

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, AUGUST 12th, 2020
Via Zoom Meetings**

Members in Attendance: Camille Alberti, Chairperson
Ann Cicchiello, Vice-Chairperson
John Birmingham
Peter DeRosa
Anne Santoro
Richard Steel

FILED

Aug 18, 20 20 AT 10:11 (AM) PM

Brianne Stearns ATC

EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also In Attendance: Mark Nickerson, First Selectman
Anna Johnson, Finance Director

Absent: No One

A. Call Regular Meeting to Order

Chairman Alberti called this Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance to order at 7:03 PM. She noted that all members were present.

B. Delegations

Ms. Alberti noted that they would not be making a decision on the latest recommendation from the Board of Selectmen on the Public Safety building this evening so anyone wishing to make comments on it could hold off until they do discuss it. That being said she read into the record a communication that she had received from Mike Schulz of Lovers Lane indicating that he agreed with the Board regarding the lack of transparency. (Copy attached)

Ms. Johnson noted that she had received an email for the Board of Finance from Mary Melton of 28 Wayne Drive noting that the cost is outrageous and asking that they be sensible regarding the Public Safety building. She read this into the record (Copy attached)

C. Minutes

▪ **Regular Meeting July 8, 2020**

Ms. Alberti called for a motion for approval or any changes to the Board of Finance Regular Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2020.

Ms. Alberti asked that on Page 4 in the fourth paragraph down that Ms. Cicchiello be changed to Ms. Alberti; the sentence starting with Ms. Johnson be changed to read ...currently \$329,701 ...a transfer from the operating fund the balance would be \$394,201. Next sentence change Ms. Cicchiello to Ms. Alberti and in the beginning of the fifth paragraph change Ms. Cicchiello to Ms. Alberti.

****MOTION (1)**

Ms. Santoro moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2020 as amended.

Mr. Birmingham seconded the motions.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

▪ **Special Meeting July 20, 2020**

Ms. Alberti called for a motion for approval or any changes to the Board of Finance Special Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2020.

Ms. Santoro said that she thought that the notes on the presentation should be noted that they had been made by the recording secretary so that people would not think that the architect had made them.

Ms. Alberti said that she would like to table the minutes as she was still reviewing them with the tape and would have that done by their next meeting.

The recording secretary noted that minutes are not a transcript but only a synopsis of the events.

D. Reports

▪ Board of Education

There was no report as everyone is busy with the new school year.

▪ First Selectman

Mr. Nickerson noted that there was a change of plans for tonight's meeting – a FEMA reimbursement came to the Town in two (2) checks from the two (2) storms many years ago (Sandy, etc). It took nine (9) years to get these checks and it has been suggested to apply this to the Public Safety building to reduce the \$2.2M to \$500,000. He said that they had received questions from the Board of Finance that they are in the process of answering so he does not think that they are prepared to answer all of them this evening. He also noted that this would be a special appropriation and added that all who would have been involved in a referendum were concerned with how they would be able to go about doing it.

He also reported that the Vets Park entrance has been re-done to be a better intersection and much safer. He, the Board of Ed and Mr. Newton met with the governor when he came to New London a couple of weeks ago. Schools will open in a hybrid format and they will go with that and see how it goes.

The Tri-Town Agreement for the sewer is up for renewal and there is a lot to update with this agreement. The Boardwalk is open in both directions now and the downtown district is moving along – they will do a vintage antique flea market type of event.

Ms. Cicchiello asked if there is a limit to the number of people who can attend a Zoom Town Meeting.

Mr. Nickerson said that he thinks that our Zoom package can handle 1000 however; they will work on perhaps an outside or auditorium set-up for the Town Meeting. These are details that they are still working out.

Ms. Santoro asked if they knew what dollar amount that the Covid is costing with relation to the schools.

Mr. Nickerson said that in September that Mr. Newton should be able to let them know about funding and where and how it will go with respect to the Covid.

Ms. Alberti said that Mr. Nickerson's comment about the Special Appropriation is on the agenda and that she will make a few comments at that time.

▪ Finance Director

Ms. Johnson said that they had received her reports in their packets and that the largest collection is from taxes. The year to year comparison is indicative of the extra days in August this year to pay without penalty. Building permits this year were at \$41,000 versus only \$15,000 last year at this time. For the Fire Depts. the overtime tracking is a bit high and she said that she will speak with the Chiefs.

Ms. Alberti noted that the new dept. 106 – HR – they had put on hold the 7.5 hrs until next year but this seems to be tracking high. One-twelfth of the year should be \$4,075 but this is \$4,726.11 for one month. She asked if they are paid weekly or bi-weekly.

Ms. Johnson said that it is weekly and she thought that there were five pay weeks which would account for the difference.

Ms. Johnson noted that she had provided them with an update on the undesignated fund balance subject to the close out of the year which has not been done yet. Also, they had \$17M in new bonds and \$2M in refunding and \$11M in notes. The new bonds and refunding were at 1.84% interest and the notes at .40% interest.

Ms. Santoro said that Ms. Johnson had said that she was meeting with the bond agency and asked if they had any comments.

Ms. Johnson said that they used \$900,000 of the undesignated fund balance with the new budget but they also put money into the fund balance and additionally raised the mil rate.

Ms. Alberti asked why the positive spin.

Ms. Johnson said that it is the combination of all the items together that work.

Ms. Alberti thanked Ms. Johnson for sharing that positive feedback as she felt very positive about the budget year that they had just gone through.

E. New Business

a. Special Appropriation Bond Resolution PS Building – Increase by \$2,200,000 to \$7,200,000

Ms. Alberti said that in light of this information this evening from Mr. Nickerson on the \$1.7M from FEMA funds potentially being applied to the PS project that if they are to hold a Special Meeting that it would be the only item on the agenda. She said that she would also expect a new proposal with the new presentation and that they will do their best to accommodate this.

