

Minutes

Board of Finance Meeting

April 3, 2012

Room 206 7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Liz Mao at 7:35 pm. All members of the Board of Finance were present. Also in attendance was Kate Clarke Buch, Finance Director. The meeting was taped for broadcast over Channel 79.

BUDGET REVIEWS (budget changes made by the BoF shown in bold)

Police Department. Joe Duwan and Jamie McLaughlin led a discussion about the police budget, which was a continuation of the discussion started last week. They focused on the SRO (school resource officer), overtime, vehicle fleet and facilities. Chief Duane Lovello and Captain Fred Komm joined the meeting.

- **SRO.** SROs have been in use for decades, but Darien is in a minority since its high school does not have one. The SRO will be stationed at Darien High School, help identify youths with problems and foster improved police/student relations. The officer will not be there to enforce criminal laws.

The downside is that the officer assigned as an SRO will be a resource that would normally be on patrol. The department believes that it can handle this deployment out of its current staff of 51 officers without needing to hire an additional officer. The SRO will, however, result in some higher overtime.

School administration will help measure success of the program. Initially, the SRO will shadow the SRO in New Canaan to learn how the job works at a practical level. Youth detectives in the police department will remain separate. They will investigate youth crimes, and will have no connection to the SRO.

- **Overtime.** Chief Lovello offered comments about police overtime. He described a new software system called Telestaff, which is now used to schedule officer deployments. This software is able to track how and why overtime is incurred. It provides detailed statistics on the sources of overtime, including sickness, training, jury duty, etc. He

expects that the software will greatly improve the department's ability to manage overtime, though it has only been in use since January 1st.

Mr. Duwan and Mr. McLaughlin recommended that **the proposed overtime budget of \$400,000 be cut by \$25,000.**

- **Vehicle fleet.** Captain Fred Komm provided comments on the department's vehicle fleet. He provided a document entitled, "Capital Improvement Program" for use during the discussion, a copy of which is appended to these minutes as a separate PDF file called "2012.04.03 BoF minutes Exhibit A.pdf."

The document outlined the proposed budget for next year, which entailed the purchase of four vehicles, two marked and two unmarked, for a total of \$196,188. In addition, the document provided a complete list of all department vehicles.

Mr. McLaughlin stressed the need for good metrics to help in understanding when to replace vehicles. Capt. Komm pointed out that the department now has a five-year replacement schedule, which should be helpful in ensuring that vehicles are replaced in accordance with a reasonable timeline.

- **Facilities.** Mr. Duwan and Mr. McLaughlin stressed again their recommendation that the department should have a solid plan for managing the new, complicated police building.

Separate from the points discussed above. Ms. Mao asked Chief Lovello about the proposed investment in school cameras. The Chief indicated that his department does not have enough staff to monitor the cameras real-time, but that video tapes generated from the cameras may be helpful in providing facts about incidents or problems.

The Depot. Monica Billeter (Depot Executive Board co-president) and Susan Hamill (Board member ex-officio) gave a brief presentation about the Depot's budget. They indicated that financial management is improving, with tighter controls over spending. They praised Janice Marzano, the Depot's program director, as being effective and highly responsive. When asked about the new SRO program at the high school, they expressed their support.

Fire Departments. Lori Bora and Jon Zagrodzky led a discussion about the fire department budgets, which was a continuation of the discussion started two weeks ago.

Mr. Zagrodzky presented a draft overview of the fire department town grants, which are used to cover routine operating expenses. This overview, reproduced below, shows that the town grants, for all three fire departments, have not been sufficient to cover these operating expenses.

Noroton Heights	(YTD)					Noroton	Darien				
	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2012-13	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Building Maintenance, supplies, custodial, lawn	18,562	18,647	20,115	16,100	19,500	32,121	17,121	19,594	16,643	16,850	17,550
Utilities (gas, water, sewer)	12,490	13,909	14,056	10,852	14,750	15,720	15,714	17,678	16,994	17,450	18,052
Communications	4,885	2,605	3,220	2,247	3,000	2,286	2,167	2,857	3,056	3,150	3,275
Cable						1,616	600	600	600	600	600
Refuse removal	1,660	1,529	1,431	1,383	1,800	1,784	2,681	2,644	2,711	2,800	2,820
Snow removal	1,800	5,250	4,765	670	4,000	2,500	857	1,045	2,374	180	1,500
Sewer Tax	328	240	224	265	275						
Uniforms	418	2,708	1,432	385	2,500	3,066	3,698	2,963	2,891	3,000	3,000
Public Education	3,249	1,061	837	2,879	3,000						
Firefighter Education	5,889	7,585	7,915	8,794	10,000	5,440	4,609	1,137	6,824	8,000	8,000
Sick Committee						1,431	700	742	297	850	850
Office Supplies, postage			3,492		1,500	1,637	1,153	2,142	1,524	1,950	1,950
Licenses & fees						50					
D&O Insurance			853	1,211	1,000	1,500					
Total	49,281	53,534	58,340	44,786	61,325	69,151	49,300	51,402	53,914	54,830	57,597
Grant	45,750	47,580	48,768	51,825	54,723	58,767	43,000	43,000	44,075	44,957	49,557
Total as % of Grant	108%	113%	120%	86%	112%	118%	115%	120%	122%	122%	116%

Mr. Zagrodzky moved that \$5,000 be added to each department's town grant, which would help cover operating expenses next year. Passed 6-1. **This would be a \$15,000 addition to the budget.**

Several board members reiterated the need to develop a clear policy regarding town grants, and to review the schedule and strategy for fire department vehicle replacement. Mr. Zagrodzky and Ms. Bora indicated that they would lead an effort to accomplish this over the summer.

