



Town of Griswold

Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
November 16, 2021
7:00 PM

Town Hall Meeting Room
MINUTES



Valerie Grills
2021 NOV 23 PM 12:24

1. **Roll Call/Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM**

Board of Finance Members Present:

Scott Davis – Chairman
Alex Grzelak – Vice Chairman
Gary Beaulac
Valerie Grills
Tom Palasky
Gail Rooke-Norman
Daniel Webster

Also Present:

Dana Bennett, First Selectmen
Erik Christensen, Director of Finance
Rob Parrette, Chairman, Senior Center Building Committee
David Fritz, Project Manager PAC
Lou Demicco III, Chief, Jewett City Volunteer Fire Department
Karen B. LaFreniere, Recording Secretary
11 Other People

2. **Public Forum**

No one wished to speak.

3. **Approval of minutes**

a. **October 19, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes.**

MOTION: G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by D. Webster to approve the October 19, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. All in favor except for T. Palasky who abstained; **motion carried.**

4. **New Business**

a. **Introduction of new Board members and comments from Chairman regarding duties/purview of Board**

S. Davis welcomed and introduced the new Board members Tom Palasky and Gary Beaulac. S. Davis stated the Board of Finance prepares the budget, makes sure the budget is adhered to and approves transfers. They also set the mil rate and handle appropriations. The Board of Finance does not deal with the day-to-day operations of the town. That is up to the First Selectmen and the Board of Selectmen. They also don't get involved in the Board of Education or their line items. The Board of Finance does have a fiduciary responsibility for the health and welfare for the finances of the town.

b. Discussion and possible action on election of officers.

Chairman:

Motion: Gary Beaulac made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to nominate S. Davis for Chairman of the Board of Finance. G. Beaulac, S. Davis, and G. Rooke-Norman voted in favor, V. Grills, A. Grzelak, T. Palasky and D. Webster opposed; **motion failed**.

V. Grills made a **motion** that was seconded by D. Webster to nominate A. Grzelak for Chairman of the Board of Finance. V. Grills, A. Grzelak, T. Palasky and D. Webster voted in favor, G. Beaulac, S. Davis, and G. Rooke-Norman opposed; **motion carried**. A. Grzelak voted Chairman of the Board of Finance.

Vice – Chairman:

Motion: V. Grills made a **motion** that was seconded by A. Grzelak to nominate D. Webster for Vice Chairman of the Board of Finance. S. Davis, V. Grills, A. Grzelak, T. Palasky and D. Webster voted in favor, G. Beaulac and G. Rooke-Norman abstained; **motion carried**. D. Webster voted Vice Chairman of the Board of Finance.

Secretary:

Motion: Tom Palasky made a **motion** that was seconded by D. Webster to nominate V. Grills for Secretary of the Board of Finance. All in favor with the exception of G. Rooke-Norman who abstained; **motion carried**. V. Grills **voted** in as Secretary of the Board of Finance.

c. Finance Directors monthly report.

The revenues recorded to date for FY2022 are \$13,394,846.93 or 35.48% of budgeted revenues. E. Christensen stated his only concern is the Distressed Municipality Grant. The State approved money through bonding and created the Community Investment fund 2030. This money is for distressed municipalities. The Town of Griswold is one of the 34 towns eligible for this money. They are allocating \$175 million each year for the next five years. E. Christensen's concern is they must submit this request to the Bond Commission and the Bond Commission must approve the funds. They are not taking applications for funds until May 2022. They won't decide about the funds until July 2022. So, the town wouldn't even get the funds this fiscal year. All major capital projects are still at a standstill. E. Christensen recommended not counting on this money and have the Capital Improvement Committee see what was allocated for these funds from last year and make cuts in the amount of \$524,960 to the capital plan. G. Rooke-Norman requested First Selectmen D. Bennett contact both our State Rep and State Senator regarding this matter. Also, she would like the First Selectmen and the State Rep at least present at the next Capital Improvements Committee meeting. The expenditures recorded to date are \$8,274,671.36 or 21.91% of budgeted expenditures. There are no new line items that are overspent for this fiscal year. At this point E. Christensen doesn't have any real concerns with the budget for this year.

d. Discussion and possible action on entering into a lease purchase for a fire truck and plow truck.

