

**TOWN OF GRANBY
BOARD OF FINANCE
MEETING MINUTES
February 15, 2023**

PRESENT: Michael Guarco, Chairman; Alfred Wilke, Vice Chairman; Kevin Hobson, William Kennedy and James Tsapsinos

REMOTE: Jenny Emery

OTHERS PRESENT: Kimi Cheng, Director of Finance; Jordan Grossman, Superintendent of Schools; Anna Robbins, BOE Business Manager and Erica Robertson, Town Manager

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Guarco at 5:00 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 23, 2023

ON A MOTION by A. Wilke, seconded by K. Hobson, the Board voted (5-0-1) to approve the meeting minutes of January 23, 2023. W. Kennedy abstained.

2. PUBLIC SESSION

Maureen Eberly, 37 Silkey Road, North Granby suggested that the Board of Finance meetings be held in the Town Hall meeting room and be available via Zoom in order to give more people the opportunity to attend and be part of the budget process.

Glenn Ballard, 289 Granville Road, North Granby expressed support for Ms. Eberly's statement concerning the accessibility of the Board of Finance meetings. Mr. Ballard further commented that the Board of Finance should mandate that the operating boards find efficiencies and cost savings rather than increasing the budget and recommended that volunteers or a consultant be engaged to perform an efficiency study. Mr. Ballard also disagrees with the idea of paying cash for major projects such as the Radio Project stating that it is not fair to current residents.

3. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Anna Robbins, BOE Business Manager reported on the BOE January 2023 Statement of Accounts:

- The full year forecast shows an anticipated over budget condition of \$654K which is \$43K better than the previous month. The favorable forecast for regular education of \$35K is \$36K worse than last month. The continued need for substitutes and purchased instructional services continues to contribute to the overbudget condition. Savings in salary and benefits as well as transportation offset some of the increases.
- Special Education is over budget by \$689K which is \$78K better than last month. The shift is primarily due to changes in out-of-district tuition and transportation. The over-budget conditions continue to reflect multiple changes in student placements since the budget was developed and in specific individual needs that have contributed to additional costs.

- Revenue to the Town is expected to be favorable at \$433K. The full year forecast shows a \$342K favorable variance in the Special Education Excess Cost Grant and a \$90K favorable variance in revenues from special education tuition charged to other towns.
- The new per pupil amount as calculated by the Connecticut State Department of Education is \$18,897 which is an increase of \$26 compared to FY21.
- Final purchase orders are due by March 15, 2023.

Erica Robertson, Town Manager, reported on the highlights of the January 2023 Statement of Accounts.

- Tax collection is slightly lower at 94% versus 95% at the same time last year. The difference is attributed to the shortfall in the Motor Vehicle Property Tax Cap.
- Collections on prior year taxes, interest and liens and auto supplement are lower than previous years and the budgeted amount may not be fulfilled.
- STIF interest rates continue to be strong at a daily rate of 4.61% and a 7-day yield of 4.59% which is much higher than last year. Interest earned in January was about \$71,000.
- Collection of building permit fees increased significantly including \$213,446 for Buildings 1-3 at the new development at 280 Salmon Brook Street. The Building Department expects to receive the permit requests for Buildings 4-7 in this fiscal year.
- Total year to date January general fund expense is the same as last year at 67%.
- Final purchase orders are due in April.

4. 2022 GRAND LIST

E. Robertson reviewed the highlights of the revaluation and the 2022 Grand List signed by the Assessor. The Grand List reflects updated real estate values due to the revaluation this year. The total increase is 28.34% including 32.72% in Real Estate, 2.58% in Motor Vehicle and 8.98% in Personal Property. The increase would have been 1.31% without the revaluation.

Highlights from the revaluation include:

- Residential homes saw the biggest increase in values. Supply and demand issues leading to multiple offers, supply chain issues and the pandemic were all contributing factors to the increase in values.
- The cost to build, the labor shortage and the cost of materials led to a large increase in new construction values.
- Retail and office space did not see the same increase due to less demand.
- Residential land values saw a slight increase.
- Apartment buildings, the increase in market rent and the demand for more rental property increased the value of commercial land and apartments.

5. BUDGET OPERATIONS GUIDELINES

Chairman Guarco reviewed the updated BOF Budget Worksheet C which included the inputs from the Governor's budget and the Grand List. Board members are comfortable with the budget guideline recommendation of less than 4% for the municipal budget and less than 5% for education.

ON A MOTION by W. Kennedy, seconded by A. Wilke, the Board voted (6-0-0) to accept the Board of Finance Worksheet C and put forth the budget guideline of a less than 4% increase for the municipal budget and a less than 5% increase for education.

6. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

E. Robertson provided an overview of the ongoing major capital projects.

Major construction on the Granby Center Project is on hold for the winter months, however the contractor will be on site over the next few months doing work outside of the roadway. Work is scheduled to resume in late March or early April focusing on the reconstruction and realignment at the intersection of Routes 20 and 10/202. Most of this work will be done at night to minimize traffic disruptions. Residents will be informed of any night work and necessary detours.

Progress continues on the major bridge projects in town. Work on Moosehorn Road Bridge has been completed for the season and will resume in the spring. WMC was chosen for inspection services for the Donahue Road Bridge replacement which is also scheduled to begin in the spring. The bids for a construction contractor are currently being reviewed. Simsbury Road Bridge is scheduled to be replaced in 2024. The Town is waiting for approval from the State to replace Doherty Road Bridge at an estimated cost of \$2.5M at 50% reimbursement.

The STEAP Grant project at Holcomb Farm is complete including new restrooms, a bridal suite and new hallway flooring. The farmhouse has been resided and lead abatement was completed. Only some minor repairs to the back steps and the sitting porch remain.

The new GMHS kitchen, commons, industrial arts area and music area were officially opened at a ribbon cutting ceremony on January 19th. This project will have a positive impact on students and the community for years to come. The School Projects Building Committee is now focused on the High School Roof Project. The grant application has been completed and submitted to the state with the hope that the project can be completed this summer.

The Radio Communications Project Committee is working on obtaining access to tower sites. The Metacomet Ridge site in East Granby has been secured and work continues to

secure access to the privately held site at 229 Mountain Road. The bid specification document has been vetted by legal counsel and will be published once the tower access rights are secured.

Work continues with the Town Engineer to design and replace the current sewer pumps and manhole at Salmon Brook Park to address several issues. Tighe & Bond was selected to conduct a wastewater flow study and is expected to begin in March.

7. ARPA UPDATE

E. Robertson provided an update on the status Phase 1 of the ARPA projects. All funds must be committed by the end of 2024 and work must be completed by the end of 2026. Projects in Phase 2 projects will be considered after the completion of Phase 1.

(A complete list of the ARPA projects can be found in the meeting materials or on the town website.)

8. CONFIRM DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Finance meeting will be held on Monday, February 27, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. in the Police Department Community Room.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION by J. Tsaptsinos, seconded by K. Hobson, the Board voted (6-0-0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Betsy Mazzotta
Recording Secretary