Mr. Nickerson said that he expects to be done with the questions next week Wednesday and that they would forward it to this Board after that.

b. Special Appropriation – Fire Department Radios – CNRE \$211,176

Ms. Johnson said that they had received two (2) bids and that both had come in at more than anticipated so they came up with a number of units that could be afforded.

****MOTION (2)**

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve a special appropriation and transfer in the amount of \$211,176.00 in CNRE Fund 32 as follows: from account 32-70-300-500-999 (Town wide projects) to an account to be established titled, 'NFD-FFD Multiband Radios'. This project is consistent with the 2020-2021 Capital Improvement Plan. This resolution is passed under the guidance of Executive Order 7S with no town meeting and being less than 1% of the current budget.

Ms. Santoro seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

c. Carryover – Emergency Management \$1000 AED Supplies

Ms. Johnson explained that they were budgeting \$1000/year so this is a carryover from the previous year as they want to purchase a defibrillator @ \$1445.

Ms. Santoro asked about an expiration date noting that is something to be cognizant of.

Ms. Johnson said that she would ask.

****MOTION (3)**

Mr. Steel moved to approve the carry-over of the remaining balance of \$1,000 in account 01-25-224-300-244 (AED Supplies) from the 2019-2020 budget to account 01-25-214-300-244 (AED Supplies) in the 2020-2021 budget.

Mr. Birmingham seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

d. Appointment of Auditor – FYE 6/30/2020

Ms. Johnson explained the process for bids – contacting OPM for audit firms of 2019 – there were 16 and she sent to three (3) of them who were working with municipalities of our size. She said that she received one (1) bid and that the last time that they went out for bids they had only received two (2). For explanation she noted that most firms like this only have a certain amount of clients that they take in and that they do not vary from that amount.

Ms. Santoro asked if Blum Shapiro provides references.

Ms. Johnson said that they did provide references although she did not call any but will do so. She noted that they are a reputable firm.

Ms. Alberti said that she is a trustee with the Kathryn Hepburn Center and noted that they use Blum Shapiro who does excellent work. That being said, she said that she would recuse herself from voting on this item.

Ms. Santoro asked Mr. Steel how he feels about the company as he was on the subcommittee.

Mr. Steel said that he feels good about them; they have a lot of clients and the last time we went out for bids they also bid. He said that he understands that they have a very large staff and that they would be assigning four (4) people to us. Additionally, as he sat on the subcommittee for this he said that he would also recuse himself from the vote on this item.

****MOTION (4)**

Ms. Cicchiello moved to approve retaining the services of Blum Shapiro & Company, P.C. to conduct the audit of the Towns records for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 and authorize the Board of Finance Chairperson to execute the engagement letter.

Mr. DeRosa seconded the motion.

Vote: 4 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Recused: Ms. Alberti, Mr. Steel

e. Ratify Transfers - \$83,869.47

Ms. Alberti noted that the books are not officially closed yet and that they may see a few more of these.

Ms. Santoro noted that a few were related to Covid and asked if they could be reimbursed by FEMA.

Ms. Johnson said absolutely and that they have coded those items for submission.

Ms. Santoro said that she thinks that it would be good to know these expenses, including the BOE.

****MOTION (5)**

Ms. Santoro moved to ratify departmental transfers in the amount of \$83,869.47 processed for fiscal year end June 30, 2020.

Mr. Steel seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

F. Old Business

There was none.

G. Public Discussion

There was none.

H. Board Comments

There were none.

I. Adjournment

Ms. Alberti called for a motion to adjourn.

****MOTION (6)**

Ms. Cicchiello moved to adjourn this Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 8:22 PM

Ms. Santoro seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary

Karen Zmitruk

From: Camille Alberti <camilleforfirst@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 9:59 AM
To: Karen Zmitruk
Subject: Fwd: PSB

Hi Karen,

Please include Mike Schulz' email in the public record.

Thank you,
Camille

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <homecraftschulz@aol.com>
Date: Wed, Aug 12, 2020 at 9:02 AM
Subject: PSB
To: camilleforfirst@gmail.com <camilleforfirst@gmail.com>

Camille,

I'm requesting my comments be read into record.

I feel our elected officials on the BOF have spoken clearly on the issue of additional appropriation for the "retrofit" of the Public Safety Building, identifying the lack of transparency and lack of apparent needs of the project. The public deserves full disclosure of all current costs, retrofit costs and anticipated future costs over the next five years to ten years. Then and only then should a referendum be considered. There is no question that the Police need new accommodations and that should already have occurred. Maybe we should move the Town Hall to the "Honeywell" building and the Police into the then vacated Town Hall building! Plenty of space, parking and central to town.

Mike Schulz
Lovers Lane, East Lyme

*Delegations
Attachment*

1

BOA

8/12/20

Karen Zmitruk

From: Anna Johnson
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 7:09 PM
To: Karen Zmitruk
Subject: Fwd: Public safety building

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Melton <mollysheehan53@yahoo.com>
Date: August 12, 2020 at 6:41:19 PM EDT
To: Anna Johnson <annaj@eltownhall.com>
Subject: Public safety building

Hi Board of Finance,

I vote no for additional money for the public safety building . The selected location is not good , way at the edge of town. The cost is outrageous. We are not a huge crime city that needs over the top high tech equipment. The way it is now you won't have enough to put Holding cells. We will have to pay Waterford again.

I think the police should have a modern adequate station. We do not need to go over the top. Look what other towns have. We do not have a large police force. Let's plan something sensible .

Resident East Lyme

Mary Melton

28 Wayne Dr.

Sent from my iPhone

*Delegations
Attachment*

BOF 8/12/20