

**BOARD OF FINANCE
FINAL MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2013**

This monthly meeting of the Board of Finance held its Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in Seminar Room 300, Board of Education Administrative Offices, 501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, CT.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members of the Board of Finance present were, Thomas Flynn, Chairman Robert Bellitto, Jr., Vice Chairman, Christopher DeWitt and Ken Brachfeld, James Brown, Mary LeClerc, Robert Stone, and Cathy Albin.

MEMBERS ABSENT

James Walsh

BOARD OF SELECTMAN

First Selectman Michael Tetreau, Robert Mayer, Chief of Staff and Acting Chief Fiscal Officer

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Dick Felner; Richard Popilowski, Chairman of the Fire Commission; David Title, Superintendent of Schools, (BOE) Phil Dwyer, (BOE), Bill Silver, Architect, Joseph Michelangelo, Director of Public Works, Ed McCourt, Maintenance Supervisor, Jerry Lombardo, Director Parks and Recreation and Peter Grace, Golf Course Superintendent.

Chairman Flynn called the meeting to order at 7:31. It followed with a moment of silence for all the victims of the Sandy Hook Shootings in Newtown.

1. To approve the minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Finance from December 04, 2012.

Robert Bellitto *moved* and Mary LeClerc *seconded* to approve the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance from December 4, 2012, as submitted. Motion passed 7-2. Christopher DeWitt and Ken Brachfeld abstained.

2. To approve the minutes of the Organizational Meeting of the Board of Finance from December 04, 2012.

Robert Bellitto *moved* and *seconded* to amend the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance from December 4, 2012 as follows: **To elect a Secretary of the Board of Finance for the period December 2011 to December 2012.** Robert Stone moved and Mr. Bellitto *seconded* to nominate

James Brown as Secretary of the Board of Finance for the year December 2012-December 2013. *Motion passed unanimously.* James Brown abstained.

Motion passed 7-2. Christopher DeWitt and Ken Brachfeld abstained.

3. To hear and review the Fire Pension issues.

Chief Felner and Richard Popilowski, Chairman of the Fire Commission, presented this item to the Board. Town Attorney, Stanton Lesser, asked that this item go into Executive Session before discussion. Following Executive Session the Board queried Chief Felner regarding the issue, which was brought to Chairman Flynn through anonymous letter regarding two out of six firefighter promotions that was given just days before retirement that significantly increased their pensions.

Chief Felner stated that none of the firefighters who retired had less than 30 years on the job. He also stated after 30 years, they continue to pay into the pension, plan but they are maxed out on their payout, receiving no more than 80 percent of their final salary.

Chief Felner also stated there were no deals made, either between himself and the firefighters, or himself and Selectman Tetreau, regarding any of the promotions or transfers.

Chairman Tom Flynn explained why the Board is concerned about pensions. He said actuaries had told the Board in December that the Town must put \$3.7 million into a combination of pension plans and retiree medical plans in the coming fiscal year. He noted that \$800,000 extra had to be put into the plans last spring, which meant such contributions raise taxes. The Town has been putting more into police and fire pension plans after not doing so for ten years because they were being underfunded by actuarial analysis. He wondered if the actuaries were aware of these last minute promotions in case they needed to add them into their calculations.

Chief Felner explained that under the firefighters' contract with the town, if there is no promotional list available, open positions are filled by the most senior firefighter. It also allows firefighter to retire at the higher salary if they are in that job when they retire, no matter if it is only a short while.

Robert Bellitto said the town originally wanted to change the contract to require a firefighter be in a new position for 12 months in order to have that salary included in pension calculations. It was rejected by the union and (then-First Selectman Kenneth Flatto) decided it was not a topic he wanted to pursue.

Human Resources Director, Mary Carroll Mirylees noted the pension plan rules call for a 31-day notice, though that apparently has not been enforced. She also noted she has wanted to reinstate

that requirement, especially since she is now getting retirement papers filed, in some cases, only a day before retirement.

Chief Felner noted a notice was sent to members of the firefighters' pension plan informing them that they must give 31-day notice of retirement. He also noted he has followed the contract and that in order to prevent similar situations in the future.

Selectman Michael Tetreau noted that he decided a review of the firefighter retirement process is needed after this was brought to his attention that some pensions recently had been increased by promotions for a series of firefighters, in some cases, only weeks before they retired. He also noted the Town will hire independent counsel and expects a lawyer to be selected within a few days.

The Board asked Selectman Tetreau that the list of over 20 questions regarding the promotions and retirement process be given to the lawyer hired to conduct the review, and that the lawyer's report be brought back to this Board.

4. To hear, consider and act upon a resolution appropriating \$4,195,013 for the costs associated with the remediation of Osborn Hill Elementary School relating to the discovery of PCBs contamination at the School and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation.

David Title, Superintendent of Schools, Phil Dwyer and Bill Silver, Architect, presented this item to the Board. This item was discussed at length.

Following discussion:

Chairman Flynn *moved* and Mary LeClerc *seconded* to change the language under paragraph two (2) and six (6) of the Bond Resolution to include the following:

2. To finance such appropriation and in lieu of tax therefor, and as recommended by the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman, the Town of Fairfield may borrow a sum not to exceed, in total, \$4,195,013 in two tranches, \$820,000 and \$3,375,013 and issue its general obligation bonds for such indebtedness under its corporate name and seal and upon the full faith and credit of the Town.

6. The Bonds may be designated "Public Improvement Bonds or School Bonds of the Town of Fairfield", series of the year of their issuance and may be issued in one or more series, and may be consolidated as part of the same issue with other bonds of the Town for the \$820,000 maturing in not more than five (5) annual installments of principal, the first installment to mature no later than three years from the date of issue for the \$3,375,013 totaling (\$4,195,013) series of issue shall mature in not more than twenty (20) annual installments of principal, the first installment to mature not later than three years from the date of issue and the last installment to mature twenty (20) years from the date of issuance.....

Chairman Flynn *moved* and Mary LeClerc *seconded* to amend the resolution appropriating \$4,195,013 in two tranches, totaling \$3,375,013 over twenty years, and \$820,000 over five years for the costs associated with the remediation of Osborn Hill Elementary School relating to the discovery of PCBs contamination at the School and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation

5. To hear, consider and act upon a resolution appropriating \$837,000 for the costs of certain non-recurring capital projects and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation.

Joseph Michelangelo, Director of Public Works, Ed McCourt, Jerry Lombardo, Director Parks and Recreation, Peter Grace presented this item to the Board.

This item was discussed at length.

Following discussion, the Board requested that the following items be brought back to the Board before voting on this item: Fire Station HVAC Improvements – show the energy savings and study. Golf Course –show traffic items and revenue to date.

Chairman Flynn *moved* and Robert Bellitto *seconded* to table this item to February 5, 2013 to discuss the requested follow up items for purpose of voting.

6. To hear, consider and act upon a resolution appropriating \$5,238,200 for the costs of certain projects to restore facilities damaged by Hurricane Sandy and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation.

A. To hear update on FEMA costs.

Due to the lateness of the hour, Robert Stone *moved* and Robert Bellitto *seconded* to table this item to a Special Meeting next week. *Motion passed unanimously*

7. To review follow-up request documents.

None heard.

8. To hear, consider and act upon any communications.

None heard.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Robert Belitto *moved* and Ken Brackfeld *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Josephine M. Keogh