

Finance Committee Minutes

January 10th 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM with Mr. David Herrick presiding, with Mr. Bill Hattendorf, Mr. Burt Imberman, Mr. Ira Yohalem, and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding in attendance. Guests were Mr. Michael Skorput, and Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem.

The minutes were accepted as read, Mr. Hattendorf 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Mr. Herrick then read a copy of the warrant for the Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, January 28th at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall. The warrant states that \$70,000 or any other amount be transferred from Free Cash to the Roads and Bridges Account for the purpose of paying for surveying to be done on the Canaan Southfield Road. The town is expected to receive \$500,000 for the repair of that bridge, however the bridge needs to be surveyed prior to receiving the grant, and since there is no snow right now it would be advisable to do the surveying now. There is also the possibility that the town may need "seed money" to get further funding and the selectmen felt that rather than having to schedule other special town meetings it would be advisable to put extra money in the Roads and Bridges Account to be available should the need arise. Special Town Meetings are expensive. Mr. Yohalem explained that a signed contract was needed to be effected by the end of January, however when the state was contacted they stated that since they were awarding quite a few grants to other towns as well as ours they needed to have all the completed paperwork from all the towns before beginning to award the grants! The \$13,000 will not be reimbursed by the state through the grant. And the cost of the Canaan Southfield Bridge is just an estimate! The town had planned to pay the contractor \$20,000 in March, April and May; however the selectmen were considering raising the amount to \$30,000 for each of those months. Mr. Yohalem added that the Clayton-Mill River Bridge is in a precarious state, and the Highway Superintendent Mr. Peter Marks stated that it was shaking as heavy weighted vehicles crossed it and perhaps should be closed. The estimate on the repair of that bridge is \$800,000! The selectmen have asked that the town apply for another grant to repair that bridge, even if it is only \$500,000! The survey will provide the town with necessary information.

Mr. David Herrick then read a letter from the Southern Berkshire Regional School District inviting the finance committee members to attend the preliminary budget of 2014 meeting to be held in the school library on Thursday January 17th at 6:00PM. The members of the Finance Committee decided to forgo their meeting and attend this meeting.

Prudence Spaulding
January 10th 2013

Mr. Herrick then circulated the forms made by Mr. Hattendorf and reflecting the amount of money the finance committee had approved on different account to date. The grand total was \$730,206.36 with the separate amounts approved and listed in the different accounts.

The Committee then began to review the following budgets.

Ambulance Loan [80750.14] (\$29,506), now requesting {\$28,164.15} Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Fire Truck Loan [80750.00] (\$31,410) now requesting {0} the last payment will be made on March 10th 2013.

Highway Truck Loan 2010 [80750.13] (\$20,908) now requesting {\$20,410} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously. This will be the last payment!

Town Hall Renovation Loan [no number available] (\$30,204) now requesting {\$29,041.33} Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Garage Loan [80750.03] (\$48,825) now requesting {\$46,912.50} Mr. Yohalem 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously. This will be the last payment!

Treasurer Software and Support [10147.89] (\$3,280) now requesting {\$3,100} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Medicare [90917.00] (\$10,300) now requesting {\$10,700} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Expenses [10147.44] (\$3,108) now requesting {\$3,130} Mr. Hattendorf 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Truck Loan 2009 [90750.11] (\$31,436) now requesting {\$30,218} Mr. Hattendorf 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously. This will be the last payment.

Berkshire County Retirement [09011.00] (\$79,494) now requesting {\$77,978} Mr. Yohalem 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Interest Expense [80752.00] (\$5,000) level funded {\$5,000} Mr. Yohalem questioned the purpose of this account. Mr. Skorput stated that this allowed the town to engage in short term loans when needed. It is hoped that with the quarterly billing this figure might be able to be reduced in the future. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Banking Services [80753.00] (\$200) level funded {\$200} Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed with Mr. Imberman dissenting.

Prudence Spaulding
January 10th 2013

Tax Tittle (Treasurer) [10149.00] (\$3,000) now requesting {\$5,000}. This request brought about some discussion. When tax payers are in arrears with their taxes the Tax Collector tries to come to some arrangement with them so that the taxes can be collected. When this fails and the taxes are not paid the land has to go through a complicated process whereby the town can eventually gain possession of the land and sell it to pay the taxes! This process is not only lengthy, but cumbersome and expensive. The town is in the process of taking some parcels of land through Land Court. Sometimes when the town proceeds with this action the owner does pay the back taxes. However the treasurer needs to have the funds available to proceed with this process of several properties. When the taxes are paid, the amount benefits the town but does not show up on the books under this account! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Board of Health Salaries [70510.00] (\$1,250) level funded {\$1,250} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Board of Health Expenses [70510.01] ((\$1,500) level funded {\$1,500} Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Health Agent Revolving [5512.00] (\$17,000) level funded {\$17,000} this account generated some discussion. Mr. Skorput explained that the Health Agent collects fees for his inspections. These fees go into this account and he is paid by this account out of the proceeds of the fees. However, he is not able to receive more that the specified amount, namely \$17,000! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Tree Work [60294.01] (\$10,000) level funded {\$10,000} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Tree Warden Salary (\$1,000) level funded {\$1,000} all members made the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Because all the members of the Committee plan to attend the SBRSD's budget meeting next Thursday January the 17th the next meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled for Thursday January 24th at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding, Secretary.

Prudence Spaulding
January 10th 2013