

BOF May 8th, 2024 Regular Meeting
Minutes

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Minutes of Board of Finance May 8th, 2024, Regular Meeting - 05/08/24

Date and time: 05/08/24 05:30 pm to: 05/08/24 06:02 pm

Present: Brooke Stevens, Rec Secretary (* Ms. Stevens was not in attendance), John T. Birmingham, Paul Maxfield, Richard Steel, Jay Ginsberg, Absent:, Denise Hall, Chairperson, Lauren McNamara

CC: Kevin Gervais, Finance Director, Dan Cunningham, First Selectman, Jerry Lokken, Parks & Recreation Director

Location: East Lyme Town Hall, Upper Conf. Room, 108 Pennsylvania Avenue
Niantic, CT, 06357.

Topics

1. Call Meeting to Order & Pledge

Note Acting Chair Maxfield called the May 8th, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 5:32 p.m. and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

2-1. April 1st, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

Note see attachment.


 [BOF-April-1-2024-Minutes.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (1)

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 1st, 2024, as submitted.
Mr. Ginsberg seconded the motion.
Motion carried, 4-0-0.

2-2. April 2nd, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

Note see attachment.

 [BOF-April-2-2024-Minutes.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (2)

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 2nd, 2024, as submitted.
Mr. Ginsberg seconded the motion.
Motion carried, 4-0-0.

2-3. April 4th, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

Note see attachment.

 [Minutes-of-Board-of-Finance-April-4th-2024-Special-Meeting-04_04_24.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (3)

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 4th, 2024, as submitted.

Mr. Ginsberg seconded the motion.

Mr. Maxfield said he has two corrections:

1. On page 9, under Motion 22, he's referred to as Mr. Maxwell.

2. Page 10, Motion 24, he's listed as making the motion twice, and he only made it once. He clarified that the Chair asked him to confirm that he still wanted to make the motion since there was some discussion between the time he made the motion and the second, and it appears that's what led to the confusion.

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 4th, 2024, as amended.

Mr. Ginsberg seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

2-4. April 10th, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes

Note see attachment.

 [BOF-April-10-2024-Regular-Meeting-Minutes.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (4)

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 10th, 2024, as submitted.

Mr. Maxfield seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 2-0-2.

Mr. Ginsberg and Mr. Steel abstained from the vote due to their absence from the April 10th, 2024, meeting.

2-5. April 29th, 2024, Public Hearing Meeting Minutes

Note see attachment.

 [BOF-April-29-2024-Public-Hearing-Meeting-Minutes.pdf](#)

Note The Board chose to table this item since they were unable to review them prior to the meeting.

2-6. April 29th, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

Note see attachment.

 [BOF-April-29-2024-Special-Meeting-Minutes.pdf](#)

Note The Board chose to table this item since they were unable to review them prior to the meeting.

3. Delegations

Note There were none.

4. Reports

4-1. First Selectman

Note Mr. Cunningham noted that they previously spoke about forming a strategic planning or capital committee, which can be done by ordinance, or by forming an ad hoc advisory committee. He will discuss this item with the Board of Selectmen, decide on the best approach, and they will also see about identifying potential members from the community for the committee.

Note He also shared how he attended the Friends of Oswegatchie Hills Annual Meeting and received a legislative update from State Representative Holly Cheeseman. The update concerned legislation related to zoning laws and rules, particularly the 'as of right' legislation, and the potential impact this new legislation might have on the town's character and zoning regulations.

Note Mr. Cunningham said he thinks they need to start studying the legislation and strategize on how to manage its impact on the town.

Note Mr. Gervais noted that the last page of their packet has a summary of what they're looking to do in regard to the Capital Improvement Committee.

 [Capital Improvement Committee Summary.pdf](#)

4-2. Finance Director

Note Mr. Gervais shared that Terri Dipallina, the AP clerk, has left, and Denise from the Tax Office has taken over the position. He added that Munis implementation for the accounting system is ongoing, with training scheduled for next month, and they're rolling out a revised 401 and 457 plan with no changes to benefits, just structural changes, on July 1st and 15th.

Note Mr. Gervais reported some of the following:

McCook's Point bathroom suffered damage amounting to \$7,000.

The damage exceeds the \$5,000 insurance threshold, and a claim will be filed.

Year-end preparations and audits are ongoing.

Finalizing the fiscal 22 audit with three remaining items for technical review.

Fiscal 22 financial statement expected by the next regular meeting.

Preparations for fiscal 23 audit are also underway.

In terms of Employee Pension Plans, non-affiliated, non-union employees are in the defined contribution plan.

Firefighters have transitioned to the defined contribution plan, except one who is grandfathered into the pension plan.

Police and dispatch are still in the defined benefit plan.

Fire contract negotiations are ongoing.

5. New Business

5-1. Special Appropriation from CNRE: P&R Equipment

Note see attachment.

