



**THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021  
6:00 PM**

A Virtual Joint Board of Finance / Board of Selectmen Meeting for the Town of Woodbridge using Webex was held on Thursday, May 20, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Due to the Corona-19 Pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using Webex.

**BOF PRESENT:** Chairman, Matthew Giglietti; Vice Chairman, Paul Kuriakose; Tom Handler; Susan Jacobs; Tom Kenefick; Ellen Scalettar

**ALSO PRESENT:** Administrative Officer / Director of Finance, Anthony Genovese; Budget Analyst / Payroll and Benefits Administrator, Karen Crosby

Chairman Matthew Giglietti called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER / DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT**

Tony reported on actual revenues and expenditures through April 2021 with a projected year-end budget surplus of approximately \$238,000. Since the current Town budget includes an allocation from fund balance of \$400,000, projected decrease to fund balance at year end is \$163,000. Fund balance at 6/30/2021 is projected to be \$6.33M or 12.70% of annual projected expenses.

Revenues

Taxes – At the time of this report tax collections were to be on budget but since then there have been some collections on back taxes and their will probably be a surplus there.

Intergovernmental Revenues – projected to generate a surplus of \$159,708 for fiscal year 2021 primarily due to the receipt of \$163,320 in Corona Virus Relief and FEMA funds to offset COVID-19 related costs from FY20, a projected surplus in special education excess cost funds, and an additional \$23,574 in ECS funding.

Investment Income – projected to experience a deficit of \$130,000 at the end of the year due to low short term interest rates.

Charge for Services – projected to experience a deficit of \$48,332. There is an anticipated shortfall of \$110,000 in transfer station fees. The transfer station fee shortfall is offset by a projected surplus of \$20,000 in town clerk fees, \$20,000 in building permits, and \$7,500 in public safety fees.

Transfers In – Due to a reduction in the amount of private duty in the police department, private duty revenues are projected to experience a deficit of \$55,000. Since private duty revenues are designed to reimburse the Town for benefit costs related to private duty, there is a corresponding surplus in benefit expenditures.

Expenses

Building Official – projected to experience a surplus of \$20,000 due to savings in part time wages.

Transfer Station – projected to generate a surplus of \$50,000. A surplus of \$85,000 in waste disposal fees and wages is offset by an increase in recycling and bulky waste costs.

Human Services – projected to experience a surplus of \$30,000 primarily due to savings in wages.

Benefits – expected to generate a surplus of \$215,000 due to a lower than anticipated workers compensation premium, savings in healthcare, and a reduction in private duty benefit costs due to reduced private duty assignments in the police department.

The Board of Education has reported a possible surplus this year.

**UPDATE ON BUDGET STATUS**

Tony reported that the new date for the continued Annual Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 and residents can start checking in at 5:30 pm.

Ellen stated that just in case anyone is interested, are masks required. Tony stated that masks will be required, and a postcard will be sent with all the details.

**FUNDING REQUESTS**

2021-24	Allocation.....	\$8,000 (Line Item Transfer)
	To: Parks/Groundskeeping Services	1520-00/53400
	From: Parks/Regular All Other (Wages)	1520-00/50240
	For: Contractor to assist with mowing due to severe manpower shortage	
	Vote: (Giglietti/Kenefick) - Unanimous	

2021-25	Allocation.....	\$15,198.78 (Line Item Transfer)
	To: CNR-Selectmen/Non-Building Improvements	302-
11000/57300/BIKE	From; Revenue/Miscellaneous Grants	1-2-
1100/42600	For: Transfer Grant and Donations funds to Bike Route Capital Project	
	Vote: (Giglietti/Kuriakose) – Unanimous	

**APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

Tony reported that he put out an RFP for auditing services and received five responses. The low bidder was RSM. It is a multi-year proposal.

The Board of Finance voted (Kenefick/Handler) to appoint RSM as auditors for fiscal year 2021.

Ellen stated as chair of the Woodbridge Diversity and Inclusion Committee, one of the areas that is important is the diversity of the Town and who we contract with. She wants to be sure that we put out RFP's and advertise in different ways to reach a diversified pool of vendors. The Committee has not come up with a policy on this yet but hopes it is being done at this time.

Tony stated that he would like to hear their recommendations.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION RE: CAPITAL PROJECTS**

Matt stated that this will be voted on at an in-person Town Meeting. The Board of Finance job Tony stated that the process will be once the Board of Finance decides to recommend these projects to be brought to a Town Meeting, Bond Counsel will then draw up all of the documents and then the Board of Finance will meet to approve the documents then the Board of Selectmen will call the Town Meeting. It used to be that the projects would be bundle the projects and there would be one bond issue. Since then, the IRS has tightened up regulations surrounding this. Bond Counsel has strongly encouraged the Town to vote on the projects individually.

Tom Kenefick asked if there was any allowance in the figures for the escalation in construction costs. Tony stated that the escalation of costs in the "Soft Costs" list.

