

BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 9, 2013

MINUTES

The Board of Finance held a Special Meeting on May 9, 2013 at the Notch Road Municipal Center. Members present were Chairman Bob Munroe, Jim Roscoe, John Toomey, Jim Bruner, Judy Wilson, Barry Stearns and Kelly Regan. Also present were Administrative Officer Joyce Stille, Financial Director Brenda Douglas, members of the Board of Selectmen, members of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools Kristen Heckt and other staff members and members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Munroe at 8:09 p.m. He commented that the budget referendum was defeated by approximately 120 votes. The next referendum is scheduled for May 21, 2013.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kate Galle of Castlerock Lane said it is very important to get the budget information in neutral and factual terms out to the public. People look to the PTA for information. Town should have an informed citizenship. She would like the budget information decided at tonight's meeting put up on the website as soon as possible. She finds getting the information regarding the budget too hard to get from the Town. B. Munroe responded some budget discussions have been on public access television recently.

First Selectman Bob Morra said the town is limited to what it can do once the referendum is set. An explanatory text has to be prepared by the Town Clerk, looked at by the Town Attorney, and sent to the Secretary of State.

Discussion followed on getting the minutes out to the public as soon as possible. K. Galle said the Town still needs a means of getting the information out neutral explanatory way and can trust the information. B. Munroe said he appreciates her involvement.

Amy Degada of Hebron Road has concern with cuts to teachers and Instructional assistants. She said the cuts will increase class size and will put special education children at risk who depend on the services. She understands that the Town is strapped financially and appreciates the board's consideration of her concerns of losing any staff.

Tom Manning said he has urged the Board of Finance (BOF) to restrain the Board of Education (BOE) budget, and would like to see all day kindergarten cut. He sees it as no benefit to educational performance. He would also cut all administrators other than the

three principals and superintendent. Another area he would cut is the maintenance staff and commented that there is too much emphasis on music programs.

Members of the audience responded to Mr. Manning's comments.

A number of the members of the BOE entered the room 8:34 p.m.

B. Munroe said the BOF does not have any say as to how school programs are decided.

K. Galle asked the BOF, in the future, to schedule the referendum meeting while school is in session.

Karen Bergin said charging fees for all day kindergarten would be illegal. All day kindergarten is a State mandate that has to be followed in the public school system and is grant funded.

3. CONSIDER AND ACT ON FY 13-14 BUDGET

B. Munroe said the issue before the BOF is how much the Board needs to cut.

He polled the Board members:

B. Stearns would like to get the tax increase slightly below 4%. The operating budget is increasing by 2%. He would like to hear from the public what they would not want to pay for. B. Munroe said each percentage point is about \$141,000.00.

J. Roscoe said the BOF has discussed unexpended appropriations for the current year. The BOE currently has a \$35,000.00 surplus. BOE members said the percentage from the State could drop. They are still waiting for figures from the State. He questioned if the BOF should consider raising the \$250,000.00 in short term borrowing provision in the operating budget.

B. Munroe said it was important to the BOF to have as much cash around in the undesignated fund to cover any deficits in the Town budget which the Town experienced this fiscal year. He said it is not good for the town to tap into the rainy day fund.

Kelly Regan said the BOF has to think outside the box and agrees with B. Stearns' suggestion of getting the tax increase below 4%.

B. Munroe is considering something less than 5% and believes that an increase under 4% would be devastating to the Town.

J. Bruner said his thought is to reduce the tax burden by 1%.

J. Wilson commented that the \$80,000.00 of funds available could be used to fund the budget at a different level. Beyond that she said a few more cuts would be needed to the capital budget, BOE and Town budget. She said the reduction of the tax rate increase needs to be significant enough based on the way the vote came out.

J. Wilson MOVED “We take that \$80,000.00 from the Designated Fund Balance and make that cash available to fund the budget and that we then reduce the capital budget by \$4,400.00, the Board of Education by \$40,000.00 and Town budget by \$20,000.00. J. Bruner seconded.

J. Bruner does not see any other options that would not affect the Charter. The new tax increase would be 4.59%.

J. Toomey said 5.6% tax increase was unattainable.

B. Stearns supports the motion. He would like to get the vote out. He asked the Finance Director what the increase in the operating budget would be now.

B. Munroe called the vote. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

J. Roscoe said he would like to put a one page summary of the budget in the minutes so it can be posted quickly.

Finance Director Brenda Douglas reported that the overall spending increase would be 1.72% over the revised budget of \$19,505,083.00. The mil rate increase would be 4.59%.

J. Toomey MOVED that the BOF have the budget referendum state: “Shall the Annual Budget for the Town of Bolton Connecticut for the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 as recommended by the Board of Finance in the amount of \$19,505,083.00 be adopted?”

B. Stearns SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

J. Bruner read the following budget summary into the record:

	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13(rev)</u>	<u>FY 14 (proposed)</u>	<u>% over FY 13</u>
Total Expenditures	\$18,075,339	\$19,174,944	\$19,505,083	1.72%
BOE	\$12,446,925	\$12,803,263	\$13,197,071	2.86%
BOS	\$4,469,753	\$4,878,547	\$5,011,334	3.46%
Debt	\$679,246	\$969,134	\$760,578	-21.52%
Other	0	0	\$40,000	-

4. ADJOURNMENT

B. Stearns MOVED to AJOURN the meeting at 9:45 p.m. J. Toomey SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Linda H. McDonald, Recording Secretary

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.