



Town of Madison, CT

Board of Finance

Draft

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Finance held on August 21, 2019, 7:00 p.m. at the Town Campus

Present: Jean Fitzgerald, Kevin Kranzler; Ken Kaminsky and Bennett Pudlin via teleconference

Also present: Tom Banisch, First Selectman; Stacy Nobitz, Finance Director; Kristen Bartosic, Accountant; Jack Drumm, Chief of Police; Bobby Kiddle, Fire Chief and representatives from Madison Hose, Justin Murphy, resident; MCTV

Ms. Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 7:05 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 – July 17, 2019 and August 12, 2019. On motion made by Mr. Pudlin, and seconded by Mr. Kranzler, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the special meeting of July 17, 2019 as submitted.

On motion made by Mr. Kranzler, and seconded by Mr. Pudlin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the special meeting of August 12, 2019 as submitted.

3. Chairman's comments. There were no Chairman's comments.
4. Citizen and Finance member comments. There were no citizen and Finance member comments.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Discuss and take action to approve a Special Appropriation request from the Communications Department in the amount of \$35,835.83 for the Communications Fire Department Tower Upgrades, consisting of (2) Two GTR Radios (Motorola Transmit and Receive), to be installed at the Dorset Road, and the Arts Barn tower sites. This request

will replace the existing “Receive Only” radios that currently service the site(s) and will eliminate any unintended problems that developed in the current communication, receive only mode. A motion was made by Mr. Kranzler, and seconded by Mr. Pudlin, to approve the request of the Communications Department for a special appropriation of \$35,835.83 to Account #1-100-3120-9998-7350-658-00, Communications Equipment, for the purchase of two GTR Radios (Motorola Transmit and Receive), to be installed at the Dorset Road and the Arts Barn Town Campus tower sites.

In discussion, Chief Drumm explained that during the last enhancement/upgrade to the fire department radio system two additional sites were added for receive and transmit on the fire dispatch frequency, which provided good coverage throughout the entire town. In addition, each fire department has a separate operating frequency that is used once the units sign on the air and work at the scene. When the two new sites were added, the existing radio equipment was repositioned so that each frequency would have better coverage in the area they are designed to work. For the majority of incidents, when one department responds to an incident within their own district, this system works well. However, the change in equipment placement developed an unintended consequence. When there is a major incident that requires both departments to respond, the supporting department responding out of their district cannot hear Dispatch on the other district’s frequency creating problems, especially in the critical first minutes of response. This situation can be corrected by the installation of two GTR radios (Motorola transmit and receive) at the Dorset Road and the Arts Barn Town Campus tower sites. The quote for this work is \$35,835.83.

Mr. Kaminsky noted that the Board had requested to receive an inventory of the radios in the field and he questioned the status of this request. Mr. Banisch noted that they are very close to receiving the final information needed to provide a complete listing to the Board. It was noted that there were no radios included in the current special appropriation request.

Mr. Pudlin commented that he understands the need for this additional equipment to resolve the issue that has developed. He questioned if they had been able to test the new communications equipment to insure that there will be no additional surprises. Chief Drumm commented that they are confident at this point that the system installed should service the town well into the future. He projected this system should last for 15 – 20 years unless technological changes require some adjustments. He noted that the radio communication has been working well except for the issue noted above that will be corrected with the additional equipment to be purchased with this special appropriation.

Chief Kiddle noted that they continue to work with Communications on the inventory of assets. The radios are currently all accounted for from the date of purchase with the assigned member signing for their equipment.

After discussion a vote was taken on the motion made by Mr. Kranzler, and seconded by Mr. Pudlin, to approve the request of the Communications Department for a special appropriation of \$35,835.83 to Account #1-100-3120-9998-7350-658-00, Communications Equipment, for the purchase of two GTR Radios (Motorola Transmit and Receive), to be installed at the Dorset Road and the Arts Barn Town Campus tower sites. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Discuss and take action to approve Line Item Transfers totaling \$462.00. On motion made by Mr. Kranzler, and seconded by Ms. Fitzgerald, the Board voted unanimously to approve the request of the Tax Collector for a Line Item Transfer from Account #1-100-1135-0000-6101-780-00, Office Supplies, to Account #1-100-1135-0000-3302-780-00, Data Processing, to reallocate funds needed to fund Software Disaster Recovery Service thru the end of the year.

7. Review CIP Committee process for FY 2020-2021. Ms. Fitzgerald recommended that discussion on the review of the CIP Committee process for FY 2020-2021 be delayed for a future meeting when the full Board is able to be present.

8. Review FY 2020-2021 Budget Process. Ms. Fitzgerald recommended that discussion on the review of the FY 2020-2021 Budget Process be delayed for a future meeting when the full Board is able to be present.

9. Review of Financials. Ms. Nobitz noted that the auditors will begin work in September but her initial review of the end of year projects an approximately \$13 million unassigned fund balance as of June 30, 2019. She noted that this amount puts the Town \$5 million over the 10% provided for in the regulations. It has recently come to her attention by the rating agencies and the Town's bond consultant that the 10% amount in the current regulations is currently antiquated. She suggested that the bond consultant be invited to attend a Board of Finance meeting to discuss possibly raising the amount provided for in the regulation. The GFOA is recommending that a municipality hold two months of operating expenses in the unassigned fund balance but for Madison that would be 16% which seems to her to be high. She noted that Connecticut is unique because of its reliance on property taxed so she is currently conducting research to see if a different percentage would be more appropriate.

The Board members agreed this is an important issue so the bond consultant should be invited to attend the next meeting to provide input. Mr. Pudlin requested that

information on the average unassigned fund balance by Connecticut towns, especially those most highly rated, be provided for reference.

Ms. Nobitz noted that she will share a score card that will highlight the offset of any changes in the unassigned fund balance and the impact on the bond rating. She requested that Board members forward any questions they might have on this issue to her before the meeting so she can make sure adequate information and answers can be provided at the meeting.

Ms. Nobitz provided a hand-out that highlighted possible uses of \$1 million of the fund balance.

Ms. Nobitz provided a hand-out on the Self Insurance Plan projection for June 30, 2019. She noted that it showed an amount one-half million above the goal of 25% of claims so there is a positive end of the year projection. This account will not be closed until the auditor's report is finalized but she does not anticipate any major changes.

10. Liaison Reports and Report from First Selectman. Mr. Kranzler noted that a status report on the Library project was provided by the Library Board. The project currently is approximately 2 weeks behind scheduled due to normal construction delay issues. Ms. Fitzgerald recommended that representatives from the Library Board be invited to attend the next Board of Finance meeting to provide an update. Ms. Fitzgerald also recommended that a representative from Youth and Family Services be asked to attend the next Board of Finance meeting to provide an update on their reorganization.

11. Citizen comments.

12. Adjourn. On motion made by Mr. Kaminsky, and seconded by Mr. Pudlin, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Terry Holland-Buckley
Clerk