TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Board of Finance
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2023
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 and 2
Via Zoom and YouTube Live

Participating:

Board of Finance Members:

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

Others:

Board of Education Members:

Brian Reas, Superintendent
Cynthia Hughson, Business Manager
Alyson Karpiej, Capital Improvements Building Projects Committee
Joseph Spurgeon, Capital Improvements Building Projects Committee
Patricia Stricker, Capital Improvements Building Projects Committee

Don Angersola, Facilities Director
Rob Funk, Finance Director
Irene Haines. First Selectwoman
Scott Kraynak, H.F. Lenz Company
And other members of the public

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Gionta called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the attendees said the pledge of allegiance.

Ms. Gionta stated that she would like to revise the Agenda to discuss Old Business item A following Guests and Audience Comments - agenda item 4.

Motion made by Mr. Gelston to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Special Meeting, April 3, 2023

Ms. Whatley noted corrections to the meeting minutes.

Motion made by Mr. Thomas to approve the minutes of the special meeting of April 3, 2023 as amended. Mr. Corbett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

b. Regular Meeting, April 10, 2023

Ms. Whatley noted corrections to the meeting minutes

Motion made by Mr. Gelston to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 10, 2023 as amended. Ms. Whatley seconded the motion. Mr. Dutch abstained from the vote and the motion was approved by a majority of ayes. Motion passed.

GUESTS AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS

There were no guest or audience comments discussed at this time in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Athletic Complex Capital Project and CIP Update

Superintendent Reas distributed documents regarding the HVAC project for the schools. He went through a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the timelines for the Elementary, Middle, and High Schools and aspects of related HVAC upgrade projects for each. He stated that the total cost for all the work is projected to range from $9.5M to $11M.

Mr. Reas advised that the Elementary and High Schools were eligible for state grants; however, because the Middle School is less than 20 years old, it would not be eligible. He noted that the Board of Education's grant application submitted in December had been rejected based on the cost estimate but the state is awarding a second round of grants in August and the BOE will submit a new grant application.

Mr. Reas stated that the current state reimbursement rate for capital project is 52% and he reviewed a list of mechanical priorities for the entire district. Mr. Kraynak responded to questions from the Board and confirmed that it there would be economies realized if the work is done school-by-school.

There was a general discussion regarding the BOE's strategy for applying for the next round of state grants for the HVAC project.

Superintendent Reas provided an update on the High School Athletic Complex. He noted that they contractor broke ground early and the project is going well. He advised that they have found construction fill in the field and the cost to removed it is projected to be $60k-$90k.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Gionta advised that she had received written notification from the Chairman of the Board of Education that the BOE will enter into collective bargaining negotiations with the union for the administrative staff no later than this August. In response to a question raised by Mr. Gelston, she confirmed that the Board of Finance members can observe the negotiations.

Ms. Gionta called the Board's attention to an email from Public Works Director Velez regarding reallocation of FY2022-2023 Snow Removal funds to the Tree Removal and Road Reclamation budgets. She noted that Director Velez's request will be considered later in the meeting under New Business.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

a. Board Subcommittee Reports

   i. Communications – There was no new update on this agenda item.

   ii. Long-Range Capital Improvements Committee – There was no new update on this agenda item.

   iii. Financial Policies – There was no new update on this agenda item.

b. Liaison Reports

   i. Redevelopment Agency – Mr. Thomas reported that the Redevelopment Agency has developed a workplan and is establishing sub-committees to address the items on the plan. He noted that the Agency's next meeting is scheduled for May 11th.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Haines reported on the following items:

- The Swingbridge had several trial openings for marine traffic on Sunday which went well. Currently, they are planning on scheduling openings on Thursdays and Sundays with a goal of hourly openings daily. As of June 4th, the bridge will be closed from 8:00 p.m. Sundays through 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday.

