

Town of Marlborough

Board of Finance Members

Michael Nastri, Chairman
Jeffrey Plourde, Vice Chairman
Robert Mirabal, Secretary
Liz Gorgoglione
Kenneth Hjulstrom
John (Jack) H Fidler



Board of Finance Alternate Members

Christopher Barella
Sal Sena
Karen Pakulis Paul

Board of Finance
Special Meeting Agenda
October 12, 2023
7:00 PM

Marlborough Elementary School Media Room

Minutes are considered "Draft Minutes" until approved at the next meeting.

1. Call to Order, Alternate Appointment

Call to order by Chairman Michael Nastri at 7:00PM.

Present at the meeting were Michael Nastri, Jeffrey Plourde, Kenneth Hjulstrom, Christopher Barella, John (Jack) Fidler, Sal Sena, Karen Pakuli Paul for Robert Mirabel

2. New Business

a. Discuss 2023/2024 Budget guidelines

Chairman Michael Nastri discussed the Kickoff meeting with the RHAM superintendent and Town Manager David Porter. Deb Bourbeau requested guidelines for moving forward.

Michael Nastri noted intending to keep the Mill Rate constant or slightly reduce if possible. Upcoming needs and challenges; preserve as much capital for capital improvements as possible. Debt payoffs, RHAM, etc.

Town Manager David Porter provided an Audit update: The Town has been sending information to auditors and anticipate finishing the progress by the end of October. Then the auditors will come on-site and prepare their 2022 Audit.

Michael Nastri expressed an expectation of having excess from 2022 and 2023 and they are looking closely at 5-year capital plan. Bonding for roads have been brought up.

Jeffrey Plourde brought up identifying anything not in the 5-year plan that has come up since, and know something will be coming up, should be considered and looked at.

Deb Bourbeau discussed more cost saving methods through Dept. of Public Works. Infrastructure is always a topic. Grants are always in the works. Example, boat ramps.

David Porter discussed:

- The storm water management, culvert replacement, end of useful life; given the severity of rainstorms, some are undersized. Pre-maintenance and removal. Road safety, maintenance and repair. Rolling five-year plan.
- Board of finance can help Town Manager send a message that Holly Hageman and David will work together to identify where shared services could be beneficial. There may be some opportunities where town and schools in CT have shared some/all of their finance functions. Explore sharing with the schools sharing those responsibilities due to overlap.
- Region 8 elementary schools – sharing some possible responsibilities.
- Encouraging Superintendent and Board of Ed to report back to Town Manager.
- Take a look at all of town functions in public works and beyond to identify opportunities to be financially prudent. Whether that means outsourcing or insourcing.
- Evaluate opportunities to automate certain things; Ex. Maintaining the soccer and baseball fields. Free up labor to be used for higher valued/skilled things.
- Need to discuss the revenue side of the equation. Residential and Commercial development conversations. Promoting economic development to increase tax base – more revenue without increasing the mill rate.
- Community development – events that bring people to Marlborough to support existing businesses and expand.

Ken Hjulstrom: Last spring during the facility repair meeting, motion passed to upgrade the building. \$70,000 in budget to complete it. \$70-80,000 more would finish it. Not currently up to standard.

Work to get sewers to other side of Rt. 2 for Business Park land – phase of sewers to pick up that area.

Karen Pakulis Paul noted the importance that all information shared by the Town Manager is shared with the town to keep people informed as to why money is being spent where it is.

Deb Bourdeau inquired which groups have been invited to the kickoff meeting. Michael Nastri identified RHAM, Holly Hageman, Board of Selectman, and David Porter. Deb suggested adding the Fire Commission and Library because of where the budget goes. David suggested inviting Chatham Health and AHM as well.

Ken Hjulstrom brought up the DOT garage to be purchased as a suggestion if that property becomes available. Facilities is rarely shared, if it makes sense to share and is agreed upon by both parties, it should be considered.

Michael Nastri suggested presentations be made for the Board of Selectmen and brought to Board of Finance; demonstrate the message at hand.

Sal Sena brought up the usage of CROGs, agencies that make things more streamlined and increase efficiencies. Due to a shortage of manpower, now more common practices.

Deb Bourdeau addressed the possibility of various town positions that can be shared – town administration costs. Ex. Assessors, building inspectors, school finance individual – duplicated job duties (school and town).

Ken Hjulstrom brought up bonding, with the interest rates high would it be more costly than years prior?

- David Porter explained that the town has a financial consultant that it uses to help the town through decisions like this. With interest rates higher, bonding now could lead to the use of Anticipatory Notes for shorter term money. These can be used for more immediate needs. Typically, Anticipatory Notes would have a higher interest rate than a long-term bond, but lower initial costs and would not be stuck paying a long interest rate at a higher rate.
- Bonding cannot occur right now because there is no audit. Projects will need to be laid out.
- This could affect bonding process in the future due to finishing the 2022 audit. Prior to bonding, David explained the town would need to select a rating agency to be rated. To qualify for a low interest rate, a high rating is desirable. Suggestion to catch up with the audits and complete one or two years of submitting audits on time to show this is sustainable.
- Deb Bourdeau addressed Karen's earlier communication comments. In January, meetings begin and it would be ideal for a way to have the Board of Selectman communicate to the public. Suggestion, weekly or bimonthly recaps of news going on in the River East. Information that people will want to know, in terms that people understand. Town Manager Monthly Update for example.

David Porter brought up the message he'd like to send is prioritizing maintenance that will help the facilities we have last as long as we can so that we can wait and bond at a more opportune time.

Ken Hjulstrom brought up the Transfer Station retaining walls are starting to disintegrate.

3. Public Commenta

None.

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Michael Nastri at 7:51PM Approved by Jeffrey Plourde and seconded by Sal Sena.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathryn Overturf Nohelty