. Kreps introduced the following resolution which was seconded by Mr. Sangiovanni:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends that the Tow of Suffield appropriate \$8,408,000 for demolition of the former Bridge Street School and the design and construction of a new library to be located on the former Bridge Street School site. The project shall be guided by the plans entitled "Conceptual Plans," prepared by Johnson Roberts Associates, Inc. and dated January 13, 2011, as provided to the Board of Selectmen. It is contemplated to include an approximately 24,000 square foot open library floor plan, children's area, young adult's area, local history room, two meeting rooms, circulation desk and work area, study rooms, administrative areas, and necessary utility, elevator, lobby, stairway and related spaces and related site improvements. A portion of the appropriation not to exceed \$40,000 may be applied upon the determination of the Board of Finance to reimburse the Town for preliminary expenditures on the project allocated to the "Other Purchased Services" line item of the annual budget for the fiscal year ending June 30,2011. The Town anticipates receiving approximately \$1,500,000 aggregate amount of grants and donations received by the Town to fund in part the appropriation, the scope and particulars of the project may be reduced or modified in any manner necessary or desirable to reflect such shortfall and to ensure that the amount of bonds or notes issued to permanently fund the appropriation does not exceed the \$6,908,000 anticipated net cost of the project to the Town.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends that the Town issue bonds or notes and temporary notes in the amount not to exceed \$6,908,000 to finance in part the appropriation.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance recommends that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting for the purpose of authorizing said appropriation and borrowing.

\*The resolution was approved by 5 votes in favor and 1 vote opposed.  
(Mr. Kost voted against the resolution)

The First Selectman distributed a calendar which reflected Town Meeting and Referendum Schedule Options. The Town Meeting must occur five days after the published notice, and the Referendum held 32

days after Town Meeting and Call. This time table may impact the budget schedule. It is our intention to call a Town Meeting, March 17; the earliest possible date of referendum could be April 19, which is school vacation week or April 26 or April 28. The Public Hearing for the Budget is April 26<sup>th</sup> and the BoF needs to finalize the budget to be presented at the Public Hearing by April 18<sup>th</sup>. The Town Meeting on the Budget is scheduled for May 11<sup>th</sup> and the Budget must be finalized by May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The outcome of the Capital Projects votes may affect what is included in the budget. He is interested in the BoF's feedback. He does not need a decision tonight.

Mr. Kost moved to adjourned the Special Meeting; Mr. Sangiovanni adjourned. The Special Meeting was adjourned.

Chairman Donnelly called the Budget Review Meeting to order.

He asked for Citizen Comment:

- Mr. John Kearny, 57 Conservation Road: He stated he applauded the Board's decision. He serves on the Library Foundation and spoke of their commitment to raise \$1,500,000.
- Ms. Mary Roy, Chairman of the Board of Education read a prepared statement: She stated the BoE approved their own resolution, noting that the BoF's MOU did not include any of the BoE's suggestions. Suggestions from the First Selectman were not included in the MOU. The BoE recognizes that the BoF always has the final word on the budget. The BoE could not agree to such strict percentage guidelines in these times of uncertain future.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Roy for her statement.

### **Budget Review**

- Zoning and Planning – Town Planner Bill Hawkins was present and noted that the Z & P budget reflected a minus 3.3%. He believes that the revenues will increase both this current year, and next year.
- Building Department – Building Official Edward Flanders was present. The proposed budget is the same as current year. He believes that the revenue will meet the projected \$250,000 in the current budget. He is projecting \$260,000 for the next fiscal year. Work is steady. Suffield is rated a "3"; in Connecticut, no one has a better Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating than Suffield.
- Town Engineer – The Town Engineer Gerry Turbet was present and he noted that he had submitted the same budget, minus the 53 week of payroll. He had reduced Contracted services by \$500. If the bond issue of Road and Drainage Projects is approved, he will hire outside consultants and that is funded within the bonding project. Mr. Turbet discussed with the BoF, his recommendation to raise the bid limit from the current \$2,500 to \$10,000. The BoF noted that this would be a policy change handled by the Board of Selectmen.
- Conservation Commission – Mr. Frenaye noted that this budget was the same as the current budget.
- Fire Department – Chief Tom Bellmore and Mr. Fred Hackynos, Chairman of the Fire Commission were present. The Chief noted that the payroll was down, due to the change from 53 pay weeks to 52 and the hiring of new firefighters to replace three who had retired or left the department. He briefly reviewed minor staffing adjustments. He noted a budget of \$675 to pay for the services of a former deputy fire marshal who is willing to continue to write grants for the Fire Commission. He not only writes the grants but follows through with the appropriate paper work. He noted that the Fire Department had applied for a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant for new staff; if it is awarded, the Fire Commission will be back before the BoF. The time frame of testing of equipment has changed. Testing is more frequent and more costly. Gasoline costs are high. There will be a saving realized by the use of natural gas, rather than heating oil. The cost of training for Firefighter 1 is no longer supplemented by the State of CT; it is now a cost of the Town

The Chairman amended the agenda to review Debt Service, before the Executive Session agenda item.

\*\*Debt Service - Director of Finance Deborah Cerrato distributed copies of the Debt Services report. The Debt Service report notes that the debt service for existing debt for FY 2011-12 is \$2,248,000.

**Executive Session – Negotiations**

Attending: Board of Finance, Tom Frenaye, Deborah Cerrato, and Bobbie C. Kling

Mr. Kost moved to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussion contract negotiations; Mr. Sangiovanni seconded. The meeting was voted into Executive Session at 8:21 p.m. The meeting entered Open Session at 8:38 p.m. No formal action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

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

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