Matt reviewed each of the projects individually as listed below:

- Former Firehouse – renovations to the former firehouse to be used as a Town Community Center and other related uses totaling \$1,821,617
- Storage Facility – a Storage Facility to be placed in the rear of the Town Firehouse to store fire department equipment totaling \$628,950
- Senior Center – repairs and renovations to the senior center totaling \$455,339
- Beecher School Roofs – refurbishment to roofs on the K-wing, D-wing, and library at Beecher Road School totaling \$575,500. Tony stated that they are looking for sources for project reimbursements

- Sidewalks – sidewalks and streetscape improvements from Amity High School to the center of Town totaling \$390,000

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- CCW Demolition – demolition of all structures on the former Country Club of Woodbridge property totaling \$766,435.

The funding sources of each project was provided to the board members.

Discussion on the projects ensued. Tom Kenefick is concerned that the figure for the demolition of structures at the country club property is not enough. Tom Handler asked if the Town could give the group a certain amount of time to sell the building at the country club but still include the figure in the bonding and if it does not get sold, then it can be demolished.

Ellen stated that we have gone through this many times with the country club property. The Town has shown the property to people who were interested, and it is still empty. Ellen asked if anyone has come forward recently with any interest in the building. Tony stated that there has not been any recent interest. The projects will be voted on individually at the Town Meeting and all those that are approved will be bundled for the bonding.

The Board of Finance voted (Giglietti/Scalettar) unanimously to recommend that the Board of Finance send this back to the Board of Selectmen to schedule a Town Meeting for the consideration of bond issue of \$4,307,000 and total project costs of \$4,635,841.

Tony Genovese left the meeting at 6:40 pm

#### **PRELIMINARY SUSPENSE LIST**

Per State Statute the accounts will be transferred to suspense and will be removed from consideration as assets of the Town but are not abated as tax liability against whom it was levied. Personal property, motor vehicle and real estate suspense taxes can and will be collected whenever possible.

Matt explained that these accounts are removed from the balance sheet, but the tax collector continues to pursue these on an ongoing basis.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Board of Finance voted (Giglietti/Handler) unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2021 meeting.

#### **FIRST SELCTMAN'S REPORT**

None

## **LIAISON REPORTS**

Amity – Matt reported that there is nothing earth shattering at the last meeting. Matt stated for people who are watching, the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 and he wants to review the process. Residents take the budget and if they want a budget reduction, they must go to each department and look at the various line items and make a motion to cut an amount from that line item. There will then be a vote to see if the motion passes by 60% or more. There must be 250 people in attendance. After each motion, a count to be sure there are 250 people (needed for a quorum), then the vote will take place to see if it passes by at least 60%. Once there is not a quorum, the meeting will be over.

Matt stated that there are four budgets that make up 75% the total budget – Amity, which can't be touched as it was approved at a referendum; Debt Service can't be touched because we have to pay the debt; Employee Benefits can't be touched due to contractual obligations for medical and pension costs (only OPEB contribution can be cut); then there is the Beecher budget which can be cut on the total amount only, not a specific line item. The Board of Education budget can not set the Board of Education below what their previous budget was. That leaves 25% of the budget which is all the other departments combined. Over the past 5 or 6 years we have actually reduced what has been spent on the departments outside of the four departments listed above. Positions have been eliminated and costs have been cut. Residents will have to go into the various departments and tell the Boards where and what line item they want to cut. He hopes that people are watching and that the instructions are clear. There cannot be motions for a 5% budget cut or a certain dollar amount to be cut from the bottom line.

Human Services – Ellen reported that at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting it was reported that Human Services is working with the Library and Recreation for Summer 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday events. The first event is a Community Taag Sale on June 12<sup>th</sup>. The Center reopened for in-person programming on April 15<sup>th</sup>. They also worked with other agencies to deliver vaccines at home to the homebound.

Woodbridge Finance Committee – Tom Handler attended the meeting, and they are looking at a \$28,000 surplus. They are expecting a second wave of money, a large amount, to be used for innovation. The SRO topic has come up again. The committee that was formed had tabled the topic until the new superintendent came on board. They were going to meet in April, but the legislature was discussing SRO's in schools and what to do with them. They decided to wait and see what was done in Hartford concerning SRO's in schools.

Library – Susan reported that the library is continuing to normalize.

Fire – Susan stated that they are meeting next week.

Police – Paul reported that they were unable to meet due to technical difficulties.

Recreation – Tom Kenefick reported that they have been conducting programs and John Adamovich has been visiting the fields to be sure people are adhering to the masking rules. That will be evaluated after the 19<sup>th</sup>. The pool is getting ready for summer, and they have been open by appointment only. They are going to evaluate opening for more days for the pool. Summer concerts are a go for this year. They will try to get an ice cream

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truck. The Fitness Center has been operating well on Saturdays and Sundays. When the Center Building opens, they will be open for more days. The Road Race has been approved for October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Matt stated that the Annual Town Meeting will be on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 pm and check-in starts at 5:30 pm. The Board of Finance will meet at the end of the Annual Town Meeting to set the mill rate.

Susan stated that as clumsy and difficult as that meeting was, the meeting date was set long ago. It was driven by Covid protocols. We had no discretion at that point but to set it up that way. This was not done for any reason other than to follow the procedures set forth in Covid protocols for everyone's safety. Susan said it is important to understand this.

The Board of Finance voted (Kenefick/Scalettar) unanimously to adjourn at 7:01 p.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Crosby

Karen Crosby

Budget Analyst

Payroll and Benefits Administrator