

Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting - April 13, 2010  
Minutes

**Attending:**

Board of Finance Members: Jim Meinhold, Warren Serenbetz, Al Alper, Lynne Vanderslice and Gail Lavielle. (Andy Pforzheimer - excused absence.)

Others: Sandy Dennies (CFO), Philip Damato, (Wilton Tax Collector), Tom Thurkettle (Director - DPW), Ken Post (BoE), Sarah Taffel (HR), Christian Camerota (Wilton Patch) and Joan Lownds (Wilton Bulletin).

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Warren Serenbetz called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- 1.) A Motion was made by Al Alper to approve the March 9, 2010 BoF / BoS work session minutes. Motion seconded by Jim Meinhold and approved unanimously.
- 2.) A Motion was made by Gail Lavielle to approve the March 16, 2010 BoF regular meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Lynne Vanderslice and approved unanimously.
- 3.) A Motion was made by Al Alper to approve the April 6, 2010 Mill Rate discussion meeting minutes as amended. Motion seconded by Lynne Vanderslice and approved unanimously. The amended wording states BoF member Gail Lavielle “agrees with making the additional 15% pension contribution.”
- 4.) A Motion was made by Lynne Vanderslice to approve the April 7, 2010 Mill Rate discussion meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Jim Meinhold and approved unanimously.

### **Elderly and Disabled Tax Ordinances:**

Sandy Dennies, CFO, introduced the topic of the Elderly and Disabled Tax Ordinances for consultation with the BoF, on behalf of the BoS and Bill Brennan who was unable to attend the meeting. Prior to the town vote on the mill rate, the floating cap on tax credits and the interest rate charged on the elderly tax deferrals need to be made public. The Board of Selectmen has recommended the interest rate be lowered to 3% for this year. Mr. Meinhold commented it was a bit of an odd consultation from the BoS as there was no opportunity to question how the 3% was determined. Mr. Serenbetz clarified the cap needs set prior to the meeting but not necessarily the interest rate. After some discussion the BoF members agreed to attend the next BoS meeting where this topic would be discussed so all questions could be answered. Mr. Alper pointed out while the BoS is not beholden to accept the BoF thoughts a two -way discussion would be helpful.

Pursuant to Section 26A-10.2 of the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Ordinance, \$850,000 is the pre-determined amount. The BoS recommends of this set amount \$675,000 be the floating cap used for tax credit and \$175,000 be used for the tax deferral options. If there are not enough applicants for the deferral category the balance will go back into the tax credit program. It's important to note until all applications are in it's difficult to determine who gets what and if an applicant is eligible and accepted he/ she may not get the full amount.

Ms. Vanderslice made a motion to approve the floating cap of \$675,000 for tax credit and \$175,000 for tax deferral. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alper and approved unanimously.

### **BoE financial update:**

Ken Post, CFO of the BoE reviewed the updated BoE budget, which currently shows a \$573,209 deficit. Mr. Serenbetz questioned what is anticipated to happen the rest of the year. Mr. Post replied he thinks Special Ed costs will continue to increase but he is hopeful for both a health benefit cost moderation and some salary savings.

Mr. Meinhold inquired about potential long- range trends regarding Special Ed students and their needs. Mr. Post responded this year the total number of Special Ed students has not increased rather the severity of their needs has changed and the staff does not have the expertise to handle these needs so often outplacement is needed.

### **DPW:**

Tom Thurkettle, Director of DPW discussed the preliminary application for the replacement of the Bald Hill Bridge. The Town of Wilton will apply for a \$520,000 grant through the CT Local Bridge Program and if approved the state will pay 80% and Wilton pays 20%. The bridge is currently closed to a single lane of traffic. Mr. Serenbetz questioned where the town will get its' 20% share. Ms. Dennies answered due to the timing of the approval process the Charter Authority will need to be accessed. Ms. Dennies also indicated that there was an outside chance that the state might pick up some of the 20% if the relevant bridge program gets funded but that is an unknown at this time. If the grant is approved the project is put out to bid and the construction will be to build the new bridge over the old bridge. Mr. Meinhold questioned what happens if the grant doesn't come through and Mr. Thurkettle responded he would be back to request funds from the BoS and the BoF.

Ms. Lavielle made a motion to approve the submission of the grant application for \$520,000 under the CT Local Bridge Program. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vanderslice and approved unanimously.

### **Suspense Account:**

Phil Damato, Wilton Tax Collector, stated this year the town has deemed \$32,491 in taxes to be uncollectable and will transfer this money to the Suspense Account. The amount in this account goes to a collection agency who adds its' fee on top of the principal and interest collected for the town. The agency may collect from the last 15 years of suspense account items. Approximately \$41,000 was collected this past year. The Suspense Account currently totals \$274,000 before the suggested transfer for 2010.

Mr. Alper made a motion to transfer \$32,491 to the Suspense Account. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vanderslice and approved unanimously.

### **Town of Wilton Financial Status Update:**

Ms. Dennies commented her report is unchanged from the one provided at last week's meeting (4/6/10).

### **Committee Reports:**

The investment committee will be meeting on 4/14/10.

There was some discussion regarding the Tri-Board Committee. Ms. Lavielle stated there was an urgency to find savings within the towns' budgets. Mr. Alper expects the April meeting will show new ideas to find savings from both the BoS and the BoE. He also stated the scope of the Tri-Board needs defined and once that occurs progress should be made.

### **Other Business:**

Mr. Alper made a motion to amend Resolution #8 (passed at the April 7, 2010 meeting) to now read that the June 30, 2011 estimated General Fund Balance be set at \$10,937,296 which is 10.6% of budgeted revenues, and that \$2,891,310 of the estimated June 30, 2010 fund balance be used to finance the FY 2011 budget. The motion was seconded by Gail Lavielle and approved unanimously.

The BoE has requested someone from the BoF sit in on the union negotiations with the custodians. Ms. Vanderslice agreed to serve as the BoF representative.

The town's 2 year contract with McGladrey & Pullen for the Town Audit has expired. Therefore it is time to re-bid the contract. Ms. Dennies will assemble a draft RFP based on the one used last time. Mr. Serenbetz stated that there are only a few firms from which to choose.

Mr. Meinhold entered into the minutes letters received from the last meeting and he will forward them to Mariana Corrado.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Roberts  
Recording Secretary