E. Christensen stated the Capital Improvement Committee as part of the towns five-year capital plan included a fire truck and plow truck to be leased purchased. The Board of Selectmen have authorized the First Selectmen to sign the lease purchase provided the funds are available. The town had budgeted \$170,000 in anticipation of entering another lease

purchase. The best rate E. Christensen could find was 2.34% for six years. The payment amount would be \$167,628. This payment amount could be reduced if we find any savings. We don't have a final price on a plow truck yet. L. Demicco stated his 30-year-old fire truck needs to be replaced. The maintenance on the truck is starting to catch up on it. The pump was replaced on the truck about eight years ago. If the Board of Finance agrees to the lease purchase this truck will go into reserve. The truck that is in reserve now will probably be sent out. It is nice to have a reserve truck, but it also helps with the ISO rating for insurance. The committee tried to build a low manpower truck because during the day manpower is down. L. Demicco is going through state bid which is through Sourcewell. The school system also uses Sourcewell so that did help get the discounts we needed. L. Demicco states if the Board of Finance agrees to this by November 29, 2021, the price will stay at \$750,000. If not, then the price will go up 5% which about \$37,000. It is possible some of the discounts will go up too. **Motion:** S. Davis made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Beaulac to approve the six-year lease purchase for a new fire truck and plow truck as presented. All in favor; **motion carried.**

5. Old Business

a. Discussion and possible action on report from Senior Center Building Committee Chairman. Finance Directors monthly report.

The project is moving along. PAC is back on sight. D. Fritz, Project Manager gave an update on the status of the project. First coat of paint is on the walls, drop ceilings are going in, the tile has been selected ordered and going in this week, HVAC is next week, operable partition starts this week, steel fabricator will be up this Thursday. The holdups are the extruded metals like drawer runners and pull handles. The supply chain on extruded metals is about six to seven weeks out. Also, the generator is in process, but they can't get a final date from the manufacturer. PAC has weekly meeting again on site to go over any issues they may be having. Some prices have gone up and they would like to do zero balance transfers from one allocation to another to cover the increase of price on certain items. The General Conditions amount PAC had to cover the remainder of the project is not going to be enough. PAC has gone back through and revaluated the General Conditions. PAC had carried over \$21,000 for the General Conditions which was going to be paid out of the Covid Relief Fund which they haven't touched. The General Conditions is everything that has not been billed from January-October 2021 such as precuring subs, subs contracts, dumpster costs and porta potty costs. R. Parrette states when they got the USDA money, they were able to give back \$197,000 to the town. The town already has \$52,800 set aside for this project. If they take the \$197,000 back, they would only be taking the net of the two figures \$144,200. R. Parrette was asked if there is a possibility that costs can go up again and they could be looking for additional funds. He responded absolutely not. The town was approved for a 1.2-million-dollar grant through State bond funds for the new Senior Center. It is in the state budget which is a two-year budget. The appropriation is on the agenda for January 2022. Groton, CT has a project they can't start yet. They want the state to give all the money up front \$1.2 million to the Town of Griswold instead of \$600,000 in January 2022 and \$600,000 following year. PAC has agreed to not invoice the town for the project costs until we receive the bond money from the state then the town can pay PAC.

Motion: S. Davis made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Beaulac to amend the not to exceed spending amounts set forth approved by the Board of Finance from previous motions in the following categories and dollar amounts leading to a zero dollar increase:

Library Bookcases (\$21,097.00)

Kitchen Equipment (\$3,515.00)
CACT Ceiling Package (\$922.00)
Interior Signage (\$1,245.00)
Operable Partition \$1,996.00
Window Treatments \$4,066.00
Paint Package \$4,360.00
Visual Display Boards \$657.00
Projection Screen Package \$282.00
Fire Extinguisher Package \$91.00
Lighting \$4,500.00
Storage Closet Shelving \$27.00
Wall Protection \$5,800.00
Plumbing \$2,500.00
HVAC \$2,500.00

G. Beaulac, S. Davis, A. Grzelak, T. Palasky, and G. Rooke-Norman voted in favor, D. Webster and V. Grills opposed; **motion carried.**

b. Update and discussion on bonding projects.

For the water and sewer, Fuss & O'Neil is still working on the design. There are no real updates on water and sewer. A. Grzelak asked the First Selectmen to try and see if she could get project moving faster. He feels this whole process is taking way to long.

6. Any Other Business

Motion: D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by V. Grills to have the Capital Improvement Committee consider and recommend to the Board of Finance cuts to be made to the current capital plan in the amount of \$524,960. All in favor; **motion carried.**

A. Grzelak questioned E. Christensen how the Pegpetia Grant is coming along? E. Christensen met with the person who oversees getting the application put through. He said the application must be in by January 2022. E. Christensen is working with him on getting the application filled out this week. This grant will allow the town to be able to put in a system in the Meeting Room to stream meetings for the public.

A. Grzelak requested for the next meeting E. Christensen bring the following information to the next Board of Finance meeting. What the towns surplus is and what percent of the budget that is.

7. Public Forum

No one wished to speak.

8. Adjournment

D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by V. Grills to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 P.M. All in favor; **motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen B. LaFreniere,
Recording Secretary