

**MINUTES
BOARD OF FINANCE
PUBLIC HEARING – QUAKER FARMS SCHOOL
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2015, 7:30 p.m.**

Present: Chairman Jack Kiley; Robert DeBisschop, Richard Burke, Tom Kelly; Lila Ferrillo.
Also present: James Hliva, Finance Director. Absent: Nancy Schmitt.

First Selectman George Temple was also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack Kiley at 7:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Kiley read the Notice for the Public Hearing that was filed with the Town Clerk. He indicated that the proposed budget is \$44,051,542. The current mill rate is 24.87 and the proposed budget would bring the mill rate to 24.98, an increase of .0011. The amount of increase which comes from property tax is \$552,000. Effort was made to hold the line on expenses. Total revenues and total expenditures are separated by department then by accounts within the department. Capital projects included in this year's budget total \$483,000.

Chairman Kiley asked if anyone from the audience had any questions or comments.

The following people spoke at the meeting:

Amy Cote, 43 Newgate Road, What was the rationale behind the \$500,000 BOE cut?

Chairman Kiley responded by noting the BOE had an increase of over \$1,000,000. The BOF felt the increase was high. BOF funded the hard costs – union contracts, insurance contracts, general building maintenance. In the capital budget a significant amount (approximately \$100,000) was returned for general building maintenance. BOF has no control over line items, only the total. BOF felt that \$500,000 increase would cover all the costs. General operating budget was cut but the difference was picked up in some of the capital items.

Scott Pelletier, 222 Christian Street, would like to have hours added back in for the administrative clerk in the Fire Marshall's department.

Joe Dempsey, 4 Sunrise Drive, doesn't see a separate sheet for Oxford Ambulance Association (OAA).

Mr. Kiley noted that the amount of money OAA requests from BOF is to continue their operation. OAA is a separate entity, a private corporation. Their salaries and expenses and collections are held in their books. Shortfall between what OAA collects and spends is passed on to Town. The only amount in the budget is what OAA is requesting from the Town to continue their operation. To see salaries an audit report would have to be requested from OAA.

Stephen Brown, 8 Bonnie Lane, had a question regarding School Security Grant of \$146,000.

Finance Director James Hliva responded to Mr. Brown's question. BOE added this in as a revenue item a couple of years ago.

Jerry Schwab, 64 Quaker Farms Road, asked the Board to refund \$25,000 for a training officer.

Ed Hardy, 14 Wyant Road, asked the Board to refund \$25,000 for a training officer.

Amy Cote, question regarding Finance Contingency – why is there an increase if \$50,000 has not been spent.

Ms. Ferrillo explained that by year end the money in will be spent.

Mr. Kiley added that there is about \$60,000 left in the Finance Contingency and dwindling fast because of the bad winter. Public Works will be coming in with overtime.

Mr Hliva stated that there is \$275,000 coming from LOCIP for Public Works which explains the increase over highway maintenance.

Jeff Haney, Cold Spring Drive, currently serving on Board of Selectmen, complimented the Board of Finance for the hard work and great job done on the proposed budget.

Mr. Temple, First Selectman, also expressed his thanks and appreciation to Board of Education. He is aware that the BOE is mindful of the impact of their budget will have on the taxpayers. Mr. Temple said he met with the power plant people and the initial payment will be \$7,000,000 to the Town on December 1, 2015. When that payment arrives, Mr. Temple intends to recommend a transfer to the Board of Education for funding.

Stephen Brown, 8 Bonnie Lane, commented on the Town website. He is the website is in shambles and indicates poor Town communication. The townspeople do not have access to Town information which causes low turn outs.

Mr. Kiley spoke about the former reporter and the complete Town coverage she provided. She reported from the BOE, BOF, all the departments. There has not been thorough coverage since she left.

Mr. Kiley said the website is a problem. A new website was instituted but it never got off the ground. Now we are between the new website and the old website. A lot of the information from the old website was never carried forward. We do not have a coordinator for the website.

Mr. Kelly said that the Website committee has been contacted twice and has not responded.

Joe Dempsey, Sunrise Drive, suggested an emergency alert system to advise townspeople about Town meetings. Mr. Temple said that he would make a Townwide announcement.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynnette Steeves
Lynnette Steeves, Clerk

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TOWN OF JRD, CT
Maya J. Clark
TOWN CLERK