



BOARD OF FINANCE

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FEB 15 2008

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, February 11, 2008 - 7:00 p.m.
CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: J. Philip Gallagher, Chairman, William Britt, Kevin Riley, William Slifkin, James Roden and John Dietter. Also in attendance were Comptroller Barry Curina and the Board of Selectmen

J. Philip Gallagher, Chairman called the Special Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Departmental Budget Presentations

130 Town Clerk

Town Clerk Lisa Bergh presented the Town Clerk's office budget request. She noted the several improvements which provide on-line access to documents. She noted reductions in several line items and increases in others; she was able to obtain several pieces of office furniture at no cost which enabled her to reduce the office expense account. Ms. Bergh advised that the State of Connecticut will reimburse the cost associated with several of the Federal elections. She requested that the Town Clerk's salary be increased to that of the other municipal department heads; J. Philip Gallagher pointed out that the Town Clerk's position is elected whereas the municipal departments are not elected positions.

140 Assessor

Assessor Ann Marie Heering presented the Assessor's Office budget request. She reiterated the need for staffing, especially due to upcoming development projects; she offered that in 2008 alone, there have already been 100 building permits issued that require field work. Mrs. Heering provided a staffing comparison to other municipalities which are similar to Bethel, noting that all have more full time staff than Bethel. She remarked that there has been favorable reaction to the addition of maps and field cards being available on-line. Board of Finance members questioned the benefit of the Tax Benefit Coordinator. Mrs. Heering offered that while the Tax Benefit Coordinator has certainly proved beneficial, that position does not do any assessing work and

that it is where additional help is needed. She also discussed the issue of alignment for the tax mapping; she has split the cost into 3 years.

150 Tax Collector

Tax Collector Ann Scacco presented the Tax Collector's Office budget request. She noted a slight increase in the printing costs. She remarked that she was quite pleased with the new software and that while the Tax Benefit Coordinator has been an asset, both she and the Assessor still have responsibilities that they are required to do which are associated with the various benefit programs.

200 Social Services

Social Services Director Kathleen Gillen presented the Social Services budget request. She noted that private donations were down approximately 75%. She also made a special point in thanking the Board of Finance for funding the Bethel Emergency Fund; remarking that it went a long way towards helping Bethel residents.

350 Health Department

Director of Health Laura Vasile presented the Health Department budget request. She noted an increase in Contracted Services to accommodate the additional spraying associated with West Nile Virus. Ms. Vasile advised that the Health Department has been able to take advantage of several grant opportunities.

340 Town Boards & Commissions

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Town Boards & Commissions budget request. He noted that this account contains funding associated with secretarial services for boards & commissions as well as the floater account. Money has been added to the Floater account; previously this money had been transferred to the Assessor's account to offset the part-time employee.

405 Intra Government Subsidies

Lorraine Schram presented the Visiting Nurse Association budget request. She noted the services provided by the VNA and advised that the request of \$40,000 has not changed.

Comptroller Barry Curina advised that this account contains the "quasi-governmental" agencies. He also noted a decrease in the Paramedic Intercept

program as discussions are taking place regarding the program and any potential changes.

100 Selectmen

First Selectman Burke presented the Selectmen's budget request. He noted that there were no increases changes to the account with the exception of salary increases from the current year.

160 Legal

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Legal Department budget request. He noted the increase to the litigation account because typically, this account is under funded each year.

170 Probate

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Probate budget request, noting no increase to the request.

110 Treasurer

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Treasurer's budget request. He noted that this account is used primarily for mailing out checks and an increase was included for postage.

120 Finance

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Finance Department budget request. He noted miscellaneous increases to the various line items.

190 Data Processing

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Data Processing budget request. He noted that the new software purchased in the current budget is being installed and almost operational. He advised that their maybe personnel changes in his office to accommodate the software.

210 Town Insurance

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Town Insurance budget request. He noted that a substantial savings was realized in the current budget which carries

over to the 2008-2009 budget. He explained that the town hired an insurance auditor to review the accounts and a savings was realized.

390 Employee Benefit

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Employee Benefit account. He noted that in the current budget year, the town funded a substantial contribution to the pension plan and that this year; the funding request this year is falls right in the middle of the recommended contribution. He also discussed that the town is exploring the cost savings associated with offering a Health Savings Account to employees versus a the traditional medical coverage.

400 Non-Government Subsidies

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Non-Government Subsidies account. He noted that there was a decrease in this account due because several agencies did not submit a request this year.

410 Utilities & other Charges

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Utilities & Other Charges budget. He noted that the town had savings due to the energy consortium and that savings for gas were realized since it's cheaper than oil right now.

420 Misc. Charges and Transfers

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Misc. Charges and Transfers budget request. He noted that this account includes contingency and Transfer to Capital account; the level of funding is determined by the Board of Finance.

440 Debt Service

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the Debt Service budget. He noted that there was a decrease in this account as some items have come off but did caution that next year, the interest for the High School Project will come on, followed by principal and interest in the next budget year.

Correspondence: None that was not related to an agenda item.

Public Comments: None

Minutes of January 14, 2008: William Slifkin made a motion, which was seconded by James Roden, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

1.) Consideration of recommendation from the Board of Selectmen to fund the Mass Notification System.

Thomas Galliford, Fire Marshal and Laura Vasile, Director of Health, were present at tonight's meeting to discuss the Mass Notification System, commonly referred to as a reverse 911 system.

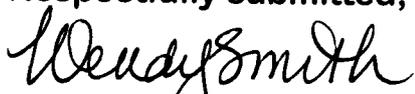
William Britt made a motion, which was seconded by John Dietter, to fund the Mass Notification System, in the current budget by transferring \$2,459.33 from the Contingency account to the Emergency Management account. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. The next year's funding of \$6,538 will be included in the Emergency Management budget request.

2.) Discussion of Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget:

J. Philip Gallagher provided several hand-outs for Board of Finance members which he felt would be helpful during budget deliberations.

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, William Slifkin made a motion, which was seconded by Kevin Riley, to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary