

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance held at 6:30 P.M., on Thursday, January 22, 2009.

Members Present: First Selectman McCarty, Mr. Doheny, Mr. Volain, Mr. Hallahan, Ms. Brown, Mr. Monico

Member Absent: Mr. Piccirillo

Also Present: Assistant Director of Finance Edward J. Swinkoski

The following materials were either mailed to the members or distributed at this time.

1. Agenda – January 15, 2009
2. Minutes of Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2008
3. December 31, 2008 - Report of Budget/Special Funds
- Report of Revenue
- Board of Education Accounting
4. Memo dated January 5, 2009, CAFR
5. Memo dated January 15, 2009, Survey – Bid Limits
6. Letter dated January 20, 2009 from the Board of Selectmen
7. Memo dated January 21, 2009, Police K9 Program
8. Library Budget Narrative
9. FY 09-10 Budget dated January 22, 2009
10. Memo dated January 2, 2009, Special Education
11. Sewer Use Enterprise Fund
12. Legal Account Breakdown
13. Letter from Town Attorney dated January 15, 2009, Authority to Increase \$1,000. public bid threshold

MINUTES

After a brief discussion of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2008, Mr. Doheny moved their acceptance, seconded by First Selectman McCarty.

VOTE:	Doheny - Yes	Volain - Yes	Hallahan - Yes
	Brown - Yes	Monico - Yes	McCarty - Yes

OLD BUSINESS

UPDATE, FY 2009-2010 BUDGET

Mr. Swinkoski stated that we have received the departments’ best estimates which are reflected in the budget that was given to the Board members tonight. He noted that the debt expenditures were down approximately \$560,000 from last year. Mr. Swinkoski also said that Community Services and the Senior Center personnel were moved to their appropriate departments. Mr. Swinkoski stated that he moved the total non-police payroll shown in Police Outside Duty to the general fund budget and reduced it by the anticipated grant revenues.

OTHER

Mr. Doheny asked First Selectman McCarty if she could give the Board an update on the Tire Pond. First Selectman McCarty said that the Attorney General was able to support the Supreme Court's decision to pierce the veil on the assets of Mrs. Farricelli's company. This is important because Mr. Farricelli who is the owner of the property doesn't have any assets. First Selectman McCarty stated that the Town now may be able to recoup some of its losses.

NEW BUSINESSREPORT OF BUDGET/SPECIAL FUNDS, REVENUE AND BOARD OF EDUCATION
ACCOUNTING DECEMBER 31, 2008

Mr. Swinkoski referred to these reports stating that tax collections at the end of December were 60.2%. Further discussion followed. These reports were accepted as presented.

RESOLUTION, INCREASE TOWN BID LIMIT

Mr. Volain explained that according to the Town's Charter, any item over \$1,000 has to go out to bid. He said that a survey of area town bid limits was done and that most town bid limits were between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The highest was Wethersfield at \$20,000 and the lowest was New Milford at \$3,000. Our bid limit is one third of the lowest bid limit of comparable towns.

Mr. Volain said he supported the increase in the bid limit and since the proposed increase was \$7,500 a charter revision was not necessary. Mr. Hallahan agreed and said that the current bid limit was antiquated and needed to be updated.

Mr. Doheny said he supported a higher bid threshold that was more in line with the Town's operating budget. He said that a \$1,000 bid limit is far too low considering we have an \$83 million budget.

Mr. Swinkoski noted that our auditors have recommended that the bid limit be increased.

Mr. Hallahan then moved the following:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Finance recommends that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting for the proposition of an ordinance to increase the competitive bid limit requirement from \$1,000 to \$7,500.

Seconded by, Mr. Doheny.

Mr. Volain read into the record the letter from our Town Attorney pertaining to increasing the Town's bid limit.

First Selectman McCarty made a motion to amend the Agenda to reflect voting on the resolution of increasing the bid limit.

Seconded by, Mr. Doheny.

