



# Town of Griswold

Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
November 21, 2017  
7:00 PM

Town Hall Meeting Room  
MINUTES



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

**Board of Finance Members Present:**

Scott Davis – Chairman  
Brian Baker – Vice Chairman  
Steve Mikutel  
Gary Levy  
Gail Rooke-Norman  
Valerie Grills  
Daniel Webster

**Also Present:**

Erik Christensen, Director of Finance  
Jeannette Bell, Recording Secretary  
Sean McKenna, Superintendent of Griswold Schools  
Todd Babbitt, First Selectman  
10 Other People

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Public Forum**

S. Davis welcomed the new Board of Finance members, Steve Mikutel and Valerie Grills. He also welcomed the new First Selectman, Todd Babbitt.

**4. Approval of Minutes:**

**a. October 17, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes.**

**MOTION:** G. Levy made a **motion** that was seconded by B. Baker to approve the October 17, 2017 as presented. All in favor; **motion carried** with Daniel Webster and Valerie Grills abstaining.

**5. New Business**

**a. Finance Director Monthly Report.**

E. Christensen stated the revenues recorded to date are \$13,844,067.87 or 38.99% of budgeted revenues. At the time the revenues were prepared we would stand to lose a net of \$31,293.00 from the state. However, with the new numbers and cuts to municipalities that loss is now at \$919,784.00. Due to this new development the latest cut in funding from the State is a major concern. E. Christensen stated the expenditures recorded to date are \$7,263,821.66 or 20.46% of budgeted expenditure. He stated there are a few line items overspent but no concerns at this time. E. Christensen stated that our undesignated fund

balance is 3.8 million which amounts to 10.78%. S. Mikutel stated that we should try to stay somewhere between 11-15%. S. Mikutel also commented that Malloy targeted the financially responsible towns and feels the Legislature should be held accountable.

**b. Discussion and possible action on setting 2018 meeting schedule.**

E. Christensen suggested to continue holding the meetings on the third Tuesday of every month at 7PM. **MOTION:** D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by B. Baker to set the regular Board of Finance meetings for the third Tuesday of every month at 7PM in the downstairs meeting room. All in favor; **motion carried.**

**c. Discussion and possible action on election of officers.**

G. Rooke-Norman nominated S. Davis for Chairman. S. Mikutel seconded the nomination. S. Davis asked for any other nominations, after hearing none he asked for a vote. All in favor; **motion carried.** D. Webster nominated B. Baker for Vice Chairman. G. Levy nominated S. Mikutel for Vice Chairman. S. Davis asked for any other nominations, after hearing none he asked for a vote. All in favor of B. Baker for Vice Chairman; D. Webster, B. Baker and V. Grills voted yes. All in favor of S. Mikutel for Vice Chairman; S. Mikutel, S. Davis, G. Rooke-Norman and G. Levy voted yes. **Motion carried** with S. Mikutel for Vice Chairman with 4 votes to B. Baker with 3 votes. G. Rooke-Norman nominated G. Levy for Secretary. S. Davis asked for any other nominations, after hearing none he asked for a vote. All in favor, **motion carried.**

**6. Old Business**

**a. Discussion and possible action on BOF policies as recommended by audit.**

S. Davis brought the new Board of Finance members up to date on the audit. E. Christensen stated he had reached out to several other towns regarding their policy in handling their Parks and Recreation cash handling. The ones he contacted did not have a firm policy in place or they were working on getting one. S. Davis suggested to table this item until the next Board of Finance meeting in order to get all new members on board. **MOTION:** D Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Mikutel to table this until the next Regular Board of Finance meeting. All in favor; **motion carried.**

