

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF FINANCE – 2018 / 2019 BUDGET REVIEW
OXFORD TOWN HALL
TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.**

Present: Chairman Jack Kiley; Jeff Grant; Robert DeBisschop; Paula Jensen; Sue Arpin; Dana Flach. Also present: James Hliva, Finance Director.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kiley at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the FY 2018-2019 budget requests for the following departments:

AMBULANCE:

Madalene Taggart, Executive Director, appeared to present the proposed budget.

Mr. Kiley gave an explanation to the new Board members regarding the Ambulance budget. \$185,000 is supplement to the Ambulance budget, not the actual Budget. \$32,000 is paid to VEMS.

Municipal funding is used to offset Contracted Services.

There are three full-time employees (Ms. Taggart, Colin Nash, Michael Aiello), one part-time (Training Coordinator). Ms. Taggart's salary is by contract. Salaries have increased by 2.5%. The insurance will increase by family because Mr. Aiello was recently hired and will be included.

Ms. Taggart requested an increase in Vehicle Maintenance because a repair was made to the 2008 Ford. Ambulance vehicles: 2007 Ford Expedition; 2014 Ford Expedition; 2016 Ford (out of service-warrantied but not repaired); 2017 Chevy Equinox. Discussion ensued regarding status of vehicles. Ms. Taggart obtained prices from the State for new vehicles: Chevrolet Equinox (\$36,600) vs. Ford Expedition (\$29,500).

Expense Equipment increase was with Epi-Pens. Shelf life of Epi-Pen is one year. Also, Narcan is a big expense outlay.

There are 45 active volunteers, all on call, 6-12 hours per week.

Medicare does not cover Valley Emergency Medical Service (VEMS) bill, but does cover 50% of ambulance.

ASSESSOR:

Teresa Geremski, Assessor, appeared to present the Assessor budget.

Two full-time clerks and one part-time clerk are in the Assessor's Department. Assistant Assessor position is not filled but needed. There was an increase in Education for three people going to class. Assessor works 40 hours. Salaries are per Union contract.

Discussion ensued regarding attempts to collect unpaid/overdue taxes.

Next assessment revaluation is 2020.

Computer System Maintenance was discussed. This includes two services (Quality Data and Vision software) which work together but are two separate services.

Request has been made for increases in Dues, Education and Mileage.

BUILDING:

Gordon Gramolini, Building Official, appeared to present the Building budget.

The department consists of Mr. Gramolini, a part-time assistant (up to 19 hours) and full-time Administrative Assistant.

Most of the budget has remained the same. Printing and Dues have increased slightly. Vehicle Maintenance decreased.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE / INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY:

Michael Herde, Conservation Chairman, appeared to present the Conservation Committee budget. Andrew Ferrillo, Enforcement Officer, for Inland Wetlands Agency also appeared.

Wages for Enforcement increased slightly. Conservation Clerk salary is being negotiated.

Mr. Kiley began the discussion on Trail Maintenance increase. Mr. Hliva explained the increased cost was tree removal from Moose Hill Road (Rock House). Outside service was brought in to take down trees overhanging Rock House.

Joe Lanier (sp?) spoke to the trail maintenance. A grant for \$5,000 was received. Currently there is a grant from Naugatuck Valley Community Foundation. Mr. Kiley noted that there will always be a special need for funding for trail maintenance.

Mr. Ferrillo spoke to the maintenance of the detention ponds. There approximately nine ponds that are serviced.

Mr. Grant questioned the proposed amount for Mapping. Mr. Hliva explained that Mapping is a shared expense among several departments (WPCA, Inland/Wetlands, Planning & Zoning, Assessor, Building Department). Each department budgets for Mapping and Mr. Hliva reduces each bill accordingly.

PLANNING & ZONING:

Jeff Luff, Chairman of Planning & Zoning Commission, appeared to present the Planning & Zoning budget.

Discussion began regarding salaries. Salaries are union-driven.

Office Supplies are now supplied through the Town. Citation Hearing Officer is very seldom used but still needs to remain in budget. If it's not used it rolls back into General Fund. Overtime applies to time put into hearings and Special Meetings and time constraint in which to act on items.

Legal Services are being used instead of Town Planner which accounts for increase in line item.

Mr. Luff continued with a lengthy discussion of upcoming plans and issues concerning Planning & Zoning.

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES:

Mr. Hliva noted that a new budget item for this year is Housatonic Valley Boy Scouts for \$3,500.00 to support scouting for Oxford only.

Joe Nesteriak (436 Quaker Farms Road, Oxford), Assistant Scoutmaster, and John Zseller II (111 New Haven Avenue, Derby) CEO/Scout Executive appeared to present this portion of the budget.

