

**Board of Finance
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 5, 2017
7:00pm Senior Center**

Present: Jeffery Otto, Andrew Dionne, Kim Conroy, Kenneth Dykstra, Sandra Brodeur, Heather Allen, and April Lamothe; Recording Secretary

Also Present: Rick Ives, Joe Voccio, Robert Kelleher, Sherry Holmes, Austin Tanner, Matthew “Bucky” Lohbusch, Fran from the Bulletin, and Thomas Rukstela (arrived at 9:05pm)

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm.
- 2) **Public Comment:** None
- 3) **Approve Previous Minutes:** Minutes from March 23rd and 29th meetings to be approved.
 - **March 23, 2017:** Andrew Dionne made a motion to approve the minutes from March 23rd. Kim Conroy seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.
 - **March 29, 2017:** Sandra Brodeur had corrections to the March 29th minutes; 1) under page 2, under Budget Presentation, ninth paragraph, it does not read that the bid must go out to bid, which was discussed in the last meeting. Correction made by Jeffrey Otto: a new paragraph that reads: “Sandra Brodeur pointed out that the aggregate cost of providing this service exceeds \$5,000 and it therefore must go to bid each year.” 2) under page 3, under Public Comment, second paragraph; it should read ‘loss’ instead of ‘last.’ Sandra Brodeur made a motion to approve the minutes of March 29th as amended. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.
- 4) **Budget Presentation – General Government Budget: (Copies of the proposed budget are available from Sherry Holmes, Finance Department, at 69 South Main St)** Rick Ives gave the presentation and let the Board know that revenue side of the budget has some assumptions, which has never been done before. The assumptions are due to the teachers’ pensions since Governor Malloy has commented that he would like the towns to start paying 30% of the cost of their pensions. Rick Ives has spoken with other towns; some towns have not included a percentage and some, including Killingly, have added the full percentage into their budgets. He feels that the Town can not completely ignore the pension percentage, so he has added 10%, approximately \$255,000, of the Brooklyn teachers’ pension into the budget. He is not sure if that is the correct number because it depends on what the high schools’ towns do for the pensions. Also, Capital Expenditure is not included in the budget because it has not been decided yet.
 - Rick Ives then reviewed the Revenues and Expenditures summary sheet; there is more revenue than expenses. The sheet included the Governor’s numbers on ECS, special education, PILOT, MRSA, and an increase in the Grand List of just over 1%, an increase in building permits fees, and increase in some Resource Recover fees. Expenses are down 3% for the Town, but the school is up 1.01% (seven one hundredths of a percent), which is approximately \$16,000.
 - **Revenues:**
 - **Property Taxes:** Taxes are reflecting the increase in the Grand List and using a 98% collection ratio. Prior taxes are increased because there will be a tax sale in the 2017-18 budget year, with one happening every other year in the future. All the issues with DMV has caused the higher collection for motor vehicle taxes.

- **State:** Special Education has been taken out of ECS. Jeffrey Otto asked Rick Ives to get reading for what the minimum school budget for education would be under the Governor's proposal. Rick Ives is not sure if the MRSA (Municipal Revenue Sharing Account) amount is correct as it has been raised, but if the deficit continues, he feels like the amount might change. The DUI Grant was cut by \$5,000. Kenneth Dykstra asked about motor vehicle fines; Rick Ives said that he will work on getting the numbers.
- **Other Revenues:** Parks and Recreation have increased some fees, which has resulted in 10% higher predicted revenue. Building Permits fees are in the process of being increased from \$10 per \$1,000 of building cost, to \$14-\$15; this increase must be approved at a Town Meeting. The Transfer Station Fees are currently changing fees to make it comparable to other surrounding towns. Kenneth Dykstra asked about the increase in Miscellaneous Income; Rick Ives said that it is the money that Mortlake Fire Department gave back to the Town. This will have its own line item next year.
 - Rick Ives spoke of when the State will pass their budget, which might happen in August. Jeffrey Otto said that tax bills need to be sent out around June 15 to generate revenue in July. By the early part of June, the Board will have to decide what they are going to do for the budget; if the Town's budget is not passed, they would undershoot the budget, explain to the taxpayers why, and send out supplemental bills after the State budget is passed.
- The proposed budget for the Board of Finance is \$22,800. Rick Ives said that the accounting line item might change, depending if there is a new auditor.
- The proposed budget for the Board of Selectmen is \$32,108. Rick Ives reported that there is not much of a change. He also told the Board that every wage column in the budget has a 2.50% increase, which is the contracted amount for the third year of the union contracts and for those that are not in a union. Kenneth Dykstra asked how many people are not in the union; Rick Ives responded that eight workers are not in the union.
- The proposed budget for Administration is \$283,926.
- The proposed budget for the Assessor is \$137,836. Rick Ives reported that there is not much of a change, other than a slight increase in data processing, payroll, and field work because there is some field work that must be done according to State Statutes. There was decrease in the revaluation cost.
- The proposed budget for the Revenue Collector is \$101,557. Rick Ives stated that the data processing increased slightly, but the printing cost is down. Sandra Brodeur asked how much it cost to send out taxes bills, in case of revised tax bills; Rick Ives said that it would cost around \$8,000 with printing and postage.
- The proposed budget for Legal Counsel is \$27,000. Rick Ives said that union negotiations will be starting in December 2017/January 2018.
- The proposed budget for Recoding-Town Clerk is \$123,894. Rick Ives reported that there is not much of a change, other than wages.
- The proposed budget for Election-Registrars is \$34,613. Rick Ives stated that the in-service line item is higher because of the four mandatory trainings, which the two registrars and the assistants must attend.
- The proposed budget for Land Use Admin/Planner is \$109,349. Rick Ives reported that additional hours have been added for a clerical position to manually input the old records into the new system purchased in 2013. The clerical position would work until the \$3,000 allotted has been spent. Jeffrey Otto asked if a college intern would be able to do the job for

