



Town of Griswold

Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
September 19, 2017
7:00 PM

Griswold Middle School Auditorium
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

Peter Dorff

Gary Levy

Gail Rooke-Norman

John Wolkowski arrived at 7:02

Also Present:

Erik Christensen, Director of Finance

Jeannette Bell, Recording Secretary

67 Other People

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Forum

Ed Burdick-Voluntown Rd - Wants the Board of Finance to consider allocating the \$75,000 to fight the gun range. Believes the State is broke and should not be building a gun range.

Joseph Willis-Roode Rd – Wants the town to put up the money to fight the gun range. Believes it will affect all real estate property values in the 06351 area. \$75,000 is pennies to put up to fight the gun range.

LaDonna Cardin-Bitgood Rd – Another town had a smaller gun range come in which dropped the property values by 6%. If property values drop how do we fund the school budget.

David Vieux-Leha Ave – Believes with the proposed gun range he would lose the tranquility of life which he moved here for. He is in favor of the \$75,000.

Allison Joslyn-Lester Rd – Opposes the gun range due to environmental reasons.

Ryan Snide-Tatro Rd – Says he owes a business in town and will leave if the gun range comes here.

Claudia Manville-Culver Rd – She retired to Pachaug Forest for the peace and quiet. Is in favor of the \$75,000 to fight the gun range. Also believes the gun range is not fiscally responsible.

Katarzyna Bakhshalizade – Dawley Rd – They built their dream home in Griswold and would like not to have to move from the area. She is in favor of the \$75,000 to fight the gun range.

Alan Cornelius – Hopeville Rd – Believes the State of Connecticut is broke. The town is receiving less money from the State and if the gun range was built we would need to pave roads and the burden would be on the town.

Jim Nagle – Stonehill Rd – Is against the \$75,000 to fight the gun range. He believes the town needs the money for roads and bridges. He suggested the group raise their own money and not ask to use town money. No matter what, he believes the gun range cannot be stopped.

Darlene Zuraw - Lester Rd – She stated she was under the understanding that the \$75,000 was not coming from tax payer money but from a rainy day fund.

Janet Barbour - Roode Rd – She believes \$75,000 is not a huge amount when the unassigned fund balance is 3.7 million.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. August 15, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION: G. Rooke-Noman made a **motion** that was seconded by Brian Baker to approve the minutes as presented. All in favor with D. Webster abstaining; **motion carried.**

5. New Business

a. Finance Director Monthly Report.

E. Christensen stated the revenues recorded to date are \$10,712,929.70 or 30.17% of budgeted revenues. He also stated there are still unknowns with what is going on with the State budget and other than that there are no major concerns at this time. Expenditures recorded to date are \$4,221,334.87 or 11.89% of budgeted expenditures. He stated there are no concerns at this point and no line items have been over expended thus far. E. Christensen did note the auditors will be here next month and he will have final figures for the 2016/2017 FY.

b. Discussion and possible action regarding State budget and FY 17/18 town budget.

S. Davis expressed his concern with the State budget. E. Christensen stated the town will run out of money in early December if no budget is passed. There was some discussion on how to proceed with FY 17/18 and what options are available. It was noted the budget talks will resume in Hartford on Friday and hopefully we will have a better understanding as to where we stand with monies being received from the State.

c. Discussion and possible action on recommendation for the possible change over to natural gas at the school campus.

Eversource has proposed a conversion from oil to natural gas with a zero cost to the town to install the gas lines and service all three schools by combining with another project they are currently working on. They have also assured us that we can also shop around for other suppliers for the natural gas. Eversource requires a 25 year contract to be signed with them in order to secure there is no cost to the town for the lines or services. Time is of the essence as they are looking for a signing of the contract somewhere between Oct 15 and Nov 1. There were many questions between the Board of Finance members and the Capital Committee as well as other people regarding the length of the contract as well as the cost of the gas being supplied. **MOTION:** D. Webster made a motion that was seconded by B. Baker to table until a Special Meeting with a date yet to be set. All in favor; motion carried.

d. Discussion and possible action on request from Board of Selectmen for additional appropriation of \$75,000 for legal fees to oppose a State Police firing range being built in Griswold.

There was much discussion within the Board of Finance members regarding this. Many on the board felt it would be opening Pandora's box and setting a precedent for any other groups or citizens to oppose a project. They also felt the \$75,000 was just the tip of the iceberg as to what might possibly be needed to fight The State of Connecticut. They had

noted how other special interest groups had raised money through fundraisers and had approached their objections without money from the town. K. Skulczyck had stated the State does not have the money to build the proposed gun range and asked the Board of Finance to send the proposal to a Referendum for the people to vote on. **MOTION:** P. Dorff made a motion to send the \$75,000 request for legal fees to oppose the State Police firing range to Referendum. After hearing no second; **motion died on the floor.**

6. Old Business

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

E. Christensen stated that the policies and procedures were in place for cash flow.

7. Any Other Business

The question was asked for more information on the boilers as to the cost and savings regarding the dual fired boilers. There are also many questions on the proposed gas line installation.

8. Public Forum

Joseph Willis - Roode Rd – Believes natural gas is not efficient for a 10 year contract never mind a 25 year contract. He would like the Board of Finance to reconsider their decision and appropriate the \$75,000.

LaDonna Cardin - Bishop Crossing Rd – Asked where do you draw the line and what is considered a special interest group.

Tony Cardin - Bishop Crossing Rd – Said the Board of Finance did not listen to the townspeople and says 200 signatures are needed to petition to go to a referendum.

Lynn Cassidy - Campbell Rd – She believes the taxpayer voice should matter.

Ed Burdick - Voluntown Rd – Believes the town is being prudent with the unassigned fund balance. He believes the Board of Finance should meet halfway with the appropriations.

Pam Patalano - Hopeville Rd – Believes the town leadership asked for \$75,000 not private persons.

Sharon Viadella - Lester Rd – Fears her quiet neighborhood will now become a constant pop pop sound. She is upset with the officials with how the taxpayers are being treated.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by J. Wolkowski to adjourn the meeting at 8:55PM. All in favor; **motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeannette Bell
Acting Recording Secretary