

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
April 10, 2024
7PM

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03PM.

Roll Call: Kathy Donahue, Judy Buell, Kathi Newcombe, Stan Crawford.

Staff and Others Present: First Selectman Allan Cahill (via ZOOM), Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman Kevin Grindle, Town Clerk Kaye Johnson, Recording Secretary Dayna McDermott-Arriola

Stan Crawford and Kathi Newcombe were seated for Ed Adelman and Diane Gagnon at their requests.

Citizen Comments: none.

Budget Presentations

- a. **Planning & Zoning Commission:** Chairman Grindle presented and distributed the commissions' budget totaling \$47,079, which represents a \$4,500 decrease from the current year and level spending in all areas with the exception of a \$5,300 reduction to the Planning & Zoning Clerk line and a \$800 increase to the Planning & Zoning Enforcement Officer line due to a market adjustment. Chairman Grindle noted that the Officer's flexibility and responsiveness to residents and the commission, as well as comparisons with compensation for the position in other towns, resulted in the increase in salary.
- b. **Town Clerk:** Town Clerk Kaye Johnson distributed the Office's budget request totaling \$66,613, an increase of \$2,738 over the current year. Increases in line items included the Town Clerk's salary to approximate the average salary of Town Clerk's in Windham County, funding for the Town Clerk Assistant's attendance at the Town Clerk conference, and the purchase of a computer and equipment, as the Office is now relying on the use of a personal computer. Ms. Johnson also reviewed the accomplishments of the current year, the goals for the next fiscal year, and the estimated revenue. Chairman Donahue requested the research used to determine the average salary of the county's Town Clerks.
- c. **Inland, Wetlands & Watercourses Agency:** Stan Crawford presented that the IWWA's budget request is the same as the current year, with the exception of the cost-of-living increases for the two employees.
- d. **Assessor:** Jodie Heon presented via cell phone the Assessor's budget request totaling \$52,508, a \$2,595 increase over the current year. Most line items remain level with an increase in computer support dictated by the user maintenance software agreements. Ms. Heon reported that the appeals are complete.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Kathi Newcombe, seconded by Judy Buell, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 13, 2024 with the following amendments: under Recreation Commission, "*Chairman Donahue explained the history, from the earlier inclusion of youth sports with the Recreation Commission, to its status as a separate entity*"; and under Correspondence, "*She has also been corresponding with Hometown Fire Fighters Insurance to discuss financing investment options for the Length of Service Award Program*" Motion carried unanimously, Judy Buell abstaining.

Reports/Actions

First Selectman: First Selectman Cahill reported that the deposit for the fire truck has been sent, and that it's expected the truck will be delivered in 4 – 5 years. He also reported that the paving of the Town Hall parking lots will begin on April 22. He also forwarded correspondence from the Revenue Collector to members.

Tax Collector: The quarterly report was distributed; \$3,816,631 has been collected to date.

Treasurer: Reports were not distributed to members this month.

Boards of Education:

Regional District #11: Chairman Donahue reported that the public hearing on the RD#11 budget was held and that Hampton's assessment, based on enrollment, is the lowest of the three towns. She also stated that the budget was a 1.85% increase, but the necessity of special education tuition raised it to 5.9%. First Selectman Cahill stated that he questioned the district's amount budgeted for legal expenses.

Hampton Elementary School: Chairman Donahue reported that the Hampton Elementary School Board of Education has adopted a budget, but there's an error that needs to be corrected. The increase is less than last year's \$100,000 increase. Mr. Cahill reported that the Superintendent contacted him, and questions concerning the transmittal of the enrollment report have been resolved and should be sent within the next two weeks.

Chairman Donahue also stated that the reductions in the Educational Cost Sharing grant, frozen during the period of the Covid pandemic, will result in substantial cuts over the next seven years, which will be even more significant due to decreases in school enrollment.

Board of Finance Committees

Policies and Procedures Committee: none.

Correspondence: Chairman Donahue reported receipt of financial reports from the schools and will ask the financial departments of the two schools to send these reports directly to members as well. She also received reports from the Tax Collector, department budget requests and submissions to the Annual Report, and a communication from HES school board member Maryellen Donnelly that the HVAC system the school is considering passed the engineering review for Eversource. She also received and read a letter from Kathi Newcombe stating that compensation she received from the Town for Election duties was deposited directly into an account she no longer has, and the response from Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez stating that the information was from 2014 when Ms. Newcomb last received a pay check. The bank returned the funds to the Town and Ms. Newcombe was issued a new check, however both Chairman Donahue and Vice-Chairman Buell stated that information on direct deposits should be verified at least once a year.

Old Business

a. Update on Annual Reports

Chairman Donahue reported receipt of more submissions to the Annual Report. The board needs the annual reports from the Board of Selectmen, the Fire Department, and both schools. First Selectman Cahill stated that his report is complete, and Chairman Donahue will contact directly the school Superintendents and Board of Education Chairmen as they have received multiple email reminders.

b. Discuss and Possible Action on Budget Workshop Dates

Chairman Donahue will contact the members absent from this meeting to ascertain their availability for April 17th and/or April 24th.

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

The report will add the Financial Statement Findings from the Audit.

Motion: Judy Buell, seconded by Kathi Newcombe, to approve the Board of Finance's contribution to the Annual Report to include the Financial Statement Findings from the Audit. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

a. Preliminary Discussion of FY2024-2025

First Selectman Cahill relayed that there are some departments which are still outstanding, and reminded members that some line items, previously covered by American Rescue Program Act funds, will have to be covered by the Town now.

Additions to the Agenda: none.

Citizen Comments: none.

Suggestions for Next Agenda: budget presentations.

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting: May 8 at 7PM in the Community Room of Town Hall.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting adjourned at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Secretary

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