



Town of Madison, CT

Board of Finance

Draft

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Finance held on March 20, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
at the Town Campus

Present: Jean Fitzgerald, Judith Friedman, Ken Kaminsky, Kevin Kranzler, Bennett Pudlin

Also present: Stacy Nobitz, Finance Director; Kristen Bartosic, Accountant; Bruce Wilson, Board of Selectmen; Sam DeBurra, Madison Ambulance Service; Bill McMinn, Director of Facilities; MCTV

Ms. Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

1. Pledge of Allegiance. The Board of Finance and members of the audience stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of minutes – February 27, 2019, March 5, 2019. On motion made by Mr. Kaminsky, and seconded by Mr. Pudlin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 27, 2019, 2019 as corrected and approve the minutes of the special meeting of March 5, 2019, 2019 as submitted.

CORRECTION MADE: Minutes of February 27, 2019: Page 4, Item 14, 5th paragraph, third line, replace “Lead-up” with “initial”

3. Chairman’s comments. There were no Chairman’s comments.
4. Citizen and Finance member comments. Kathryn Hunter, 31 Scotland Avenue, noted that there was some public confusion concerning the referendum regarding the Academy School project. She asked that the Board of Finance assist in helping the public understand the purpose and meaning of the proposed non-binding resolution.

Ms. Fitzgerald noted that, with the large number of upcoming capital needs, the Board of Finance members have expressed agreement that the goal is to present the public with a thorough list of all of these projects at once so the public will know the full picture as proposals are made to move projects forward. Proposed school projects will move through the Board of Education and will be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen to be

joined with Town projects. The timeline is for the Board of Selectmen to have a plan for all projects together to send to the CIP by July 1. While one package will go to CIP it is uncertain if, in the end, there will be some individual votes on individual or groups of projects.

Ms. Hunter requested further clarification on the impact of the proposed May referendum on the Academy School with a non-binding question, especially if it is voted down.

Ms. Fitzgerald noted that the Board of Finance perspective is that all projects included in the package should move forward through the CIP process. The Board is not in favor of a non-binding vote on this one issue. The members are in agreement that the public should know what is being asked for all Town needs, with their known dollar estimates, all at once. If a vote is held in May on an Academy School proposed project, it would still need to go into CIP through the Board of Selectmen regardless of the vote outcome.

Mr. DeBurra, noted that he had follow-up comments and questions from the Emergency Medical Services budget workshop. He noted that, while the current staffing level of the service is adequate 70 – 80% of the time, there are some concerns about retaining staff and about depletion of their reserve account. They are also concerned that any reduction in staff will impact service and response time. In an effort to retain and attract staff, action has been taken to initiate a wage increase in April, however, this will impact their reserve which is currently below the amount recommended by their CPA. The EMS is grateful for the agreement of the Board of Finance for support of two thirds of its budget request, but they still have concerns about the impact any shortfall could have on their reserve account.

Ms. Fitzgerald commented that the Board of Finance shares concerns about depleting the EMS reserve. In an effort to help alleviate concerns and to show BOF support the members have agreed to put in writing their intent to support the EMS if their reserve funds are depleted in order to maintain a level of service for this important service for Madison residents.

Mr. Kranzler commented that he sees the current discussion as the beginning of a conversation. The expectation is that steps will be taken during the next year to look into and consider all options to be able to understand what the Town can do and consider in order to move forward the following year with a true partnership between the Town and EMS working together.

Ms. Fitzgerald noted that the Board of Finance has requested that the Board of Selectmen commission a study that will provide the information needed to develop a long term plan for financing the EMS.

Mr. Kaminsky clarified that the Board is striving, through the requested study, to fund the most effective and efficient way to keep the needed level of services while managing finances and costs.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Discuss and take action to approve Special Appropriation from the Tax Collector in the amount of \$4,000 to fund prior year refunds. A motion was made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Ms. Friedman, to approve the request from the Tax Collector for a Special Appropriation of \$4,000 from Contingency to Account #1-100-1135-0000-9000-780-00, Prior Year Refunds, to fund prior year refunds.

Ms. Nobitz explained that the budget for this line is based on the prior year's budget and there are always a number of unknown items. The majority of the requests are from leasing companies who typically pay their bill in full and then request that tax bill to be adjusted at a later time.