Mr. Nesteriak explained that there are two Boy Scout troops for Oxford. One is Troop 65 and Troop 1 which is strictly Oxford. The Housatonic Council encompasses five Valley towns: Seymour, Oxford, Shelton, Ansonia, Derby. The Council services the troops, the troops service the towns. Mr. Kiley asked if the \$3,500 would be paid to the Council and pushed back into the Town.

Mr. Nesteriak continued with a discussion of contributions to the Town. There were ten Eagle Scouts in the Town.

Mr. Zseller continued with a discussion of contributions and funding and uses for same. Approximately \$29,000 was donated to Oxford. He continued with plans for moving forward with the Boy Scout program. The total budget is \$500,000 and 73% goes to the program, about 20% to fundraising and the balance to administration.

Troops do perform individual fund raisers which benefit the individual troops.

ASSESSMENT APPEALS BOARD:

Mr. Hliva presented this budget to the Board of Finance. This Assessment Appeals Board hears assessment disputes. The budget is for clerical fees, legal notices and education.

CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

Mr. Hliva presented this budget. Pomperaug River Watershed previously requested increase in contribution from Oxford which was denied. Housatonic Valley Watershed includes towns up and down Housatonic River to Massachusetts border. One project per year is funded for Historical Society. July 4th Fireworks amount is \$4,000 and balance paid by Fire Department.

INSURANCE: Liability Insurance is not in a good situation. Mr. Kiley asked if this was a Town-wide package and the response is yes.

CULTURAL ARTS:

This budget is presented by Mr. Hliva. Request for \$15,000 was denied by Board of Selectmen.

DEBT SERVICE / PRINCIPAL:

Mr. Hliva discussed this budget. Budget is up this year by \$250,000. Long Term financed for remainder of High School, Rock House Hill Sanctuary and Library is now permanently bonded.

Last equipment lease purchased was fire engine two years ago. After 2021 there will be no more leasing on books.

DOG WARDEN and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
[WILL BE PRESENTED ON 4/5/18]

ETHICS, BOARD OF:

Mr. Hliva stated that the need for \$100.00 is for a Clerk to record meetings.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT / BOARD OF FINANCE / FINANCE CONTINGENCY:

Mr. Hliva's hours went to 40 hours from 32 hours which accounts for Finance Director's increase in salary. Bookkeeper and part-time Clerk positions are interchangeable. With benefits the cost for the department is approximately \$285,000.

Bids for next year's audit will be open at upcoming meeting.

Lengthy discussion ensued among Board members with regard to items in Capital and Capital Non-Recurring.

Board of Finance budget is only Recording Clerk.

Board of Finance-Contingency contains \$200,000. Mr. Kiley would like to return to \$250,000. Nothing is spent, no expenses; items get transferred to other departments.

Land Use Attorney has been lowered from \$40,000 to \$20,000.

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES:

Mr. Hliva presented this budget. Joanne Jelenik is Social Services Coordinator. There is a Senior Outreach person for guidance for senior citizens/elderly. Ms. Jelenik reaches out to and assists people who are not senior citizens.

HOUSING AUTHORITY:

No expenses since 2014.

INSURANCE:

Insurance has to go out to bid. Presently using ESIP for emergency services and Travelers for liability. Five percent added to budget.

Mr. Kiley asked for an explanation for \$5,000-Safety Committee. Mr. Hliva explained that it was added in case a department has safety issue arose and money was needed to resolve issue. This has never occurred. Committee meets every two months.

LAKE HOUSATONIC AUTHORITY:

Mr. Hliva explained to Mr. Grant and Ms. Jensen that Lake Housatonic is below Stevenson Dam and Lake Zoar is above the Stevenson Dam. City of Shelton pays for half and the balance is split between Derby, Oxford and Seymour.

LAKE ZOAR AUTHORITY:

There is a decrease in this budget. The Authority received a grant of \$10,000 from First Light.

POMPERAUG HEALTH DISTRICT:

Oxford's contribution to this budget has increased based on Oxford's population.

PROBATE COURT:

Mr. Hliva receives a bill from Town of Southbury. Budget has increased.

STREET LIGHTING:

Mr. Hliva looked into possibly purchasing lights from Eversource but this is not cost-effective. All lights have been switched to LEDs. Eversource has requested a rate increase to maintain.

TREASURER:

Mr. Hliva noted that Deputy Treasurer's weekly duties consist of reviewing and approving transactions in Tax Collector's office. He verifies all cash in the Tax Office.

WATER HYDRANTS:

Budget has increased because of new hydrants installed and pipes. Town pays for hydrants located on roads but not located on private property. Cost is also based on inch feet of pipe.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS:

Clerical fees are needed in the event a meeting is called. Publications are for training and reference materials for members of the Board of Appeals. This has never been used.

ADJOURN

Ms. Flach made a Motion to adjourn. Ms. Arpin seconded the Motion. All in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynnette Steeves
Lynnette Steeves, Clerk

18 APR 13 AM 11:24
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT
TOWN CLERK