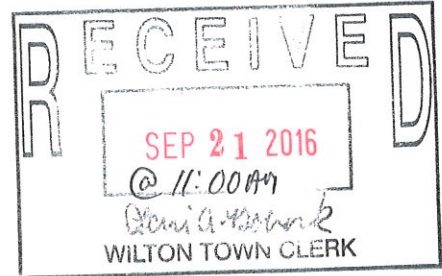


**BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING – July 19, 2016  
MEETING ROOM B TOWN HALL**



**PRESENT:** Jeff Rutishauser, Warren Serenbetz, John Kalamarides, Walter Kress

**ABSENT:** Peter Balderston, Richard Creeth

**Others Present:** Anne Kelly-Lenz, CFO; First Selectman Lynne Vanderslice, members of the press and public

**Call to Order**

Chairman Jeff Rutishauser called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Approval of June 21, 2016 Minutes:**

Walter Kress moved to approve the minutes as presented and the motion carried 3-0-1, with Warren Serenbetz abstaining.

**Facilities Project Status – Chris Burney**

Chris Burney, the Town's Director, Facilities & Energy Management, gave a status update on three facilities. Fire Station #2: Chris summarized the issues of potable water, the septic system and the need to address new seismic code requirements if significant changes would be made to the existing building, as well as the need for a presence in the north end of town for response time.

Police Station: Chris is looking at the entire Town Hall campus and is awaiting a general condition assessment of all the buildings that will become the basis of the study going forward to look at a coordinated expansion plan.

Miller-Driscoll: From the construction point of view, things are moving very quickly and are on schedule, but there is a lot of work to be done during the next five weeks. He said there is the potential issue of space left over. By the end of summer construction work will slow down.

Mr. Burney and the First Selectman then responded to questions from the BOF and after which departed from the meeting.

**Preliminary Discussion of Fiscal '18 Budget**

Mr. Rutishauser commented that, since only four members were in attendance, it was better to defer the bulk of the discussion to the September meeting. He added, however, that he had been working with Anne to start building the mil rate model. The FY18 budget will include an increase in Debt Service of a little over \$1 million, as well as any state revenue grant shortfall from the FY17 budget of \$2.1 million, even before receiving the operating budgets of the Boards of Selectmen and Education.

Jeff asked what the Board would want to do with money from Hartford, saying one option is to not recognize any state funds until they actually are received as opposed to being cut as happened with the FY '17 budget. Mr. Kress felt cutting one-third of state reimbursement would be reasonable, given the climate in Hartford.

Jeff then asked Board members to consider if guidance given to the BOS and BOE provides benefit. Discussion followed as to the benefit of guidance, citing the more cooperative attitude exhibited by the BOE especially as it relates to building a 3-5 year plan. Warren said there is benefit in knowing what is expected of the BOE by the BOF; what they do with the guidance is another matter. Jeff added that any BOE budget needs to be a strategic plan and deal with issues of state funding, facilities change and possible regionalization, as well as the needs and

resources of the town. Mr. Kalamarides said it would be helpful if the BOE gave the BOF more understanding of the role of some of the administrative jobs, to which Mr. Kress agreed. Both felt the BOF needs to continue to ask questions and get answers early on.

After considering several meeting dates for further discussion with all Board members present, it was ultimately decided to have the guidance discussion at the August meeting to get an early start on the budget season.

#### **Committee Reports**

John Kalamarides – Miller Driscoll: He felt Chris Burney gave a thorough report and added that Turner Construction is working 24-7 and doing a good job.

#### **Other Business**

Mr. Serenbetz asked Anne if there was a FY16 report. Her reply was that she is still working to close the year, but advised that the results would not go down below the projected Fund Balance. Mr. Kress asked Anne if the Building Department had advised her of any projects that were subject to completion which could favorably impact the Grand List. Jeff responded it was too early to discuss any preliminary numbers of some potential projects.

#### **Public Participation**

Alex Ruskewich of Calvin Road spoke. He had compiled reports and said that his research showed data provided to Boards does not have a lot of integrity. He cited data given to him from the BOE relating to the actual number of Pre-K students enrolled in the past year, saying it is not accurate and has not been accurate for a few years. He also questioned the veracity of the special education enrollment numbers. He told the Board he felt guidance should be based on what the town can afford vs. a percentage of last year's number. Mr. Rutishauser thanked him for his information and his continuing participation.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Fager  
(from video recording)