**7. Any Other Business**

G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Mikutel to add to any other business any budget related updates or items and also the pipeline update at the schools. All in favor; **motion carried.** Shawn McKenna stated he heard a special session might possibly be called to address the cuts to the municipalities however he is not confident it can be resolved. S. Norman stated we could attract more tuition students however that would not be a fix for this budget year. S. Davis stated the tax letter asking tax payers to pay their tax bill ahead of time in order to generate revenue did not go out due to the fact the budget was passed with a \$31,000 cut to the town. He also touched on the point of a supplemental tax bill being sent out. E. Christensen stated a house with an assessed value of \$150,000 would see an increase of \$187.50 if a 1 ¼ mil increase were imposed. S. Mikutel stated the Town and the Board of Education needs strict spending controls. G. Rooke-Norman felt it was a mistake not to send out the letter requesting early payment of taxes. Regarding the gas line project S. Davis stated the numbers came back higher than anticipated at the middle school. There appears to be an issue with the chimney. The consensus of the Board feels the need to have a committee formed through the Board of Selectmen and an energy analysis

company needs to be called in to give their insight as to any unknown issues or questions. T. Babbitt stated the Board of Selectmen will meet Tuesday to appoint that committee. It was also noted that the contract has been signed with Eversource by the previous Board of Selectmen.

S. Davis polled the Board of Finance members on whether to wait another month or should we institute something at this point on the budgets. The Board asked both budgets for a preliminary report in December and an expanded report in January. S. McKenna stated the Board of Education was still on a freeze. E. Christensen stated the Town had lifted their freeze due to the budget being passed. **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by B. Baker to implement a hard freeze on expenditures for both the Board of Education and the Town. All in favor; **motion carried.**

There was further discussion regarding reports from both budgets with the amounts postponed for payment. S. Davis asked S. McKenna and T. Babbitt for a list of what was saved and also a list of their priority of where to make cuts and the dollar amount associated with each one to be presented at the next meeting. **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to table until the next Regular scheduled Board of Finance meeting. All in favor; **motion carried.**

**MOTION:** S. Mikutel made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to discuss and possibly act on a contract between the outgoing Board of Selectmen and the Finance Director. **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** to go into Executive Discussion. It was decided to bring up the original **motion** at this point and it can be amended if needed. B. Baker stated he understood there was another contract signed as well and stated we might as well include that one in the discussion as well. There was discussion as to whether the other person had to be present to discuss the other contract. G. Rooke-Norman withdrew her second. **MOTION:** S. Mikutel amended his **motion** which was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to state he wanted to discuss and possibly act on the contract signed by the outgoing BOS and the Finance Director and also the contract signed by the outgoing BOS and the Executive Assistant. There was further discussion as to whether Executive Session could be added to any other Business. S. Mikutel stated his **motion** was to bring it onto any other business and have someone else make a **motion** for Executive Session. **MOTION:** S. Mikutel made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to bring this item onto the agenda. All in favor with D. Webster opposed; **motion carried.** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to go into Executive Session and invite the First Selectman to attend for the purpose of discussing the contracts with personnel. There was continued discussion. S. Davis explained the fiduciary authority of the Board of Finance is to fund or not fund. The Board of Finance does not have the authority to negotiate a contract only fund it. There was much discussion between the board members. S. Mikutel withdrew his second and G. Rooke-Norman amended her **motion.** **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Mikutel to go into Executive Session and invite the First Selectman and Erik Christensen. There was much discussion again. All in favor; S. Mikutel raised his hand; **motion failed.** **MOTION:** B. Baker made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to place an item on the agenda for executive session to discuss personnel contracts. There was more discussion. B. Baker amended his **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to include inviting the first Selectman. All in favor; **motion carried.** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Mikutel to table the discussion of contracts until the next regular meeting. All in favor with D. Webster opposing; **motion carried.** S. Mikutel stated he would like the Board of Finance members to have copies of the contracts. G. Rooke-Norman stated she would like

to have the town attorney present for discussion of the contracts however, not the attorney which was involved with the drafting of the contracts.

**8. Public Forum**

S. Norman- hoped the percentage is not the total money spent. Feels the percentage should be based upon the amount of money the townspeople are putting into the budget.

J. Barnie- Believes if we add another 1 ¼ mil increase to the budget that will equal a 2 mil increase. Believes the budget needs monitoring much sooner than the BOF is doing.

N. Higgins- Believes the Board of Finance as well as all boards do a great job for the town. He believes in turning the land at the school into wind and solar power. He feels the Selectmen should come before the Board of Finance to ask for money.

**9. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** G. Levy made a **motion** that was seconded by D. Webster to adjourn the meeting at 8:51PM. All in favor; **motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeannette Bell  
Recording Secretary