free; Rick Ives said that he looked into the nearby colleges and they would want an intern to do more than clerical work. He also mentioned that they wanted to use the person who normally fills in for the office, since she is use to the system and it would cut down on error. Discussion ensued.

- The proposed budget for Planning & Zoning Commission is \$15,424. Rick Ives reported that there is not much of a change, other than a decrease in legal fees.
- The proposed budget for the Agriculture Commission is \$2,300. The budget is the same as last year.
- The proposed budget for the Zoning Board of Appeals is \$1,000. The budget is the same as last year.
- The proposed budget for Probate is \$9,655. Rick Ives reported that there is not much of a change, other than a slight decrease.
- The proposed budget for Inland Wetlands Commission is \$5,850. Rick Ives reported that there is not much of a change, other than the legal fees were slightly reduced.
- The proposed budget for Conservation Commission is \$2,600.
- The proposed budget for ECON. Development Commission is \$3,650. Rick Ives spoke with the EDC today and they would like a part time employee to act as Brooklyn's Economic Development Director to help the Town's commercial zone and maximize the use of it. He said that the Board of Selectmen want to discuss this before giving a recommendation to the Board of Finance. Jeffrey Otto asked how much the budget would increase with this employee; Rick Ives responded around \$35,000.
- The proposed budget for the Town Hall is \$47,845. Rick Ives said that the Town Hall budget is less than last year because Computer Services was removed from the Town Hall's budget and added to the Central Supplies & Services budget, which is the correct budget.
- The proposed budget for Central Supplies & Services is \$65,119. Kenneth Dykstra asked why the Equipment Rentals went down; Rick Ives responded that there was an item that was the Library's and it is now under the Library's budget.
- The proposed budget for Ethics is \$3,000. The budget is the same as last year.
- The proposed budget for the Board of Assessment Review is \$550. The budget is the same as last year.
- The proposed budget for Patrol Services is \$227,724. Rick Ives told the Board that as of two Mondays ago, a new resident trooper, TFC Steve Corradi, started working. He is a 17-18 veteran of the force. Rick Ives received today the breakdown of Trooper Corradi's pay and benefits (car, uniform, guns, etc.), which has an increase in pay from the previous trooper. This is 100% of the cost of the trooper, per the Governor's budget. Last year the Town covered 85% of the cost. Sandra Brodeur asked if anyone has complained about losing a trooper; Rick Ives said that the only thing that he has seen is the speed of cars has increased.
- The proposed budget for the Fire Facilities is \$447,795. Rick Ives said that ambulance line item for this year is \$0. Both fire departments' budgets and safety equipment has stayed the same, but firemen's retirement program should have increased slowly instead of jumping up; the figure is from Hooker and Holcombe. Also, the water line item has been increased. Jeffrey Otto asked if further discussion with Hooker and Holcombe would change the number; Rick Ives does not believe it would change the amount, but there should be further discussion with them.
- The proposed budget for Homeland Security is \$4,750. Rick Ives told the Board that numbers were moved around and shelter supplies were increased by \$50.

