

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
March 13, 2024
7PM

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:08PM.

Roll Call: Kathy Donahue, Ed Adelman, Nick Brown, Joan Fox, Kathi Newcombe.

Staff and Others Present: First Selectman Allan Cahill, Recreation Commission Chairman Andrea Kaye and member Bruce Spaman, Conservation Commission Chairman Mark Samios, and Recording Secretary Dayna McDermott-Arriola

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Joan Fox, to seat Kathi Newcombe.

Citizen Comments: none.

Budget Presentations

- a. **Recreation Commission:** Chairman Kaye presented the commission's budget, which included funds for Arbor Day, Cooking Classes, Halloween, Movie Nights, Music Concerts, Theatre, and the Woo Sox game, totaling \$5,650. Ms. Kaye explained that the commission is in transition, with intergenerational goals in terms of programming. The commission is also investigating youth sports, which are not currently offered in town, as there is some interest among parents, and the fees for youth participation in other towns are costly. First Selectman Cahill explained the history, from the earlier inclusion of youth sports with the Recreation Commission, to its status as a separate entity, and its eventual demise. He will check on the amount of money remaining in the Youth Sports account.
- b. **Conservation Commission:** Chairman Samios presented the commission's budget, which included, along with current line items totaling \$575, an additional \$3,700 for Bird Blind and Bat Box materials, \$1,600 for signage and kiosks at the Little River Preserve, and \$5,000 for the reconstruction of two stream crossings on the tractor trail. The commission also asked for \$15,000 for annual maintenance of the Town's trails, and \$10,000 for legal fees to conduct research for re-establishing antique roads as town-owned trails, noting that our Town attorney has expertise in this area. Members posed questions on the purpose, the continued maintenance and its cost, and collaboration with other agencies, such as the Historical Society, and requested a list of the roads. First Selectman Cahill suggested that the commission select one road at a time, the first serving as a litmus test for further projects. The commission is also requesting \$10,000 each for the Land Acquisition and Open Space Accounts, and reported the submission of a grant application for \$246,000 for work at the Little River Preserve.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Ed Adelman, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 15, 2024 with the following amendment: under Policies and Procedures Committee "...finance board members to consider separating *the approval of* the Town's policies and procedures from the school's." Motion carried unanimously.

Reports/Actions

First Selectman: First Selectman Cahill announced that the referendum approved the purchase of the fire truck, and that the contract, which has been reviewed by the Town attorney, is ready to sign. Chairman Donahue explained that the funds from the American Rescue Program Act and the Capital and Non-recurring Account will serve as the deposit, the balance paid upon delivery, so the finance board has approximately three years to discuss financing. Mr. Cahill stated that a recent meeting with the Ambulance collaborative resulted in a one year contract which has the Town responsible for \$90,000 of the \$300,000 annual cost. He also reported that the trial date for the Solar Park litigation is June 11, 2024 and that payments remain frozen for any portion of the approximately one million owed the town.

Tax Collector: The monthly report has not been received yet.

Treasurer: Treasurer Rodriguez requested one transfer to cover the rest of the fiscal year's exterminator fees.

Motion: Nick Brown, seconded by Joan Fox, to approve the transfer of \$327 to #6013-17 Community Center Supplies from #6013-03 Town Hall Electricity. Motion carried unanimously.

Boards of Education:

Regional District #11: Chairman Donahue reported that RD#11 has developed a preliminary budget which she has requested.

Hampton Elementary School: Chairman Donahue reported that the committee researching a new HVAC system for the school is waiting to learn of the financial assistance Eversource might provide.

Board of Finance Committees

Policies and Procedures Committee: none.

Correspondence: Chairman Donahue reported receipt of financial reports from the schools, the Town Attorney’s suggestions for the contract on the purchase of the fire truck, a letter from the Tax Collector regarding this year’s short fall due to errors in the Department of Motor Vehicles’ assessments, though the adjustment made to address the issue was not mentioned. She has also been corresponding with Hometown Fire Fighters Insurance to discuss financing options, which will be discussed, along with current interest rates, at the next meeting.

Old Business

a. Update on Annual Reports

Chairman Donahue reported receipt of more submissions to the Annual Report, including the Inland, Wetlands & Watercourses Agency and the Fletcher Memorial Library. The board needs the annual reports from the schools, the Board of Selectmen, and the Department of Public Works.

b. Discuss and Possible Action on Budget Workshop Dates

Department presentations of budgets will be scheduled during regular meetings, after which the need for additional budget workshops will be discussed and scheduled.

c. Discuss and Possible Action on Board of Finance’s Contribution to the Annual Report

The introductory paragraph from the Windham Regional Revenue Office’s Year End Review will be included in the introductory paragraph of the Board of Finance’s report. The following amendments were also made to the final paragraph: “At a March 29, 2023 meeting, after *a review of the* Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) protection of Town funds...” and “Dairy Farm Abatements”. Information from the Annual Audit will also be included after it is received.

New Business

a. Preliminary Discussion of FY2024-2025

First Selectman Cahill reported that the Selectmen are waiting on a few items.

Additions to the Agenda: none.

Citizen Comments: none.

Suggestions for Next Agenda: budget presentations, Annual Report, financing options for Fire Department Insurance

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting: April 10 at 7PM in the Community Room of Town Hall.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Secretary

This is a draft version of the Minutes until approved by the Board of Finance.