



BOARD OF FINANCE

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8501

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, November 17, 2008

7:00 p.m.

CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

PRESENT: J. Philip Gallagher, Chairman, William Britt, William Slifkin, James Roden, Gary Regan and John Dietter. Also in attendance were First Selectman Burke, Comptroller Barry Curina, Tax Collector Ann Scacco and Assessor Ann Marie Heering.

Call to order: J. Philip Gallagher called the Special Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Public Comments: William Michael and Robert Fand spoke

Correspondence: None

Minutes of September 8, 2008 J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by William Slifkin, to approve the minutes of September 8, 2008 with the addition of including that the Board of Education surplus was approximately \$230,000. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Minutes of October 27, 2008: J. Philip Gallagher made a motion, which was seconded by William Britt, to approve the minutes of October 27, 2008 with the correction to the sentence to read: *“He wondered if the Board of Education members had known that there was actually over \$230,000 instead of the \$50,000 mentioned at their June meeting, whether they would have turned more back to the town.”* Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

New Business

RECEIVED

NOV 19 2008

TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

1.) Consideration of FY 2007-2008 Year End Transfers

Comptroller Barry Curina presented the list of FY 2007-2008 year end transfers (attached). He explained that all accounts with unexpended funds are swept and placed in the contingency account, and then, the accounts with over expenditures are cleared. This amounted to \$488,574 transferred into contingency, with \$250,178 transferred out to cover over expended accounts.

John Dietter made a motion, which was seconded by William Britt, to approve the transfers as requested. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

2.) Consideration of FY 2008-2009 budget

Comptroller Barry Curina discussed the good news/bad news scenario that is before the Town of Bethel. He advised that FY 2007-2008 ended with a surplus of \$685,472 which was added to the fund balance. The fund balance is now \$5,946,006. This was the good news. He also pointed out that this will be helpful with the upcoming bonding for the High School Project. The bad news is that right now, anticipated revenues in the current budget year are down and this could potentially result in a shortfall of 1.5 million dollars. Discussion took place regarding this information and possible methods to alleviate the impact; ideas included hiring freeze, furlough, spending freezes, holding off of purchasing any nonessential items, no paving or capital projects, etc. It was discussed that perhaps the fund balance could be used to help with the offset, but this raised the concern that soon the town will be bonding several large projects, including the High School Project, and the fund balance plays an important role in the interest rate that will be established. Board of Finance members concurred with the Comptroller, that it would be impossible for the town side of the budget to shoulder the burden of balancing this revenue shortfall, since 70% of the budget is for education related expenses. First Selectman Burke advised that he spoke with the Governor today and she advised that the State is anticipating at least \$1.2 to \$2.6 billion dollar shortfall.

John Dietter made a motion, which was seconded by Gary Regan, to hold a Special Meeting with the Board of Education as soon as practical to apprise them of the seriousness of the situation and to work together to lessen the impact that this shortfall will bring to the entire town. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

3.) Consideration of FY 2007-2008 year end surplus

J. Philip Gallagher reminded members of a motion approved by the Board of Finance in 2006 which requested that the Board of Education return half of the excess in their salary account to reduce debt service for school related debt. The Board of Education will be reminded of this Board of Finance action.

4.) Consideration of annual review of the current elderly tax benefit program.

Discussion took place regarding the annual review of the current elderly tax benefit program. Tax Collector Ann Scacco and Assessor Ann Marie Heering presented information on our current program. The State of CT has established their 2009 income guidelines, (an increase of 2.8%). The current program automatically goes up to match the state program.

John Dietter made a motion, which was seconded by William Britt, to raise the top limit from \$45,000 to \$46,000. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

TABLES FOR FISCAL YEAR - JULY 1, 2009 TO JUNE 30, 2010

OVER	INCOME NOT EXCEEDING	CREDIT*
\$0	\$15,200.00	75%
\$15,201.00	\$20,500.00	60%
\$20,501.00	\$25,600.00	45%
\$25,601.00	\$30,500.00	30%
\$36,501.00	\$37,300.00	15%
\$37,301.00	\$46,000.00	10%

5.) Consideration of other tax relief programs offered by the Town of Bethel and/or State of CT

Both the Assessor and Tax Collector discussed the many other programs offered by the Town of Bethel and State of Connecticut to assist residents with tax relief. These programs include the Elderly Tax Relief program, Housing Authority Abatements, Firemen/EMS program, Veterans' Benefit, Social Security Disabled Persons, Blind, etc. It was pointed out that all the programs combined provide for approximately \$800,000 in tax relief programs, which, in turn, result in over \$600,000 in lost revenue made up by the taxpayers. The State of Connecticut reimburses the town a portion of these programs. The Assessor and Tax Collector stressed that our current programs are really good programs which helps to meet the needs of those requiring assistance. The concern that the state has (and may continue to) reduce reimbursements to the municipalities for various programs continues to be an issue. The town program provides for no asset restrictions.

Discussion took place regarding PA-06-176 which provides for an opportunity to "freeze" taxes. It is anticipated that the cost to the town will be \$2,000,000 to \$4,000,000 over a ten year period; this would be in addition to the programs already provided by the Town.

As there was no further business to come before the Board of Finance, William Britt made a motion, which was seconded by Gary Regan, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary



COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE

C.J. Hurgin Municipal Center
1 School Street, Bethel, CT 06801 (203) 794-8512

Barry R. Curina, Comptroller

TO: BOARD OF FINANCE
FROM: BARRY CURINA, COMPTROLLER
DATE: NOV. 14, 2008
SUBJECT: YEAR END TRANSFERS

Please consider for approval the following FY 2007-2008 year end transfers.

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
100-301	330.00	
130-250	2,931.00	
150-201	826.00	
150-301	847.00	
180-301	1,314.00	
200-201	665.00	
200-301	840.00	
200-361	240.00	
210-325	17,147.00	
220-206	5,107.00	
220-217	1,863.00	
230-201	489.00	
230-301	1,926.00	
230-313	13,124.00	
240-313	13,896.00	
240-404	16,973.00	
250-301	1,164.00	
250-403	574.00	
260-405	65,009.00	
290-403	3,009.00	
310-202	5,232.00	
310-207	2,693.00	
310-208	1,621.00	
310-301	4,109.00	
310-306	6,234.00	
330-201	1,124.00	
340-514	17,501.00	
350-201	186.00	
350-313	15,805.00	
360-313	2,173.00	

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
380-301	1,790.00	
380-315	2,087.00	
400-336	4,000.00	
400-374	500.00	
405-333	1,025.00	
405-344	541.00	
405-346	412.00	
405-366	102,154.00	
420-353	129,733.00	
440-623	8,479.00	
450-701	22,258.00	
460-406	10,643.00	
420-350		488,574.00
TOTALS	<u>488,574.00</u>	<u>488,574.00</u>

110-201		862.00
120-307		1,979.00
140-301		296.00
160-351		27,159.00
160-352		60,840.00
160-357		3,179.00
170-201		152.00
190-306		37,950.00
190-313		5,334.00
270-313		2,083.00
300-201		610.00
320-207		142.00
410-204		50,508.00
410-205		20,171.00
410-321		38,398.00
430-201		449.00
435-212		66.00
420-350	250,178.00	
TOTALS	<u>250,178.00</u>	<u>250,178.00</u>