TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Board of Finance
Special Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2022
Nathan Hale-Ray High School Library
Via Zoom and YouTube Live—Audio Only

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Gionta called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance:

Board of Finance Members:

Tracey Gionta, Chairman
Bruce Dutch, Secretary
Joseph Corbett
Todd Gelston
Harvey Thomas
Rebecca Whatley

Others:

Brian Reas, Superintendent of Schools
Donald Angersola, Director of Operations
Cindy Varricchio
And members of the public

ATHLETIC COMPLEX UPDATE

Ms. Gionta stated that the proposal for a capital project to construct an Athletic Complex at the high school, including the repair of the soccer fields, would be presented in a public hearing following this meeting. She advised that the Purple Fund had allocated $500,000 for the project and the State of Connecticut had approved a grant of $1,400,000, consequently, the out-of-pocket cost the Town will have to bond for is approximately $1,000,000. She responded to several questions from the Board members and Mr. Reas confirmed that there had been no changes to the proposal since it was last presented to the Board of Finance.

NATHAN HALE-RAY HIGH SCHOOL BOILER UPDATE AND APPROVAL

Ms. Gionta advised that the boiler at the high school has failed and must be replaced. She stated that the replacement had been on the Board of Education's capital plan for several years and the Board of Finance had approved $189,570 for the replacement; however, the actual cost to replace the boiler will be $288,880. She added that $120,000 and $45,000 in reserves were set aside respectively in fiscal years 2019-2020 and 2021-2022.

Superintendent Reas advised that funds allocated to purchase a generator for the elementary school would cover most of the difference between the approved and actual expense and, further, it is not likely that the Board of Education will be able to secure the purchase of the generator this fiscal year.

Ms. Gionta and Mr. Reas responded to several questions raised by the Board members.

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas to appropriate $52,000 allocated in the FY2021-2022 budget for a generator for the elementary school and $8,000 from reserves, for a total of $60,000 to complete the high school replacement boiler capital project. Mr. Gelston seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE EAST HADDAM NEWS ARTICLE—REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Ms. Gionta advised that the Communications Subcommittee's article for the East Haddam News would be distributed to the Board members and they could provide her with any feedback they have.

2022-2023 BUDGET

a. Discussion Potential Adjustments Following the Public Hearing:

Ms. Gionta advised the Board that Ms. Varricchio had informed her that the Fire Department's proposed operating budget has excess funds of $20,000. She also stated that the First Selectman had requested that the Board of Finance reinstate the Land Use Department's capital request for $30,000 to fund a Land Use/EDC Conceptual Design Study for a Master Plan for Moodus Center and she solicited the Board Members input on Ms. Haines' request.

The consensus of the Board members was that they were not opposed to a study/master plan for Moodus center; however, they would like more specifics about the project and whether the group has researched grant funding.

Ms. Gionta confirmed that the request had been in the original budget submitted to the Board of Finance but had been cut during the Board's efforts to reduce the overall FY2022-2023 budget. She suggested using the $20,000 of excess funds from the Fire Department's operating budget to partially fund the Land Use Department's capital request and, if needed, approving the remaining $10,000 in FY2023-2024.

GUESTS AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS.

In response to a question raised by Mr. James Francese, Ms. Gionta stated that it was the Board of Finance's intent to fund a specific dollar amount in the Shared Services budget to hire a Human Resources professional under the assumption that the role would be a 25-to-30-hour position serving all East Haddam's employees. She acknowledged that the salary of the current individual is slightly over budget, that she is unsure whether the Board of Education' human resources needs are being met and agreed that the situation needs to be resolved.

Mr. Thomas noted that members of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education will attend the upcoming Public Hearing and encouraged Mr. Francese to bring his questions up for further discussion at that meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mr. Dutch to adjourn the Board of Finance meeting at 6:38 pm. Ms. Whatley seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
/s/
Bruce Dutch
Secretary