



TOWN OF BROOKLYN

P.O. Box 356 - Route 6 and 169
BROOKLYN, CONNECTICUT 06234

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Board of Finance
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
7:00pm via Zoom and
Clifford B. Green Memorial Center

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2022 SEP 28 PM 5:01
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Present: Sandy Brodeur, Drew Dionne, Aaron Soucy, Ken Dykstra, Heather Allen and Melissa Bradley;
Recording Secretary

Absent: R. David Lee w/notification

Also Present: Austin Tanner, Lou Brodeur, Joe Voccio, Patricia Buell and Shelley Cates

1. **Determination of a quorum and Call to Order:** S. Brodeur called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
2. **Public comment:** None
3. **Action on minutes of 5/18, 5/26, and 6/21, and 8/17/2022 meetings:** A. Soucy made a motion to approve the minutes of 5/18/22, 5/26/22, 6/21/22 and 8/17/22 meetings. D. Dionne seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
4. **Old Business**
 - a. **Update on Finance clerk position; total number of persons in the Finance Department:**
A financial assistant for the Town was hired and previously one for the School; One assistant that is split between the Town and the School; and a finance director for the school and one for the Town. The office is completely staffed.
 - b. **Update on Recreation Director position:** A recreation director was hired and will begin on October 5th.
 - c. **Action on Audit recommendation to bring WPCA in-house?** S. Cates is still researching ordinances and state statutes and has reached out to the auditors.
 - d. **Status of pooled cash fund? Has this been corrected?** A review of the internal system was done and S. Cates has reached out to the bank and waiting to hear back.

e. **Discussion about considered reviews of financial information from town agencies, etc., which receive money from the town – First Selectman’s thoughts on this:** A. Tanner states the fire commissioners report directly to this board as well as recreation but he will ask the other agencies for year end reports. i.e. library, cemetery, NDDH, TVCCA and the Senior Center.

f. **Request for statements showing fire district tax collection and transfer of money to the fire district; request for statements showing Recreation fund activity for donations/scholarships – status?** Fire district taxes are collected in the tax office and directly go to the fire district. They do not hit any of the Town accounts.

g. **Are account reconciliations being done monthly now – problem listed in Audit:** All reconciliations are up to date.

h. **Status of Ice Box lawsuit:** A. Tanner questions why the board is only concerned with this lawsuit? He states all suits are being monitored by out attorney.

i. **Other Old Business:** There were two trucks for the highway department approved in capital. One truck included a plow. When the trucks were ordered, the truck with the plow cost more than estimated so it was ordered without the plow and the other truck came in under the estimate when ordered. T. Rukstela discussed with the First Selectmen, using the unused funds from both trucks to purchase the plow. No decision was made. In discussion, it was revealed the plow was already purchased and on the truck. The transfer of funds between projects should have been approved by this board before the purchase.

K. Dykstra made a motion to use the leftover funds from one truck project to pay for the plow on the on the other truck project that was already purchased. D. Dionne seconded the motion. The cost of the plow is \$7,100. A purchase order was not done. It needs to be known to suppliers that they need to have a purchase order from the Town as well as department heads. Small businesses such as Napa should have a blanket one because the guys run there often to grab small parts or odds and ends. Motion carried 3-1-1. Yay-H. Allen, D. Dionne, S. Brodeur; Nay-K. Dykstra; Abstain-A.Soucy for not having enough information.

5. **New Business:** D. Dionne made a motion to move item 5e to 5a. K. Dykstra seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

a. **Other new Business:** Patricia Buell updates the school phone system is still on a temporary repair. IT is working on a new system.

P. Buell presents to the board:

The Brooklyn Public Schools would like to apply for a School Construction Grant through the Office of Administrative Services. This project is a "general construction" project that requires

approval from the Town of Brooklyn and if approved by DAS/OSCG&R would provide a reimbursement rate of 72.86%

HVAC Grant Considerations: We will look to meet the air quality needs of the district by making the schools healthier, more efficient, and accessible to the community during all seasons of the year. During the last five years, there have been days that the building has been too hot to effectively educate students, there has been an ongoing need to leave windows open to increase air exchange and by doing so, we have created concerns from many parents who believe the open windows create a safety risk on the ground level classrooms. We are also aware of the weight limits and implications of upgrading or adding air handlers to the "new roof" and solar systems on our roofs. The Director of Facilities has been reviewing the locations for air conditioning units both on the roof and on the side of the buildings, including in the courtyards at BMS or "interior" areas of the school at BES. We believe that there has never been a better time to apply for an HVAC grant as this is the first time that this type of project has been offered under the Office of School Construction Grants.