In addition to the town grants, there was also a discussion about some potentially expensive repairs at the Noroton Heights fire department. Ron Falcioni (Treasurer) and Ron Riolo (Chief) provided an overview (below) of the potential repair needs.

Noroton Heights Fire Department - Potential Building repairs	
March 30, 2012	
Engineer: review of building and plans, testing, meetings, design and instruction	\$10,000
Engine room floor: concrete repairs and section replacement	\$25,000
Apron: caulking cracks cleaning and re-sealing surface area	\$5,000
Replace floor drains and piping	\$5,000
Epoxy floor covering system	\$33,000
Flagpole, base: masonry repair (part of apron work)	\$500
Chimney: rebuild to roofline and repair crack in attic, brace wall	\$10,000
Cracks on building exterior, re-caulk and paint	\$1,000
Total	\$89,500

They indicated that testing is underway to determine if cracks in the floor and resulting water seepage have damaged the concrete. This testing will help determine what the total cost of the repair work will be (the above schedule is just an estimate).

Board members discussed funding these repairs out of the BoF Infrastructure Reserve, in the current fiscal year, if possible.

Cut list to date. Kate Buch reviewed the BoF cut list to date. One addition to the list not yet discussed was a savings of nearly \$290,000, the result of a successful bid process for medical and dental insurance. Mr. Duwan indicated that a \$1,000 cut in overtime for the police records department was inadvertently left off the list.

IT – General Government. Lori Bora and Gwen Mogenson reported meeting with Jeff Adams, the town’s Director of Information Technology. No capital expenditures for IT were proposed for next year, because the department is “in between technologies” and because the Munis system migration is largely complete.

Regional planning. This budget covers the town’s participation in the Connecticut Southwestern Regional Planning Associate (SWRPA). No changes were proposed to this budget.

Beautification. Covers plants and watering in the downtown area. No changes were proposed to this budget.

Celebrations. No changes were proposed to this budget. The department had asked for an additional \$8,000 for added holiday lights, but the Board of Selectmen declined this request.

Harbormaster. No changes were proposed to this budget. It was noted that revenue from boat moorings has improved.

CONTINGENCY FUNDS

Kate Buch reviewed the status of three contingency funds.

- **Board of Finance Capital Contingency fund.** This is a capital account and carries its balance forward each year. It has a current balance of \$575,579; no funds have been used this fiscal year. The BoF has agreed not to add to this balance for the coming fiscal year.
- **Board of Finance Infrastructure Reserve.** This is also a capital account and carries its balance forward each year. Previous intended uses have included flooding studies and other infrastructure projects. It has a current balance \$456,998; no funds have been used this fiscal year. The BoF decided to commit \$148,392.76 from this account to support the Middlesex School roof replacement effort (see below). An additional potential use of funds from this account may be to finance repairs to the Noroton

Heights fire station (to be determined). No additional funding for the account is planned for next year.

- **Board of Finance General Contingency fund.** This is an operating contingency fund. It is budgeted each fiscal year, and any unused funds are credited back to the General Fund at the end of the year. This year, the account was budgeted \$450,000. To date, \$118,000 has been expended. It is expected that the Legal Department, currently \$182,000 over-budget, may consume much of the remaining balance of this account.

For the coming fiscal year, the budget for this account proposed to the Board of Selectmen was \$400,000, which they reduced to \$372,000. **The Board of Finance elected to restore \$28,000 and bring the budget back up to \$400,000.**

RFCNRE (Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditures)

Kate Buch provided a summary of RFCNRE accounts to be closed out, with balances available for transfer to RFCNRE Contingency or another RFCNRE account. The schedule discussed is included with these minutes in a PDF file called, "2012.04.03 BoF minutes Exhibit B.pdf."

The BoF considered whether these funds could be used to support the \$750,000 Middlesex School roof replacement project, which was proposed to be budgeted in the coming fiscal year. Jon Zagrodzky moved the following:

- Commit the available RFCNRE balances of \$601,607.24 to the roof project
- Fund the remaining \$148,392.76 required out of the Board of Finance Infrastructure Reserve

The motion passed 7-0. **It was noted that funding the roof replacement project in this manner meant that the proposed budget of \$750,000 would not be needed (equivalent to a cut).**

Separately, it was decided to close the Heights Road drainage account, which had a committed (though not funded) balance of \$5,149,640.64. Since the account was not funded, closing it had no financial impact. Gwen Mogenson moved closing the account; passed 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Gwen Mogenson made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved 7-0 at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Zagrodzky
Clerk