

The Board of Finance held a regular meeting on September 16, 2009 in the Courtroom of Windham Town Hall, 979 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226

Members Attending: Barbara McGrath, Hanna Clements, Peter McDevitt,
and Jeffrey Smith

Chairman, Barbara McGrath called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Public Comment

Edith Pompei of Willimantic commented on the need for a new Senior Center.

Katherine Eves of Willimantic gave an update on the Senior Center. The fourth site for the Senior Center is the VFW. She commented about the improvements that will need to be done to the building. The Senior Center Committee is waiting to hear from the VFW and then they will decide on a location. A survey needs to be done to include other towns.

Barbara McGrath commented that an architect could be hired to look over all four sites.

Peter McDevitt suggested Windham Tech may be able to help with architecture.

Lori Jeffers of Willimantic commented the Town should have sold the front part of the VFW lot to Stop and Shop, tear down the VFW and build what was really needed there.

Approval of meeting minutes

Upon a motion by Hanna Clements, seconded by Peter McDevitt to accept the meeting minutes from August 26, 2009.

The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation from Tom Forma on Town Pension Funds

Tom Forma and Alma Kru from Merrill Lynch presented a background on municipal pensions. The process of the pension itself is the pension is operated for the police and fire as one body of money that supplies monthly checks to its retirees. The money stays managed based on the ages of current employees and the ages of the retirees. The other funds for municipal employees require, when someone retires, an amount that will be needed for the rest of a person's life be given to the insurance company for an annuity. Several retirements at once can deplete the fund. A handout was reviewed for the fire and police pension funds.

Peter McDevitt questioned how often meetings are held?

Tom Forma replied meetings are held quarterly.

Jeff Smith questioned has an investment policy been established.

Tom Forma replied it is in the process and is in draft right now. It will be discussed at their next meeting.

Tom Forma reviewed a handout on Great West.

Barbara McGrath questioned if there was a pension committee for the town employees.

There is no pension committee for the town employees.

A new contract is needed with Great West.

The savings by changing to Merrill Lynch were reviewed.

Barbara McGrath questioned if the fees could be split between police, fire, and town.

Tom Forma replied yes they could be split.

Jeff Smith questioned if the school has employees that have another fund similar to the Town where they buy annuities.

Tom Pesce replied yes they do.

Jeff Smith questioned what happens if that fund comes up short.

Tom Pesce replied that it is a guaranteed fund similar to the Town. It is funded by the Board of Education operating budget.

Jeff Smith questioned if we determined what we will do with Great West?

Barbara McGrath commented we haven't made a determination because we have to find out about the 5% withdrawal fee.

Jeff Smith questioned if anything in writing has been sent to them and we might want to talk with the State Insurance Commissioner.

Tom Pesce replied a letter will be sent to Great West and he has spoken with the State regarding this.

Town Controller's Report

Town Controller's report was presented by Tom Pesce.

The status of the 2008-2009 budgets was discussed. There will be a revenue shortfall in the general government. There will be a surplus in the general government expenditures which will offset the shortfall in revenues. The Willimantic Service District has a surplus in both revenues and expenditures.

The tax collectors office had a 98% collection rate for last year.

Jeff Smith questioned if we have a fund balance policy.

Barbara McGrath commented that we currently do not.

It is early to forecast the 2009-2010 budgets. Purchase orders have been entered for expenses we know we will have during the year. We will get projections for the current year in the next couple of months. One area of concern in the service district is in the contingency line. The payroll for the police department was figured before the union contract was settled. A transfer will need to be done for the difference in pay now that the police department union contract has been settled.

The Board of Education monthly financial statement was reviewed. One significant item in their budget is the ECS Stabilization Fund. The State of Connecticut is taking approximately 3.4 million of ECS revenue from the Town and will be sending it directly

to the Board of Education. Our revenue projection will show a shortfall. The Board of Education will reduce their appropriation by the amount they receive in ECS funds. The renewable energy committee has recommended the use of motor silk oil. This will be talked about with public works.

Three funds (Heartsafe, Animal Care and Education, and Recreation) were presented to the Board. The recreation revolving fund is in a deficit of \$52,000. The Town appropriates \$100,000 per year which will clear up the deficit. Recreation has increased their fees. The boiler needs to be repaired at Kramer Building for the pool.

Upon a motion by Hanna Clements, seconded by Jeff Smith to appropriate \$10,000 from the recreation revolving fund to repair the boiler at Kramer Building.

Peter McDevitt commented how much has been put into the pool and is it worth it.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and possible action on any General Government 2009-2010 budget transfer requests

There were no budget transfer requests.

Discussion and possible action on any Willimantic Service District 2009-2010 budget transfer requests

There were no budget transfer requests.

Discussion and possible action regarding an energy consultant

The energy committee has decided not to go forward with a consultant. Instead, they are looking to put out an RFP to have someone do an energy audit. No action was taken.

Discussion and possible action regarding submitting grant for energy efficiency

The deadline to apply for the grant was originally September 1st but the guidelines have not been set. Once the guidelines are available, the grant application will be submitted. No action was taken.

Discussion and possible action regarding the Senior Center

There was no action regarding the Senior Center.

Any other business appropriate to come before the BOF – discussion only

There was no other business.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Upon a motion by Hanna Clements, seconded by Jeff Smith, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Attest: _____
Karen Williams, Clerk