

**TOWN OF GRANBY
BOARD OF FINANCE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 24, 2014**

PRESENT: Michael Guarco, Chairman; Gordon Bischoff, Francis Brady, Frederick Moffa, O.D.; Kelly Rome, and Al Wilke

Also present: William F. Smith, Jr., Town Manager; Alan Addley, Superintendent of Schools; and Harry Traver, BOE Business Manager

Chairman Guarco stated there was a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the regular meeting minutes for the meeting of June 23, 2014 before taking action.

ON A **MOTION** by Gordon Bischoff, seconded by Francis Brady, the Board voted 6-0-0 to approve the minutes of June 23, 2014, as presented. Mr. Bischoff abstained.

STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNTS

Town Manager Smith reported on the October Budget Operations report. He stated tax collections to be at 56% which is holding strong. Under Intergovernmental Revenues, the Education Cost Sharing account has received its first payment (\$1,487,328). Town Manager Smith commented earlier this month correspondence from OPM reported that the money coming to Granby from the state is still intact. However, he is waiting for formal correspondence regarding how the state will be making up the shortfall in expected revenues, which may affect Granby's intergovernmental revenues. The dispatch fees from East Granby Ambulance have not been received since it merged with Granby Ambulance. Discussions are in hand with Granby Ambulance to address this issue.

On the expenditure side under General and Equipment Maintenance, a salt purchase was made at a higher cost than expected. However, it should be made up elsewhere in the department's accounts.

Mr. Bischoff asked whether the 50% match money is reported on the monthly budget operations report for the Senior Citizen Transportation Grant, which Town Manager Smith indicated that it does not but it is run through the General Fund and then into a special fund entitled Senior Activities Fund.

Town Manager Smith stated that the audit is still in review and will be completed by December 31st. The surplus and fund balance analysis sheet provided by the Finance Department will be updated and emailed out to Board of Finance members. It is estimated that the fund balance at year-end will be approximately 5-7%.

Miscellaneous discussions were held regarding the Holcomb Farm improvement project, open Capital projects (Wash Bay, Sidewalks, Generator, and East Street Property), and other general items. Highlights were:

- Holcomb Farm is running well and making ends meet but with a very tight budget. It is hoped with the improvements that this complex will be self-sustaining. It is a draw on the Public Works Department using in-kind services (small demolition, digging, and

maintenance). The town receives rental money from Holcomb Farm Board of Directors and Granby Land Trust. The Park and Recreation Department is the administrator regarding organized programs or events occurring at the farm and collects those revenues. A marketing plan will be in place once the construction at the farm is complete to promote this treasure in Granby.

- Wash Bay is virtually completed and well within budget. Some clean-up of the area is still needed.
- Sidewalks project is in place and waiting to hear about a grant to help with the cost of the project.
- Generator – Town is still waiting to hear from FEMA regarding the grant for the generator to be installed at Granby's Middle School to handle sheltering needs during emergency declarations.
- East Street Property – a Town-owned Land Committee is being created to study this parcel, along with other property, for suggestions on how to use the land.
- Kirk Severance has been appointed as the new Director of Public Works.

Town Manager Smith discussed the cost of heating fuel and the conversion to natural gas from oil for town buildings. The town is working with Connecticut Natural Gas to receive cost savings for the conversion from heating fuel to keep the cost in line with the budget. The Granby Public Library building has been approved for the conversion and it has met the breakeven point in the budget. The school is also working on this too.

Town Manager Smith further reported on the Preliminary Surplus and Fund Balance Analysis. The town expects to turn back to the General Fund at year-end approximately \$75,000 or more. He mentioned that Harry Traver, BOE Business Manager, spoke with Mrs. Scibelli recently and indicated that there may be some surplus money from the BOE's budget to turn back to the town that is not indicated on the Preliminary Surplus and Fund Balance Analysis distributed this evening. Lastly, Town Manager Smith stated that the fund balance at year-end will be approximately 5-7%.

Harry Traver reported the statement of accounts for October and year-end. Mr. Traver indicated that approximately \$214,000 will be returned to the town for the year-end report. However, an additional \$130,000 earmarked for school security in end of year purchases orders (cameras, motion sensors, secured doors) will be released and an appropriation of \$130,000 will be requested by the Board of Education for school security purchases. It was asked if a security guard for the schools is being considered. Superintendent Addley indicated not at this time, but issues are always changing, especially if an incident occurred in Granby schools.

Mr. Traver reported from the October statement that revenues from Tuition from other Towns is down by \$40,000 because one student left and another student is moving. The snow removal account (maintenance) will need to be watched. The Special Education outplacement tuition costs forecast is at \$280,000 unfavorable, making the forecast for total expenditures at \$165,000 unfavorable. A soft freeze of \$75,000 on non-program spending has been instituted. The Board of Education is keeping an eye on the school's population and what effect it will

have on Granby. The Granby Education Association contract has been settled with an increase of approximately 9.68% over the next three (3) years.

OTHER

Kelly Rome reported on the Intra-Town Advisory Committee activities. She indicated three different areas (IT, Public Works, and Finance) have been reviewed by the Committee. Reports have been requested regarding IT (infrastructure) and Finance Department, in particular for future needs and efficiencies in pooling together resources for the school and town. The potential solar project was returned to the Board of Selectmen for consideration under the newly formed Town-owned Land Study Committee to study.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROPRIATION REQUEST FOR SENIOR CITIZEN TRANSPORTATION GRANT

Town Manager Smith presented the background information for this grant request. He indicated the Board of Selectmen approved the grant application on March 3, 2014. The agreement period is July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015 and the Town of Granby has been awarded funding from this program since FY 2006-07. The grant funding is combined with municipal dollars to employ a full-time senior van driver. The grant award for 2014-15 is \$28,641.

Mr. Wilke commented that the senior van service is one of the best services and a great program for our senior community.

ON A MOTION by Al Wilke, seconded by Kelly Rome, the Board voted unanimously (6-0-0) to approve the appropriation in the amount of \$28,641 from General Fund Balance to the Senior Activities Fund – Van Services.

PRELIMINARY BUDGET CALENDAR

The Board, Town Manager, and Superintendent of Schools discussed some of the important dates regarding the budget and Board of Finance's input. The Board suggested some changes to the calendar, which are:

- The Three Board meeting be held January 20, 2015
- Board of Finance Special Meeting to present guidelines for budget preparation be held early February (perhaps Feb. 9th or 10th)
- Board of Finance Special Meeting to present the school and town budgets be held March 30, 2015.

The Board made comments regarding the environment of the budget. It was concurred that the budget again this year will be a challenge. The Board concurred that the budget should remain as it has in the past few years with a slight increase in the budget and a slight increase in the mill rate.

CONFIRM DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It is anticipated there will be no meeting in December. The next regular meeting would be scheduled for January 26, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the Police Department Community Room.

ADJOURNMENT

ON A **MOTION** by Al Wilke, seconded by Frederick Moffa, OD, the Board voted unanimously (6-0-0) to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia I. Chieski
Recording Secretary