- The proposed budget for Emergency Services is \$29,239. The Medical Intercept Program cost with K&B Ambulance has gone down from \$96 to \$65 per intercept according to Rick Ives. The decrease took effect in January 2017, so the cost savings will be in this current budget year too.
- The proposed budget for the Building Office is \$73,597. The code books did not have to be bought this year. Sandra Brodeur asked about the part-time wages; Rick Ives responded that it is to help cover the office for the assistant's vacations and that it should be included in the budget.
- The proposed budget for Animal Control is \$26,016. Rick Ives expects that there should be a revision for the cost coming in thirty to sixty days because NECCOG has added four new towns to the shelter, which will decrease Brooklyn's portion.
- The proposed budget for the Fire Marshal is \$54,253. Rick Ives said during union contract negotiations, the Fire Marshal will be discussed about the overtime. Currently, when there is a fire, the Fire Marshal must go to the fire and it is a minimum two-hour fire call.
- The proposed budget for Roads, Drainage, & Facilities is \$551,412. Rick Ives stated the budget is higher than last year due to LOCIP being used last year.
- The proposed budget for Engineering is \$20,235. Rick Ives said that the budget increased \$13.
- The proposed budget for Snow & Ice Control is \$100,405. Rick Ives said that there is an increase in the Salt & Chemicals line item by \$11,000 (the increase was originally put in the Sand line item in error). With the increase, the Salt & Chemicals line item is at \$50,005. There was also an increase in part-time wages, but the \$5,000 was taken out of the Roads, Drainage, & Facilities since it was for snow removal. Kenneth Dykstra asked about the Weather Service line item; Rick Ives said that the Town had hired a meteorologist three years ago to better predict when snow storms would end to know when the snow plow drivers were needed, along with the best time for breaks. Sandra Brodeur asked if the meteorologist helped with the decision about school delays/closings; Rick Ives responded that it does, when there is communication.
- The proposed budget for Maintenance of Equipment is \$87,000. Rick Ives stated that the cost of fuel is the difference between last year's budget and the proposed budget. He said that Sherry Holmes was able to lock in a low rate for diesel fuel.
- The proposed budget for the Resource Recovery Commission is \$224,618. Rick Ives reported that garbage bags did not have to be bought this year.
- The proposed budget for the Cemetery is \$5,000. Rick Ives said that this is the Town's contribution for the cemetery's lawn maintenance.
- The proposed budget for 61 So. Main St-Garage Maintenance is \$5,610. Rick Ives said that the garage is used for cold storage for highway equipment and the bus office, but there is a high heating bill.
- The proposed budget for 95 Rukstela Rd-Garage Maintenance is \$17,190. Rick Ives said that it needs a better alarm system.
- The proposed budget for Health Services is \$74,383. Rick Ives said that all the agencies provide services for the Town. ACCESS Agency is the designated social service agency, Community Kitchen, District Department of Health, Day Kimball Health Care, Connecticut Coalition to End Homeless finds shelter for Brooklyn's twenty-six homeless; NECASA helps the schools with drug and alcohol addiction awareness, the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District which helps residents along the White Brook, which feeds into the Mashamoquet Basin and has been failing its water test, to watch the river and update septic systems; the

TVCCA makes forty meals at the Senior Center. The Senior Center is going to need a new roof next year and heat is an issue at times. Discussion ensued.

