

The Board of Finance held a special meeting on **April 11, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Meeting Room of Windham Town Hall, 979 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226**

Members Attending: Lynne Ide, Anita Sebestyen, David Hemenway, Charles Pennewill, Jeffrey Smith, Thomas White

1. Call to Order

Chairman Lynne Ide called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Public Comment

Kevin Hoxie commented the Middle school sports are going strong. Books for students have been needed for years. The Board of Education should put the funds for books in their budget.

Bernie Dauteuil commented books and supplies are needed for the Board of Education.

3. Board of Finance Comment

There was no comment

4. Presentations and Special Reports

Presentation from Comptroller's Office:

Helen Sullivan from the State Comptroller's Office presented a handout to the Board on the State's Health Insurance Plan.

Employees would have access to State employees insurance benefits. There is a maintenance drug program. Co-pays would be the same as State employees. Renewal time will be blended with State. The Town would not need to purchase stop loss insurance. The State plan offers several levels of dental, and a vision rider. Physicals, dental exams, and vision exams do not require a co-pay. United Health Care is the insurance carrier.

James Sterling from Sterling Benefits was hired by the State as a consultant for the State Insurance Plan. The rates have changed from what was originally provided on March 12th. This plan needs to have a consultant involved.

Lynne Ide questioned the rate stability over time.

If there was a 15% increase in the Town's premium and a 5% increase in the State premium, the Town would have the 5% plus 3% for an 8% increase. The town would be locked in at 3% increase.

Charles Pennewill questioned if there were other municipalities signing up.

James Sterling replied that approximately 100 towns have asked for quotes.

Anita Sebestyen commented we don't want to cut anyone's health insurance and this has to be negotiated with unions.

5. Discussion and possible action on the 2012-2013 Board of Education Budget

There was a handout from the BOE regarding questions from the last meeting.

There was a \$30,000 change in benefits. Originally the crossing guard's salaries were in a salary and benefits line, the revised budget book has the salaries in the contract services.

Thomas White questioned if the bus routes have been looked at and have additional crossing guards been put in the budget.

Jeff Smith questioned the reduction in federal funds and has the staffing changed as a result of that.

Nancy Tinker commented that there are adjustments being made in classroom sizes.

70% of budget is going to the schools and 30% to offices.

All buildings that can be on natural gas are.

When the Magnet School opens there will probably be to many schools.

Jeff Nelson commented on the per pupil allocation for elementary, middle, and high school. It will cost \$8,607 per pupil for the elementary schools, \$10,107 per pupil for the middle school, \$12,500 per pupil for the high school. The budget was based on a cost basis and each building has its own budget and is responsible for the costs.

Nancy Tinker commented we are looking at the best purpose for using funds.

6. Discussion and possible action on the 2012-2013 Willimantic Service District Budget

Jeff Smith commented on folding the ambulance budget in the general government budget.

Neal Beets commented the Town wanted to do a study but the Town Council declined.

The study would not show how to provide ambulance services but would show a cost of service.

We have 30 firefighters and allocated 10 salaries and benefits to ambulance. The other 20 firefighters are allocated to the Willimantic Service District.

Jeff Smith asked how many calls are ambulance and how many are fire.

Neal Beets replied that 75% are ambulance calls and 25% are fire calls.

Thomas White commented he would like the Windhams to pay the cost for an ambulance and the service. He does not want to pay the fire service when the people in Windham already pay for volunteer fire fighters.

Charles Pennewill commented he does not agree with the salaries and benefits portion of the ambulance budget. We would not be paying a pension plan of \$130,000 for a separate ambulance service.

David Hemenway commented all services are not evenly split.

Thomas White commented there could be separate unit for ambulance. He would like to ask the Town Council to do a study again.

Mayor Ernie Eldridge commented it costs more for a fire call than for an ambulance call.

Jeff Smith commented there is one building that the services come out of. How do we divide costs between police and fire, and then between running the fire and ambulance? It costs more to run a fire truck than an ambulance. What is the reasonable cost? He would like a study on the cost for running the ambulance.

Thomas White commented he would like a study on the funding and the cost of running the ambulance.

Upon a motion by David Hemenway, seconded by Thomas White to request to the Town Council to have a study done on the cost allocation of the ambulance.

The motion passed unanimously.

Thomas White commented this is in no reflection on the service the fire department provides.

Thomas White questioned the number of vehicles and the cost in the police department budget. Police Chief Lisa Maruzo-Bolduc commented the vehicles cost \$24,000 and then there will be a cost for cages and equipment.

Jeff Smith questioned if we provide police services at the high school, middle school, and hospital. Are we providing police services for the people who live in Windham and go to school in Willimantic?

Neal Beets commented on adding narrow banding to the CIP for the fire department radios.

Marc Scrivener commented on the narrow banding and there are some radios that can be reprogrammed but the older radios will need to be replaced. He will need to have funds in the budget in case a grant is not found. It will cost approximately \$25,000.

7. Discussion and possible action on the 2012-2013 General Government Budget

Thomas White commented he would like to see funds for economic development.

Jeff Smith asked if there were funds in the finance department for additional staff. The department needs to be fully staffed. The bank reconciliations need to be done and grants accounted for. He would like an accountant position not a clerk.

Thomas White requested what it would cost for a full time position.

Charles Pennewill commented on updating the accounting software.

Jeff Smith commented we need to get our financial records in order to get an audit done on time.

Charles Pennewill would like to see a study done for a new accounting software program.

Neal Beets commented on renovations of Town Hall and to co-locate the finance departments of the Board of Education and Town. The renovations would have the Assessor's Office, Tax Collector's Office and Finance Departments all in the same area. The study will show the space available for the third floor at the Kramer Building and in Town Hall. The Board of Education is paying part of the cost for the study but they have not agreed to combine offices.

Jeff Smith commented there is no department of finance in the Town Charter. Is there any recommendation to have a Director of Finance?

Upon a motion by David Hemenway, seconded by Thomas White to cost out what it will cost to change to the state insurance program.

The motion passed unanimously.

6. Update on the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Audit

Tom Pesce commented we are still working with the Board of Education on reconciling. Adjustments will be sent to the auditors. This should resolve everything. They may not have a draft for the April 18th audit but should have it filed for April 30th.

7. Public Comment

Bernie Dauteuil commented the Town Council should have been here to hear the report on medical insurance. Transparency is getting better but communication is not good. The Town should be one town.

Kevin Hoxie commented the fire department does a good job. The ambulance doesn't run cheap with the cost of fuel. The cost of the magnet school is going to cost the Town.

Thomas White commented he went in front of the Charter Revision Committee. He hopes the treatment by others is better than what he received. The Charter revision committee feels the board of finance should not exist.

Dave Hemenway thanked the mayor and town manager for coming to the meeting.

8. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Thomas White, seconded by Anita Sebestyen the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Attest: _____
Thomas Pesce