

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 17, 2015  
WHS PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY**

**PRESENT:** Warren Serenbetz, Lynne Vanderslice, Jeff Rutishauer, Richard Creeth, John Kalamarides

**ALSO PRESENT:**

**From the Town of Wilton:** Sandra Dennies, Steve Pierce

**From the Board of Education:** Kevin Smith, Ken Post, Bruce Likly, Glenn Hemmerle, Lori Rothstein, Chris Finkelstein, Laura Schwemm and members of the staff of Wilton Public Schools

**Others Present:** Kendra Baker, Wilton Bulletin

**ABSENT:** Al Alper

**Call to Order**

Warren Serenbetz called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting February 24, 2015**

There was a correction to the Town's Revenues percentage; the number for the Town's Revenues should read as 90.81%. The second paragraph has been amended to read "As previously requested Ms. Dennies distributed a final FY14 budgetary basis financial report. The report was discussed with questions asked which will require follow-up by Ms. Dennies." Further, in the Budget Discussion paragraph Ms. Vanderslice said that the statement about the Board of Ed budget being due next week was incorrect; as Mr. Serenbetz had commented that it is the Board of Selectmen's budget that is due. This was duly noted and corrected.

A motion was made by John Kalamarides to approve the minutes with these suggested changes. It was seconded by Richard Creeth and the motion carried 5-0.

**Dial-A-Ride Grant**

Steve Pierce then came before the Board to request authorization to submit the application for the State Grant in the amount of \$25,665, the same amount as last year. He said this is a recurring grant and it augments the Town's Dial-A-Ride program. Jeff Rutishauer asked Mr. Pierce about the P & L line item of \$60,000. Mr. Pierce explained it was a purchased transportation vehicle. Ms. Vanderslice questioned him about differences in one of the budget line items. He indicated that he will review. A motion was then made by Lynne Vanderslice to authorize the submittal of the application for the State Grant. It was seconded by Mr. Creeth and the motion carried 5-0.

**Elderly and Disabled – Interest Rate for Deferrals**

Sandra Dennies explained last year's rate was 2.75% and that the Board of Selectmen has suggested this year's rate be tied to the rate of bonding, 2.776%. However, at the meeting held Monday evening, March 16<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Selectmen had decided to maintain the interest rate on deferrals at 2.75%. Ms. Dennies recommended the same rate to the Board of Finance. After a brief discussion about how many actually took the deferral vs. using a tax credit program, John Kalamarides made a motion to approve the 2.75% Interest Rate on Deferrals. This was seconded by Jeff Rutishauer and the motion carried 5-0.

### **Board of Education Budget**

Jeff Rutishauer informed the Board of Ed members present that the forecast presented was well done, coming close to the Board of Finance's target the first time around. He noted he would like to see more enrichment type programs going forward. The reply was that a Parent Advisory Board was formed this year to inventory interest in certain programs. It was also explained that Gifted Education is different from any enrichment programs. Mr. Rutishauer said the cost per student was going up at an unsustainable level and inquired as to the assumptions behind these three-year projections in order to determine what is driving the three-year model.

Ms. Vanderslice requested that Mr. Post send her the 2015 year-end Forecast. She then initiated a discussion about the financial report of the Educational Cost Grant. All agreed to work towards reporting which is more transparent and better matches expenses with revenues. She also asked Dr. Smith for an explanation of Common Core. Dr. Smith provided a detailed response on the ramifications of Common Core.

Warren Serenbetz then commented that the Board of Finance has been looking at the cost per student, as this number is going up 3-1/2% – 5% in FY 2016, 2017 and 2018. He said there is a need to try to manage the fixed costs as well as the variable costs. He further stated he would like the Board of Ed to manage to a lower cost per student goal.

### **FY15 Status Report – February 28, 2015**

For the most part, there were no significant changes from last month's report. Sandra Dennies explained certain categories giving further explanation. In response to a previous BOF inquiry, she noted the 2015 current tax amount on the budget submission was incorrect, as taxes had not been reconciled on a timely basis, and taxes from the prior year had been included in that line item. Education Intergovernmental exceeded budget because the first payment of the unbudgeted Excess Cost Grant had been received. Ms. Dennies said she will research what is included in the number for Town Aid Roads line item, as it appears something may be classified incorrectly or revenue received and booked this year may be last year's amount.

Ms. Dennies also informed the Board that CIRMA has told her we need to budget more for workers' compensation claims and that at least \$250,000 needs to be put in Reserve to cover claims. Discussion followed and Ms. Dennies stated that, based on insurance limits, the most we may incur is \$650,000 annually.

Discussion followed as to a forecast of 2015 Revenue results.

### **Update – Fraud Risk Assessment**

Blum Shapiro was here for two days interviewing various departments.

### **Parks and Rec Audit Update**

The Board had some questions on the audit results, but this topic is tabled until the next month's regular meeting.

With respect to the Parks and Rec's audit, one of the comments so far was involving segregation of duties. Ms. Dennies said this is not always possible, although cross-training has been done to aid in this effort. Ms. Dennies also said New World interface with the "Class system" will no longer be supported as of 2017, so they are looking to other towns to learn how they are dealing with the issue. Possible solutions will be looked at further within the next six months.

### **Bonds**

We sold \$22,750,000 in new bonds that closed on March 20. She stated a premium was paid on the new money bonds. The Bond Council told her the premium needs to be put in the Reserve to offset the interest, suggesting five years. The premium can also be used to offset the cost of going out to bid. As we will most likely be doing bond refunding, we may need to use a portion of the premium to offset the cost we incurred to go out to bid on the new money issue. The Board of Selectmen voted to approve the resolution to allow refunding, and Roosevelt & Cross had won the bonds.

### **Budget Discussion**

Public Hearings are set for March 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

The mill rate deliberations are the following week. Ms. Dennies was requested to provide the 2017 and 2018 Debt Service numbers to the Board as soon as possible.

### **Committee Reports**

John Kalamarides/Miller-Driscoll: Things are moving along quite well. Turner Construction was approved as Construction Manager. Design development is finalized and there will be a model presented soon, although it is not yet approved by the Committee.

Richard Creeth/Comstock: Everything is on track, with construction starting soon.

### **Other Business**

Lynne Vanderslice suggested setting up Town email addresses as members of the Board of Finance vs. using personal emails. Warren Serenbetz asked Sandy Dennies who should be asked about setting these up, and she suggested speaking with First Selectman Brennan.

Ms. Dennies informed the Board that the RFP's for the telephone system resulted in ten bids and the committee was reviewing them to select the top three for interviews.

### **Public Participation**

None.

Since there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Fager  
(from video recording)