

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

Members Attending: Barbara McGrath, Leo Santucci, Thomas DeVivo, Jeffrey Smith, Charles Pennewill, Anita Sebestyen, Jay Handfield

Chairman, Barbara McGrath called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Approval of meeting minutes**

Upon a motion by Thomas DeVivo, seconded by Leo Santucci to accept the meeting minutes from November 18, 2009.

The motion passed with Jay Handfield abstaining.

### **Discussion and possible action to convert to self insured dental plan for Board of Education and Town Employees**

Barbara McGrath commented the report which was included in the packet regarding the self insured dental plan for Board of Education and Town Employees was presented at a previous meeting. Tom Pesce commented the draft of an ordinance that was sent to board members was also sent to the Town Attorney. The Town Attorney, Richard Cody, is reviewing the proposed ordinance for the self insured dental plan and will be making some revisions.

Upon a motion by Jay Handfield, seconded by Thomas DeVivo to table the self insured dental plan until January.

The motion passed unanimously.

### **Town Controller's Report**

Town Controller's report was presented by Tom Pesce.

Members from the Senior Center Committee held a meeting today. There was a consultant at the meeting who discussed the process of constructing a Senior Center. A RFP will be put out for a preliminary feasibility study and preliminary design for a regional senior center.

A Town Council member will be appointed to the ambulance committee in January. An extension was given to March 30, 2010.

Leo Santucci commented the Town Council brought up at their last meeting that the Town Charter states a Board of Finance member shall not be a member of another appointed or elected committee. A Board of Finance member can attend as a citizen. The auditors have been in for the past few weeks. An extension was filed by the auditors. OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) data that is required in the audit this year has been submitted.

Improvements to Kramer Building include lighting upgrades and contractors have been working on HVAC controls.

A memo regarding the Education Cost Sharing grant was reviewed. The memo provides initial guidance on how Towns can respond to the way the State is funding ECS money to municipalities. Traditionally the State provides the revenue to the Town and then it is turned over to the Board of Education as an appropriation. This year, approximately 14% of the revenue coming from the Federal Government to the State is going to be given directly to the Board of Education. This was decided after the appropriations were completed. In the Board of Education's monthly expense report, they have shown the ECS money they will be receiving directly. The Board of Education will only be submitting drawdowns totaling approximately 37.8 million. The Town will have approximately 3.5 million less in revenues and the Board of Education will have approximately 3.5 million less in expenditures. Another way to handle this is the State has passed special legislation allowing municipalities for the current fiscal year to adjust their budget downward for the purpose of solving this problem.

Barbara McGrath questioned if we have to reduce the appropriation?

Jeffrey Smith commented we should not do anything because the auditors will put it back.

Tom Pesce commented this will probably happen again next year.

Jeffrey Smith commented he would like a narrative from Jeff Nelson and questioned how is June 30<sup>th</sup> looking.

Leo Santucci commented this is an extremely important body, the minutes need to be done as required by law. He suggested we should have a written report from the controller and from the Board of Education so citizens can see what is going on.

Jeffrey Smith commented he agrees and suggested a quarterly report with a narrative on the general fund and board of education expenditures, and Town revenues.

Thomas DeVivo asked if the Board of Education reports to the board or just sends a report?

Barbara McGrath commented the board is invited to the Board of Education finance sub-committee meetings.

Leo Santucci questioned if we can submit a formal request for a brief narrative from the Board of Education finance committee or for someone to appear before the board.

Upon a motion by Leo Santucci, seconded by Jeffrey Smith, to ask the Board of Education to supply a brief narrative or appear in person to explain the monthly financial report.

The motion passed with Jay Handfield opposing.

The Board of Education is in arbitration on one of their contracts for administrators. Barbara McGrath commented the law allows a member of the Board of Finance to be available to answer questions about the financial status of the Town. The revenues and expenditures for the current fiscal year were reviewed. We are still waiting on state revenues. There is a possibility of a three percent cut. The other revenues may come in short based on the state of the economy. On the General Government expenditures, the budget has been projected to the end of the year. Any surplus or deficits were highlighted. A transfer request for the General Government budget was reviewed. There is a second transfer request that is within the public works division for reclassification from the Southeast Project that is no longer used. This was previously used for waste collection, hauling and disposal fees. The expenditures for the Willimantic Service District were reviewed. This budget was also projected to the end of the year. There is a transfer request for the workers compensation line in the fire department. The premium allocation was unfavorable to the fire department and favorable to the police department.

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

Upon a motion by Leo Santucci, seconded by Thomas DeVivo to approve the recommended transfers totaling \$32,510.00 for General Government 2009-2010 budget.

The motion passed unanimously.

Upon a motion by Jeffrey Smith, seconded by Jay Handfield to approve the recommended transfer totaling \$386,300.00 for the General Government 2009-2010 budget

The motion passed with Thomas DeVivo abstaining.

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

Upon a motion by Thomas DeVivo, seconded by Anita Sebestyen to approve the recommended transfers totaling \$20,728.00 for the Willimantic Service District 2009-2010 budget.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Any other business appropriate to come before the BOF**

Jeffrey Smith commented on preparing for the 2010-2011 budget and at some point we will need to get someone to study the public safety services. Who benefits from the services and how do we make sure the people who benefit from them pay for them.

Charles Pennewill questioned how does the city rate compared to other cities for public safety? How is the safety factor rated overall by the state for all towns and cities?

Barbara McGrath questioned if the study will have an impact or change.

Barbara McGrath commented that as the budget for the service district increases there may simply not be enough revenues.

Jeffrey Smith commented we need to ask questions on paying for services and raising revenues on services in the Town.

Barbara McGrath commented on calling CCM to see if there is a study.

Thomas DeVivo commented on checking with the Town Manager about Board of Finance members being on other committees.

Charles Pennewill questioned if we have any numbers from the State on the percentage of foreclosures in the area?

Tom Pesce commented the foreclosures are up from last year

**Public Comment**

Lori Jeffers of Willimantic commented on the microphones.

Bernie Dauteuil of Willimantic commented on overtime, would it be more productive to have a temp, and questioned if everything has been found from the audit that was being done when Ms. Maxwell was here.

Barbara McGrath commented the auditors pointed out that there were too many funds and the audit was not to look for money but to look into consolidating funds.

Bernie Dauteuil questioned if the overtime was an offshoot from the previous controller, why are we into overtime, what is the overtime connected to and what is the overtime producing. He is also commented on ECS money.

Upon a motion by Thomas DeVivo, seconded by Leo Santucci, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Williams, Clerk