Mr. Hallahan amended the resolution to read:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Finance recommends to the Board of Selectmen that they act upon increasing the Town bid limit from \$1,000 to \$7,500.

Seconded by, Mr. Doheny.

VOTE:	Doheny - Yes	Volain - Yes	Hallahan - Yes
	Brown - Yes	Monico - Yes	McCarty - Yes

REVIEW OF 6/30/08 CAFR

Scott Bassett and Christine Carling of McGladrey & Pullen reviewed in detail the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2008 and answered several questions from the Board. Mr. Bassett also went over their recommendations contained in the Management Letter.

Mr. Hallahan asked Mr. Bassett if there were any significant changes this year as compared to last year. Ms. Carling said that there were no significant changes and that the Finance Office's records were in very good condition. She also said that the recommendations that were made last year were already corrected before they began the audit.

Mr. Hallahan asked how the Town of North Haven compares to other towns that the firm has audited. Mr. Bassett indicated that the following activities speak well of the Town and its management. (1) There is a detailed financial review each year and the results of the review are available to the public; (2) The Town maintains a high tax collection rate and does a good job managing the Fund Balance; (3) The financial records are above average; and most importantly, (4) the Finance Office takes ownership of its financial statements. Mr. Bassett stated that in his opinion, the Town has a sound Fund Balance at 8%.

Mr. Volain then thanked Mr. Bassett for a very informative presentation. He also thanked Mr. Swinkoski and his staff for a job well done.

OTHER

Mr. Volain stated that the Department Workshops are now in progress. During the budget process, he would like board members to communicate to him their views and ideas on fund balance, expenditures cuts, increase in taxes, etc. and he will try to incorporate them into the budget. He also said that any requests for information should go directly through him.

RESOLUTION, POLICE K9 PROGRAM

Mr. Monico made a motion to amend the agenda to include discussion and action on the Police K9 program.

Seconded by, Mr. Hallahan.

VOTE:	Doheny - Yes	Volain - Yes	Hallahan - Yes
	Brown - Yes	Monico - Yes	McCarty - Yes

Mr. Volain then read the memo from Police Chief DiCarlo into the record.

Police Chief DiCarlo explained that this opportunity came up unexpectedly and that if we had to go out and purchase a dog for a K9 program it would cost between \$4,000-\$7,000. In this case we would be able to get the dog for free. In addition, the Connecticut State Police offer a 22 week training course for the dog and a police officer at no cost to the Town.

Mr. Volain asked what the current procedure is if the Police Department needs a dog.

Chief DiCarlo explained that a dog would be requested from area towns such as Hamden, Milford, West Haven, and East Haven. Hamden is the primary supplier since they have 4 canines 24 hours a day. The Chief said that his department uses a dog 3 or 4 times a month. There is no cost to the Town for the use of the dog from a surrounding town. He also said that if the Town had its own dog it would have the potential to bring in money through asset forfeiture.

Mr. Monico supported this request and felt that the benefits outweighed the costs.

Mr. Volain was concerned about the costs, especially overtime, associated with the Town's own canine program. He said that although he sees the value and benefits of such a program, he feels it is not a critical item at this time.

First Selectman McCarty said that since we have the use of Hamden's dog we should not consider this program. Next year's budget is going to be very difficult and this would be an additional cost to the Town.

Further discussion followed.

Mr. Volain moved the following:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Finance vote on the recommendation of a K9 unit with no prejudice regardless of the outcome of this vote and it does not preclude the Chief of Police to come back at a later date to present this again.

Seconded by, First Selectman McCarty.

VOTE:	Doheny - Yes	Volain - No	Hallahan - No
	Brown - No	Monico - Yes	McCarty - No

PUBLIC COMMENT

Discussion followed for approximately 20 minutes with several residents asking questions and making recommendations/suggestions.

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Volain moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM, seconded by Mr. Monico.

VOTE:	Doheny - Yes	Volain - Yes	Hallahan - Yes
	Brown - Yes	Piccirillo - Yes	Monico - Yes
	McCarty - Yes		