TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Board of Finance
Special Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024
Municipal Office Building – Room 2
Via Zoom and YouTube Live

Participating:

Board of Finance Members:
Eric Kolasinski
Joseph Corbett
Todd Gelston
Maureen Goff
Harvey Thomas
Rebecca Whatley

Absent: Joseph Corbett

Others: Valerie Belles, Finance Director
Lori D'Aquila, Ambulance Association
Irene Haines, First Selectwoman
Ken Tosi, Citizen
And other members of the public

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Gelston called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and the attendees said the pledge of allegiance.

GUESTS AND AUDIENCE COMMENTS

The following comments were raised at the meeting:

- Lori D'Aquila- spoke on behalf of the East Haddam Ambulance Association and read a prepared statement. She referenced the Town's 2010 agreement with the EHAA to fund a capital reserve account for the purchase of a new ambulance "no less than every five years". She noted that the life expectancy for ambulances is 100,000 miles and expressed concern that the ambulance purchased by the Town in 2016 has over 132,000 miles on it.

  Ms. D'Aquila stated that the Town was notified in 2022 of the need to replace the 2016 vehicle and that there is a lead time of approximately 2 years. She requested the Town honor the 2010 agreement and start funding a capital reserve account for the purchase of the next ambulance and that it also pay for the necessary upgrades for the existing ambulance.

Ms. D'Aquila responded to questions from the Board. Mr. Gelston agreed to have this issue put on the BOF's next meeting agenda. Ms. D'Aquila agreed to provide them with the EHAA's financials and a copy of the agreement with the Town.

- Ken Tosi – provided follow-up comments on Ms. D'Aquila's statements. He stated that he had researched the funding for a new ambulance on ClearGov and noted that the Town had set aside $64k in FY2023-2024 and proposes to add $68k to that line item in FY2024-2025. Given that the projected cost of a remount of the existing ambulance is $177k, he pointed out that they are still short $45k and suggested using the $100k emergency medical service contingency fund to make up the difference. Mr. Tosi stated, however, that he feels the Town needs to develop a better plan for the future.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. March 20th Special Meeting Minutes – Mr. Gelston called the Board's attention to the draft minutes of their special meeting of March 20th. Ms. Whatley commented on the spelling of "mil" rate.

Motion made by Ms. Goff to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of March 20, 2024 as written. Mr. Kolasinski seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

b. March 27th Special Meeting Minutes - Mr. Gelston called the Board's attention to the draft minutes of their special meeting of March 27th.

Motion made by Mr. Thomas to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of March 27, 2024 as written. Ms. Goff seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REP0RT

Mr. Gelston noted that Chairman Corbett is traveling on business and, consequently, he would dispense with the Chairman's report.

a. Discussion About April 16th Public Hearing - Mr. Gelston reviewed the standards for a Public Hearing and there was a general discussion regarding holding a straw poll on the budget at the meeting. The Board also discussed how to govern the meeting.

FIRST SELECTMEN'S REPORT

a. Fringe Benefits – Ms. Haines reported that she has not yet received definitive information on the cost of employee health insurance. Consequently, she recommended using the figure that was originally provided for the FY2024-2025 budget.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. February 2024 Year-to-Date Budget Report - Ms. Belles called the Board's attention to the February 2024 YTD budget report in the meeting packets. She stated that the FY2023-2024 budget appears to be healthy and she does not anticipate any significant issues with it. She responded to questions from the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Transfer Request from Ice/Snow Budget to Tree and Road Reclamation Budgets – Mr. Gelston called the Board's attention to a request from the Public Works Director to transfer funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas to transfer from Snow Removal the following budgeted amounts: $45,533.70 from 10543070-51510 - Regular Employees, $962.31 from 10543070-52975 - Food Allowance, $46,453.98 from 10543070-56600 - Sand/Salt, and $7,050.01 from 10543070-56900 - Other Supplies, for a total of $100,000.00, to 10549010-59700 - Transfer to Capital Projects. This budgeted transfer will increase account number 3250013-58926 - project number C0230 by $100,000.00; and to request that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Ms. Whatley seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ms. Whatley to transfer from Snow Removal the following budgeted amounts: $19,000.00 from 10543070-54103 - Snow Plowing/Sanding to 10543550-54303 - Grounds Maintenance (in Tree Removal) and to request that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Town Meeting for approval. Mr. Kolasinski seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mr. Kolasinski to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/
Todd Gelston
Secretary