- She is talking with the town of Hebron regarding an agreement to have Officer Rhodes work on their Police Accountability accreditation. She stated that they have discussed sharing the cost of Officer Rhodes salary equally.

- The Fire Company No. 2 Building Committee received an engineering report and expect to get a recommendation on the best way to proceed in the near future. Ms. Haines stated that she expects that the engineers will recommend that the Town build a new building. The projected cost to construct a new firehouse on the site is $350-$750 sf. Facilities Director Angersola responded to questions from the Board.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. March 2023 Year-To-Date Budget Report

Mr. Funk called the Board's attention to the February 2023 year-to-date budget report in their meeting packets. He reviewed the report and provided comments.

b. Audit Update

Mr. Funk reported that he expects to get a trial balance from the auditor by the end of the week. He advised that the auditor will provide the audited numbers to her superiors for their review and expects to get their sign-off by the end of this month

OLD BUSINESS

a. Athletic Complex Capital Project and CIP Update

This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting and is reported on in the minutes above.

b. ARPA (SLFRF) Grant Status Update, Budget Approval, and Possible Resolutions

Mr. Funk called the Board's attention to a document in their meeting packets related to this agenda item. He provided an overview of the document and responded to questions. Ms. Gionta recommended a strategy for moving forward with the use of ARPA and new funds for capital projects.

Mr. Funk advised that he had spoken with the auditor regarding a spending strategy that would comply with federal budgeting requirements and he provided additional information on same. He also provided information on ARPA acceptable expenses and noted changes in the cost of several capital projects.

Motion made by Mr. Dutch to approve revisions to existing budgeted use of ARPA (SLFRF) funds, resulting in a net overall change of $4,462.00 as outlined in the "Revisions Pending" column of the accompanying document title ARPA EXPENDITURES – BOARD OF FINANCE APPROVED MAY 8, 2023. Mr. Gelston seconded the motion.

Motion made by Ms. Whatley to approve additions to ARPA budget resulting in a net increase of $1,341,660.00 as outlined in the "Proposed ARPA Additions" column of the accompanying document titled ARPA EXPENDITURES – BOARD OF FINANCE APPROVED MAY 8, 2023. Mr. Corbett seconded the motion.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Thomas, Mr. Funk clarified that the separate motions provide a clear tracking of the Town's use of the ARPA grant funds. He responded to several questions from the Board.

Both motions were unanimously approved. Motions carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Transfer of Funds from Snow Removal to Road Reclamation Capital Project

Motion made by Mr. Thomas to transfer from the Public Works Snow Removal lines the following budgeted amounts: $88,000.00 from Salt/Sand (10543070-56600), $5,000.00 from Other Supplies (10543070-56900), and $7,000.00 from Snow Plowing/Sanding (10543070-54103), to Transfer to Capital Projects (10549010-59700). The transfer shall cause revenue in the amount of $100,000.00 to be recorded in Capital Projects (33299-49100) to be used to increase the funding for project C0230 Road Reclamation by $100,000.00, and to request that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Mr. Gelston seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Motion carried.

b. Transfer of Funds from Snow Removal to Tree Care/Removal

Motion was made by Mr. Dutch to transfer from the Public Works Snow Removal lines the following budgeted amounts: $35,000.00 from Regular Employees (10543070-51510), and $40,000.00 from Snow Plowing/Sanding (10543070-54103), for a total of $75,000.00, to Grounds Maintenance - Tree Removal (10543550-5430) and to request that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Mr. Corbett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Motion carried.

c. Donation Acceptance – Senior Center Shed

Motion was made by Ms. Whatley to accept a gift from Liberty Bank of a used storage shed valued at approximately $1,200.00 to be utilized by the Senior Center and to request that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Motion was seconded by Mr. Gelston and it passed unanimously. Motion carried.

GUEST AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS

There were no guest or audience comments discussed at this time in meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mr. Dutch to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Mr. Gelston seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/
Bruce Dutch
Secretar7