- The proposed budget for the Library is \$137,911. Kim Conroy asked about the wage increase since it is more than 2.5% the Town employees receive; Rick Ives said the wages are about 2.5%, but there might be something more that the Library is including in the wages. He will get back to the Board.
- The proposed budget for the Recreation Commission is \$326,817. Already reviewed.
- The proposed budget for Park Maintenance is \$110,199. Already reviewed.
- The proposed budget for the Open Space Fund is \$8,259. The budget is almost the same as last year.
- The proposed budget for the Community Center is \$20,557. There is an increase for the building repairs and a new roof is needed, once the roof is not accessible, said Rick Ives. Jeffrey Otto asked about the increase in cleaning services; Rick Ives said that a day was added to the cleaning schedule, so they are cleaning two times a week instead of one.
- The proposed budget for the Clifford B. Green Memorial Center is \$23,637. The budget is almost the same as last year.
- The proposed budget for the Transit District is \$14,453. Rick Ives that the increase is due to costs going up. There is going to be a run from Plainfield to Walmart starting soon.
- The proposed budget for Special Programs is \$5,750. Rick Ives said that Family Fun Day was decreased because of the amount of donations that are received, less supplies have to be bought. The Fall Festival is in two budgets, Special Programs and ECON Development, for the needed \$1,000.
- The proposed budget for Redemption of Long Term Debt is \$37,500. Rick Ives told the Board that there is a slight increase in legal fees. The Putnam Tech Park is due \$8,000 plus interest, but they have not put in place an interest bearing note; Rick Ives said that the Town will pay the interest once a bill is received. There has been interest growing in the Tech Park.
- The proposed budget for Redemption of Short Term Debt is \$490,313. Rick Ives said the payment to the Town of Killingly is down about \$50,000 due to less Brooklyn students attending and Killingly Schools refinanced. Andrew Dionne asked about any capital costs from Woodstock about their large purchase last year; Jeffrey Otto said that it is being financed by out of country students.
- The proposed budget for Fringe Benefits is \$861,708. Rick Ives reported that health benefits are up and an employee was added to the insurance. 10% of Brooklyn's employed teachers' retirement cost has been added to this budget; \$255,496. Discussion ensued.
- The proposed budget for Municipal Insurance is \$127,616. Rick Ives told the Board that it is lower because of distribution between the Town and Schools changed.
- The proposed budget for Contingency/Reserves is \$20,000. Rick Ives said the transfer will happen at end of this budget year.
- The proposed budget for Storm Water Management is \$23,000. Rick Ives said that the Town is now in compliance and the Storm Water Management plan was filed Monday. Next year, mapping will have to be done of roads, bridges, culverts, outflows, etc., to make a searchable map. Jeffery Otto asked if the \$23,000 is quote from a contractor; Rick Ives said yes, the \$18,000 is an estimate for the mapping and GIS and an estimate of \$5,000 for substantial ordinances and regulation changes with Planning and Zoning and Wetlands to meet the MS4 requirements. Under this plan, there must be a reduction of impervious surfaces like roads, roofs, and parking lots in the next five years. Roads and parking lots would need to be made of a porous material. Sandra Brodeur asked if the commissions are going to be trained; Rick

Ives said yes, but the training/education for commission and public is not available until the 2018-2019 budget. Discussion ensued.

- Jeffrey Otto asked the Board if they have any questions on the budget:
 - Heather Allen questioned the layout of the revenues and expenditures summary page (which is attached to the minutes) and why there is actual from the 2015/16 budget year, budget from 2016/17, and actual from 2016/17, which is the current amounts. Discussion ensued. Sherry Holmes suggested that she could change the actual 2016/17 to read “actual through March 31, 2017.” The Board agreed that would clarify the issue.
- Jeffrey Otto commends the Board of Selectmen for keeping the proposed budget very close to last year’s amount during a difficult year. He suggests that the Board of Selectmen make budgets with 5% and 10% reductions; Rick Ives said that he already has.
 - Andrew Dionne made a motion to receive the General Government budget as presented and leave it on the table for further consideration. Sandra Brodeur seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

5) Other Business:

- Jeffrey Otto wanted to make sure the members received a copy of the memo he emailed on March 31st based on minutes from the last meeting to the auditor about the changes to the audit. The changes will be discussed with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education in the future.
- Around May 1st, the late pension reports need to be discussed, based on someone coming from Hooker and Holcombe to the April 19 meeting. Sherry Holmes has called and left a message. The agenda should reflect: 7pm Hooker and Holcombe, then the Board of Fire Commissioners, and the Board of Education at 7:30pm.
- Two meetings ago, Jeffrey Otto received a letter from the Agriculture Commission asking that any property taxes received from solar farms be put into an open space fund. He will make copies of the letter for the Board so they can discuss it in the future. He asked Rick Ives about the tax stabilization agreement for the solar farm; Rick Ives is putting one more thing together for the attorney and the Board of Selectmen will have it on their next agenda.
- Kim Conroy asked if there was anything scheduled to be presented next meeting. Sandra Brodeur said that she had more questions on the audit, but that it could be done after the budget time. Jeffrey Otto canceled the April 12th meeting.
- Andrew Dionne asked about the money for the School Wall; Jeffrey Otto said the money would be designated to uncommitted reserve.
- Sandra Brodeur asked for an update on LOCIP; Rick Ives said he had received a call from the Speaker’s Office and said that the Town would not lose the LOCIP, but he is not sure of when the money will be received, most likely around July 1. Sandra Brodeur asked if there was enough money to cover the money used from LOCIP fund; Rick Ives said there is enough money. Discussion ensued.

6) Public Comment: Austin Tanner asked about the resolution the LOCIP funds and if it was to spend them on the roads, even though the Town does not have the funds. Rick Ives responded that to receive LOCIP funds, the Town must spend money on the roads, which they did. Discussion ensued.

7) Adjourn: Andrew Dionne made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:17pm. Sandra Brodeur seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted;
April Lamothe
Recording Secretary