 [Parks Rec.pdf](#)

Note Jerry Lokken, Director of Parks & Rec, reported the following:

They had some excess Parks & Rec equipment that they sold on a public auction website.

They're proposing to use the funds that came from the sale of that excess equipment to purchase new equipment that's necessary for the operation of the department.

The Board of Selectmen obviously concurred, and he's here to answer any questions they might have.

Decision MOTION (5)

Mr. Ginsberg moved to accept the Park & Rec Department's request to purchase new equipment with money, obtained from selling old equipment.

Mr. Birmingham seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

5-2. Special Appropriation: \$ 157,000, Eversource Reimbursement

Note A special appropriation of \$157,000 for an Eversource reimbursement was discussed.

 [Eversource.pdf](#)

Note Mr. Gervais detailed the following:

A couple years ago Eversource was paving three roads, Society Road, Riverview, and Roxbury. As part of that process, the engineering department required them to get a right-of-way permit. Instead of having them patch the road and having potholes and the like, the Public Works and Engineering Department made a deal with Eversource to release them of responsibility in exchange for a payment, in lieu of restoration, since we were already going to repave these roads in a couple years. We're now moving that, dropping it down from the balance sheet into our P&L, so we can pave those roads.

Decision MOTION (6)

Mr. Steel moved to approve a special appropriation in the amount of \$157,000 to the Fiscal Year, 23-24 Highway Road Reconstruction Account 01-30-317-200-224 to offset utility pavement restoration costs and forward to the Board of Finance for approval. Note this requires a town meeting.

Mr. Birmingham seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

5-3. Special Appropriation: Animal Control Officer Donations Appropriation

Note Mr. Gervais explained that the grant fund now has \$6,400 available. Currently, \$3,300 is being spent on capital uniform (body armor), leaving approximately \$3,000 for other supplies. The plan is to request appropriation from the board once a year for the entire amount needed.

Note see attachment.

 [Animal_Control.pdf](#)

Note Mr. Cunningham reported the following:

East Lyme & Waterford Animal Control received donations of funds from the public and citizens for needed equipment.

And the animal control officer, they participate in what they call high-risk endeavors, the need for bulletproof vests for animal control is a sad reality.

These funds will assist in providing that specialized equipment to the animal control officers.

The amount is \$6,431 from the animal control donation expense account, to allow that them to pay for the capital uniforms.

Decision MOTION (7)

Mr. Birmingham moved to appropriate \$6,431.46, to animal control donation expense account 28-01-000-000-00-00-00-00.

Mr. Maxfield seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

Note Mr. Gervais clarified that it's from the General Fund Balance and that they now have a Grant Fund, and \$6,400 is available. Currently, \$3,300 is being spent on capital uniform (body armor), leaving approximately \$3,000 for other supplies. The plan is to request appropriation from the board once a year for the entire amount needed.

Decision MOTION (8)

Mr. Steel moved to amend the previous motion to state that the appropriation is from the General Fund Balance.

Mr. Ginsberg seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

5-4. Special Appropriation: \$15,000 Grant from Community Foundation of Eastern CT

Note see attachment.

 [Brookside Farm.pdf](#)

Note Mr. Gervais detailed how a \$15,000 grant was awarded to the Brookside Farm Museum by the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. The grant is intended to establish a home-grown national park to regenerate biodiversity in the community. The Brookside property will serve as a host site offering biodiversity training, book clubs, discussion groups, and will turn about 40 acres into a diverse ecosystem.

Note Mr. Gervais added that the grant has a life expectancy until September 1st, 2029, and there is no clear estimate of the future maintenance costs once the grant runs out.

Decision MOTION (9)

Mr. Birmingham moved to approve a special appropriation of \$15,000, grant from Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut.

Mr. Steel seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

Note The Board briefly discussed how this identifies a potential impact on future budgets.

6. Public Discussion

Note There was none.

7. Board Comments

Note Mr. Steel said he would like to express his thanks to all the members of this Board, the Board of Selectmen, and our Finance Director for steering us through a very smooth and easy budget season.

Note Mr. Steel and Mr. Gervais discussed how there has been no response regarding whether boardwalk maintenance is occurring as stipulated in the ARPA grant, Boardwalk maintenance was stipulated in the ARPA grant, and the need to follow up with Parks & Rec and Public Works to determine responsibility for boardwalk maintenance.

Note Mr. Steel noted the town use to have a beach camera and the website showed the boardwalk and shore. He discussed how these types of cameras are often utilized as tools for tourism. Mr. Cunningham said he will investigate the possibility of reinstating the beach camera feed for tourism purposes.

8. Adjournment

Decision MOTION (10)

Mr. Birmingham moved to adjourn the BOF April 10th, 2024, Regular Meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Mr. Ginsberg seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

Note Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary