



Town of Griswold

Board of Finance
Special Meeting
March 10, 2015
7:00 PM

Griswold Senior Center
APPROVED MINUTES



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

Board of Finance Members Present:

Steve Merchant, Sr. – Chairman
Gail Rooke-Norman – Vice Chairman
Brian Baker
Scott Davis
Peter Dorff
Gary Levy
Dan Webster

Also Present:

Erik Christensen, Director of Finance
Jeannette Bell, Recording Secretary
Kevin Skulczyck, First Selectman - arrived at 7:05PM
Valerie Pudvah, Town Clerk
Richard Grabowski, Tax Collector
Todd Babbitt, Director of Public Works
Evelyn Spagnolo, Assessor
3 Other People

2. New Business

a) Discussion and possible action on the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget Calendar

Erik Christensen asked the Board is in agreement to reschedule the public hearing to April 7, 2015 at 7:00 at the Middle School due to scheduling conflicts.

MOTION: D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by B. Baker to set the public hearing date at April 7, 2015. All in favor; **motion carried.**

b) Update from the First Selectman regarding grand list

(This item was discussed during item 3a when First Selectman arrived) K. Skulczyck informed the Board of Finance that the Grand List was finalized and the Assessor and her assistants that were helping the Town finalize the Grand List added an additional \$6,448,764 in property values from the previous year.

3). Old Business

a) Discussion and possible action on the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget

1501 – Town Clerk – V. Pudvah outlined the department budget. **5200 Travel** increased by \$300 due to the Assistant Town Clerk traveling to Town Clerk school. **5202 Meetings and Dues** should continue to stay at \$1,200 due to schooling for the assistant as well. **5406 Service Contracts/ Leases** up slightly due to the lease on the new copier costing

more. **5428A Land Record/Update Code Book** increased by \$2,000 due to an increase in ordinance updates. **5412 Index and Recording** increased \$1,500 due to a monthly increase by Cott Systems of \$127. V. Pudvah also stated she is not happy with Cott due to numerous issues and may look into other vendors.

1302 –Tax Collector – G. Levy recused himself and left the room at 7:11 PM due to his wife K. Levy being the Assistant Tax Collector. R. Grabowski outlined the department budget. He stated he had requested 3% in his salary but the BOS reduced it to 2.5%. He would like the BOF to consider increasing it back to 3%. **5212 Postage** was reduced by \$5,000 as a result of the tax bill vendor directly mailing out the bills. **5406 Service Contracts/ Leases** being increased due to direct mailings would be done by a contractor and not by the Tax Collector’s Department. **5121 DMV Collection Fee** might also be reduced to zero depending on what the State does. Questions were asked regarding the pay for the Assistant Tax Collector. It was noted by E. Christensen that the increase was due to the bump in pay for assistants in the union contract to get them all at the same level. G. Levy returned at 7:22 PM

1303 – Assessor – E. Christensen stated that he along with K. Skulczyck put together the Assessor’s budget prior to the new Assessor being hired but discussed it with E. Spagnolo when she was hired. He stated he and E. Spagnolo would both be happy to answer questions related to the budget. **5101E Assistant Assessor** was increased to reflect a full-time person. It was clearly stated this is a much needed position due to the issues regarding lost revenue. K. Skulczyck also noted this should be a full-time position in order to avoid any further mishandlings resulting in lost revenue. **5145 Health Insurance** increased in regard to the Assistant Assessor. **5150 FICA** and **5155 Pension** also increased due to the potential full-time Assistant Assessor. E. Christensen noted if the Assistant was reduced to part-time the savings would be approximately \$44,000.

1801 – Maintenance of Town Hall 28 Main – T. Babbitt outlined the department budget. **5230 Heating Fuel** was reduced by \$1,500 due to the price decrease and past history. **5234 Building Repairs** increased \$5,000. T. Babbitt would like the carpets replaced in the first and second floor as well as the outside trim on the building painted. The carpet replacement would be done in house and the painting would be contracted out. B Baker and G. Rooke-Norman asked for quotes for wrapping the trim. T. Babbitt said he would get that as well.

1802 – Maintenance of Town Bldg – Pachaug – 5234 Building Repair increased due to repair to the furnace room and oil tank area. T. Babbitt stated the access is very poor and the oil tank is currently not supported as it should be.

1803 – Maintenance of Town Bldg - Highway Garage all line items remained the same. **5234 Building Repairs** remained the same due to possible generator repair.

3201 – Highway Department – T. Babbitt outlined the department budget. **5101 Regular Payroll** was requested for an increase in order to add a full-time light truck driver in lieu of the Seasonal Maintainer. The BOS declined that request; however T. Babbitt would like to see the BOF consider adding it back in. **5102 Director of Public Works** is a 2.5% increase and also an additional \$2,000 per year. T. Babbitt stated he is underpaid at \$75,800 when comparing to towns in the area which are at \$80,000 to \$100,000. **5105E Seasonal Maintainer** the BOS when putting the Seasonal Maintainer

position back in added \$2,000 to try to get through the full mowing season. **5120H Tree Warden** increased by \$500 per P. Brycki's request due to additional work. **5228B CL&P Street Lighting** increased \$500 to cover rate increases. **5700 Equipment Repairs** increased based on the older equipment needing more repairs. **5703 Snow Removal** increased \$10,000 for added salt. New line item **Historic Research** T. Babbitt stated we need to be proactive regarding roads in question. There are currently 30-40 roads with no documentation. B. Baker asked about FEMA money for the blizzard. E. Christensen stated we had around \$70,000 in expenditures that would be refunded at 75%. D. Webster would like to see the town comparisons regarding wages for T. Babbitt. T. Babbitt stated there could be a savings in capital projects of \$50,000 for the two bridge projects due to a pilot program at DOT for design services.

3204 – Waste Disposal – T. Babbitt stated the tipping fees are down \$10,000 due to SCRRA adjusting tonnage. **5425E Dumpster Replacement** this should be the final year for this line item.

2401 – Animal Control – E. Christensen stated L. Proulx, Animal Control Officer wanted to keep all line items the same this year.

1101 – Board of Finance – E. Christensen outlined the department budget. **5101B Financial Director** increased 2.5%. **5101C** and **5101I** increased per the contract as well. **5145 Health Insurance** decreased due to the Assistant Bookkeeper taking the insurance buyout and the Bookkeeper on single coverage now. **5212 Postage** decreased by \$500. **5402 Finance and Accounting** increase is for OPEB liability report which is due this year as required by the state. **5406 Service Contracts and Leases** slight increase for the cost of the copier contract.

1301 – Treasurer – E. Christensen noted the same as last year.

4201- -Uncas Health District – E. Christensen explained that this number is based on a per capita rate.

4202 – Public Health Nursing – **5226,5228,5230,5232** amounts added for utilities to be paid by the town until it is known who and when the building will be rented. **5625 Day Kimball Nursing** currently at zero. K. Skulczyck stated the Board of Selectmen just voted to move the Youth Center into the building therefore these numbers will be adjusted.

7101 – Contingency – **5850 Exchange** E. Christensen stated this was decreased by \$40,000.

7201 – Fringe Benefits – **5155B Merf Admin Assessment** E. Christensen stated the pension is down per the state.

8101 – Debt Retirement – E. Christensen outlined the department budget. E. Christensen stated this is the final year for capital lease payment 7/1/2015. P. Dorff wanted everyone to keep in mind principal and interest could go up next year as a result of the high school roof project. B. Baker wanted to express the need for a new fire truck for the Griswold Fire Department and two new dump trucks for the town and he would like to see the capital lease rolled over into a new lease purchase.

4). **Adjournment**

MOTION: D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to adjourn. There was no discussion. All in favor; **motion carried.** S. Merchant Sr. adjourned the meeting at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Recording Secretary
Jeannette Bell**