ARP/ESSER Funding: The Brooklyn Board of Education has directed the Superintendent to request funding through ARP/ESSER to offset the local portion of the construction grant. It has recently been determined that the Department of Administrative Services has determined that ARP/ESSER funds can NOT be used to cover the cost of the local, 27.14%, of our project. The ARP/ESSER funds are allowed to be spent on HVAC if it was funding the full project but can NOT be used as an offset to this type of grant request. The ARP/ESSER Committee has been very responsive to the idea of using these funds for HVAC at the schools and this would be a project that would meet all of the requirements of committee. This project would benefit a very large percentage of the Brooklyn residents. Our current enrollment is over 900 students, and we employ 175 people. The request was justified in the application and is sustainable as part of the Town's largest investment. This project has a positive impact on COVID related protocols as it will increase the air exchange without having to open windows. Open windows create inefficient heating of our buildings and poses a safety risk as this could allow a breach. The original request of the ARP/ESSER Committee was for \$495,000.

HVAC Estimates for BES and BMS: The Brooklyn Public Schools will need to get permission to create a building committee, create a RFQ to determine what specific requirements are needed and see approval from the Town of Brooklyn through a Town Meeting in order to move forward. The "rough estimate" for upgrading the HVAC for both buildings would be \$2,000,000.

Funding Considerations:

Option 1: Apply for the Office of School Construction Grant with Brooklyn Funding 27.17%.
\$2,000,000 Project would require approval by Brooklyn for the full cost
72.86% or \$1,457,200 reimbursement from DAS
27.14% or \$542,800 to be paid for by the Town of Brooklyn Tax/Bond

Option 2: Split the project into two projects.

Use the Town's ARP/ESSER funds to pay for \$500,000 of the HVAC Project. This portion of the project would not be part of the larger project submitted to DAS for the grant.

Apply for the Office of School Construction for \$1,500,000 HVAC grant.

The Town approval of \$1,500,000 for the grant project would need to be approved.

72.86% or \$1,092,900 reimbursement from DAS

27.14% or \$407,100 to be paid for by the Town of Brooklyn Tax/Bond

Option 3: Scale back the project and NOT complete a full renovation of the system.

Pros: to not completing the full project:

We could reduce the amount of money being requested for the project if we were to leave some of the older units in place. They are less efficient and would need continued maintenance.

Cons: to not completing the full project:

-There are older AC units in both buildings that use R-22, a refrigerant product that began to be phased out of use in US in 2010 because it is depleting the ozone.

-There are portions of the buildings that are really unbearable when the temperatures get very high or stay high for multiple days.

-Systems would not run off of one control system and would be more difficult to manage.

-If the whole system was upgraded, we would have classrooms with Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) which offered increased flexibility to heat and cool areas of the buildings that are hot or cold. By adding this type of system, we would be able to reduce fuel usage for chilly mornings when we just need to warm up the buildings, but do not need to run the full furnaces. The higher efficiency VRF would result in cost savings over running the furnaces.

-Costs would be higher including the engineering and additional work to complete the job at a later date.

-We would need to target specific areas in buildings making it less efficient and would result in some rooms not receiving AC and would be difficult to explain.

-Some windows would need to be left open to enhance air exchange resulting in the continued concern about school safety.

Discussion held on hiring a mechanical engineer and using funds from the Town ARPA money to fund it. This will be presented to the ARPA fund at the next meeting and the Board of Selectmen.

- b. **Discuss status of auditors' contract:** It is time to go out to bid this year. Drew Dionne made a motion to go out to bid to receive quotes for an auditing firm. Sandy Brodeur seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
- c. **Tax Payer's Guide on Town Website – currently fy 2019-2020. Can this be updated?**
This has already been updated.

- d. **Review of most current June 2022 financials and estimate of completion date for audit:** Nothing additional has been done. They haven't scheduled a date in October yet.
 - e. **Review of 22-23 financials:** Under administration, there are shared services with the HR director. The Town pays her salary and bills the school for their half.
6. **Selectmen's Report:** When the Town Hall was painted, the painter stated he wouldn't warranty his work unless the gutters were fixed. A. Tanner received three quotes and will contact the company to begin installation. This will be paid out of town hall maintenance. We received the grant for the generator for the Senior Center. Amount awarded is \$180,000, the Town match is \$5,000. This will come out of maintenance for the CBGMC. STEAP grant for Tatnic road was awarded for \$299,000. The Town match is \$55,000. The bushes have been ordered for the Community Center. The Recreation liaison has been unable to attend, D. Dionne offers to attend in October and November is his place. There are a few items for a Town Meeting, A. Tanner would like to wait to button up the school H-VAC project to include that. The seasonal recreation maintainer resigned from his position. This will be filled next Spring because the position ends in November, A. Tanner states there no need to hire someone now and lay them off.
7. **Liaison Reports:** BOE – they have had a large turnover with staff but are running smoothly. Housing – meeting tomorrow.
8. **Public comment:** None
9. **Adjournment:** D. Dionne made a motion to adjourn the meeting. K. Dykstra seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted;



Melissa J. Bradley
Recording Secretary