After discussion, the Board of Finance voted on the motion made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Ms. Friedman, to approve the request from the Tax Collector for a Special Appropriation of \$4,000 from Contingency to Account #1-100-1135-0000-9000-780-00, Prior Year Refunds, to fund prior year refunds. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Discuss Budget Process. There was no discussion on the budget process.

On motion made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Ms. Friedman, the Board voted unanimously to amend the meeting agenda to move Item #7 and Item #8 to follow Item #11 on the agenda.

9. Discuss and take action to approve Special Appropriation from the CNRE Fund for \$25,000 to continue the planning phase on the BOE Facilities Study from April 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019, pending board of Selectmen approval. A motion was made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Mr. Kranzler, to approve a Special Appropriation from the CNRE Fund for \$25,000 to continue the planning phase on the BOE Facilities Study from April 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019, pending Board of Selectmen approval.

Mr. Pudlin recommended that this motion be amended to refer the project back to the CIP for approval as well as the Board of Selectmen.

After discussion a voted was taken on the motion made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Mr. Kranzler and amended by Mr. Pudlin to approve a Special Appropriation from the CNRE Fund for \$25,000 to continue the planning phase on the BOE Facilities Study from April 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019, pending Board of Selectmen approval and referral to the Capital Improvement Committee for approval.

10. Discuss and take action to approve modifying the 2019-20 Capital Improvement Program to include planning funds in the amount of \$100,000 for the BOE Facilities Study for fiscal year 2019-20, pending Capital Improvement Committee recommendation and Board of Selectmen approval. On motion made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Ms. Friedman, the Board voted unanimously to approve modifying the 2019-20 Capital Improvement Program to include planning funds in the amount of \$100,000 for the BOE Facilities Study for fiscal year 2019-20, pending Capital Improvement Committee recommendation and Board of Selectmen approval.

11. The following line transfers are designated as routine and appropriate for approval as a single action by the Board of Selectmen, if so desired. A board member may request removal of any line transfer item from the consent agenda for review and discussion.

Motion: To approve Line Transfers totaling \$72,250.

On motion made by Mr. Kaminsky, and seconded by Mr. Kranzler, the Board voted unanimously to approve Line Transfers totaling \$72,250.

7. Review of Financials. Ms. Nobitz advised that the Health Insurance account is in very good shape.

Ms. Nobitz also provided an updated projection for the Fund Balance. This projection is based on revenue and approved special appropriations but does not take into account expenditures and special appropriation requests over the next few months.

8. Liaison Reports and Report from First Selectman. Mr. Wilson noted that the Board of Selectmen agrees that public safety is an important pillar in the community and will be considering the request of the Board of Finance to move forward with a study to look at the large picture and sustainability for an appropriate EMS model for Madison.

Mr. Kranzler highlighted issues to consider in the study including revenue and reimbursement and models in existence in Connecticut. He believe it is important that the Town take the time necessary to make the correct decision to insure that taxpayer money is being spent in the most responsible manner.

Ms. Fitzgerald noted that the study will provide important information needed to understand what structure is needed to provide the appropriate level of services in Town for staffing coverage, appropriate response time and use of mutual aid. She noted that if the study indicates the need for a specific level of participation by the Town, this will provide the consistency needed by both the public and the EMS to plan for future needs and will provide figures needed for a budget to meet those needs into the future.

Mr. Pudlin agreed that the use of an outside expert is needed to help the Town understand the options available to provide the appropriate effective and efficient emergency medical service for the people of Madison.

12. Citizen comments. The Board of Finance received the following statement prior to tonight's meeting to be included in Citizen Comments.

Catherine Ferrante, 71 Copse Road.

I am opposed to the purchase and installation of the surveillance cameras requested by the Information Technology department. My concern stems from the fact that the data would be collected and stored by Comcast. Who owns the data that is collected and how can it be used? These are very important questions in an age of advanced facial recognition software. We've already seen municipal police departments in our state share license plate data with ICE at the click of a button. Are we going to end up at some point, inadvertently – through Comcast – sharing data with ICE or other agencies, or opening the door to hacking by nefarious groups? I understand some of the cameras would be installed around the Youth and Family Services building where confidentiality of clientele is protected. The Board of Finance should have serious concerns about opening the town up to potential liability for breaches of that confidentiality by sharing images and data with Comcast. Defending a lawsuit is very expensive. Please deny the request for funding for surveillance cameras. Thank you.

13. Adjourn. On motion made by Mr. Kaminsky, and seconded by Ms. Friedman, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Terry Holland-Buckley
Clerk