



# Town of Griswold

Board of Finance

Regular Meeting

April 21, 2015

7:00 PM

Town Hall Meeting Room

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

Daniel Webster

**Also Present:**

Erik Christensen, Director of Finance

Kevin Skulczyck, First Selectman

Richard Grabowski, Tax Collector

Todd Babbitt, Director of Public Works

Ryan Aubin, Director of Recreation and Youth & Family Services

Tina Falck, Senior Center Director

Paul Smith, Superintendent, Griswold Public Schools

Elizabeth Dorff, Chair, Board of Education

Jeannette Bell, Recording Secretary

17 other persons

**2. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION:** P. Dorff made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2015 regular meeting, March 25, 2015 special meeting, and April 7, 2015 public hearing as presented. All in favor; **motion carried.**

**3. New Business**

**a) Finance Director's Monthly Report.**

The Finance Director stated to date everything appears to be on track. Revenues to date are \$25,763,385 which is 80.41% of budgeted revenues. Expenditures thus far are \$22,359,369 which is 69.75%. The Finance Director is estimating revenues to be around \$47,000 more than was budgeted. Expenditures are estimated to be around \$85,000 less than was budgeted. The major concerns are legal fees and highway department overages due to the winter storms. However a majority of the highway overages will be covered by Town Aid Road money. There are \$25 overages for longevity due to the union contract being signed. E. Christensen estimated the unassigned fund balance to be \$3,735,606 which is approximately 11.66% of the budget.

#### 4. Old Business

##### a) Discussion and possible action on FY 2015-2016 budget.

There was much discussion regarding the upcoming vote for a five member Board of Selectmen. Salaries, travel and meetings were discussed in great detail. The Board of Finance then made the following changes.

- **MOTION:** P. Dorff made a **motion** to reduce the Second and Third Selectmen (line item 5125B and 5125C) plus adding additional line items for the Fourth and Fifth selectmen to \$5,000. **The motion died on the table.**
- **MOTION:** S. Davis made a **motion** that was seconded by P. Dorff to reduce the Second and Third Selectmen Salary (line item 5125B and 5125C) to \$3,000 each and to create additional line items for the Fourth and Fifth Selectmen (line item 5125D and 5125E at \$3,000 each) with the notation if there is no Fourth and Fifth Selectmen the extra goes back into the General Fund. **The motion passed with S. Davis, P. Dorff, G. Levy and S. Merchant Sr. in favor. D. Webster, B. Baker and G. Rooke-Norman opposed.**
- **MOTION:** P. Dorff made a **motion** that was seconded by D. Webster to reduce the Second and Third Selectmen Travel (line item 5200B and 5200C) to \$50 each and to create additional line items for the Fourth and Fifth Selectmen Travel (line item 5200D and 5200E) for \$50 each and to increase First Selectman Travel (line item 5200A) to \$200. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **MOTION:** G. Levy made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Davis to create additional line items for the Fourth and Fifth Selectmen Meetings (line 5202D and 5200E) for \$100 each. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **MOTION:** S. Davis made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to reduce the Tax Collector DMV Fee (line item 5121) to \$10 based on recommendation of R. Grabowski. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by P. Dorff to reduce Legal Labor Matters (line item 5120F) to \$10,000. **The motion failed with G. Rooke-Norman, P. Dorff and S. Davis in favor. B. Baker, D. Webster, G. Levy and S. Merchant Sr. opposed.**
- **MOTION:** S. Davis made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to reduce Maintenance of Pachaug Town Hall - Building Repairs (line item 5234) to \$10 and use money left over from Town Hall Roof Repairs (Fund 309) to fund the repairs. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- D. Webster recused himself at 8:02
- **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Davis to reduce Building Official Overtime (line item 5110) to \$5,000. **The motion failed with G. Rooke-Norman and S. Davis in favor. P. Dorff, B. Baker and G. Levy opposed.**
- **MOTION:** G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** to reduce the Building Official

Secretary to reflect her current hours. **The motion died on the table.**

- D. Webster returned at 8:15
- **MOTION:** B. Baker made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Levy to reduce the transfer to Senior Citizens Expansion Fund (no line item number) to \$10 based on discussion with T. Falck. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **MOTION:** After discussion with R. Aubin, D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by G. Rooke-Norman to reduce Youth and Family Services Facility Rental (no line item number) to \$0 and transfer \$200 for water and \$2000 for heating. **The motion failed with D. Webster, S. Davis and G. Rooke-Norman in favor. G. Levy, P. Dorff, B. Baker and S. Merchant Sr. opposed.**
- **MOTION:** G. Levy made a **motion** that was seconded by B. Baker to reduce Youth and Family Services Facility Rental (no line item number) to \$0 and transfer \$500 for water and \$3,000 for heating. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **MOTION:** After discussion with T. Babbitt, G. Rooke-Norman made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Davis to reduce Capital Skid Steer (no line item number) to zero. **The motion passed with G. Rooke-Norman, S. Davis, G. Levy, B. Baker and P. Dorff in favor. D. Webster opposed.**
- **MOTION:** D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by S. Davis to reduce Capital BOE Maintenance Garage (line item 5713B) to zero. **The motion passed with D. Webster, S. Davis, G. Levy and P. Dorff in favor. G. Rooke-Norman and B. Baker opposed.**
- At this time S. Merchant Sr. asked the Board of Finance what mil rate they were trying to get to. He had suggested a .49 mill increase stating the budget needs to pass on the first try. S. Merchant asked the Finance Director how much more needed to be cut from the budget in order to get to the .49 mill increase. E. Christensen stated \$151,000. K. Skulczyck suggested using surplus to cover the remaining \$151,000. He stated he thinks we will recoup that money very quickly with the possible sale of some Town properties. S. Merchant Sr. asked E. Christensen his opinion regarding using surplus funds. E. Christensen stated that he does not like to normally use fund balance but he believes it would not hurt us too much by doing it if we want to avoid further cuts. He stated he estimates it would put us at about 11.19% down from 11.66% which still leaves us in good shape.
- **MOTION:** G. Levy made a **motion** that was seconded by D. Webster to take \$151,000 out of surplus. **The motion passed with G. Levy, D. Webster, P. Dorff and S. Merchant Sr. in favor. G. Rooke-Norman, S. Davis and B. Baker opposed.**
- **MOTION:** D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by P. Dorff to send the General Government Budget at \$7,301,366 and the Board of Education Budget at \$25,488,215 to the Town Meeting as it currently stands. The total budget of \$32,789,581 reflects a .49 mil rate increase. **The motion passed unanimously**

5. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

6. **Public Forum**

**S. Norman** - Spoke on behalf of the Board of Education and would like the Board of Finance to keep in mind that at some point the budget will have to be increased in order to continue to secure the out of town enrollment.

**J. Bernie** - Would like to see the Public Forum held at the beginning of the meetings in order for people to voice their concerns before decisions were already made. He stated he supports both budgets and thanks everyone for their hard work. He feels the Selectmen salary should be lumped into one line item not individually. He also agrees with the salary increase for Todd Babbitt, Director of Public Works.

**G. LaBossiere** - Wanted to know why the Chairman of the Board does not vote along with the other board members. He noted S. Merchant only votes as a tie breaker. S. Merchant Sr. responded that's what he has always done and is the recommended practice.

7. **Adjournment: MOTION:** D. Webster made a **motion** that was seconded by B. Baker to adjourn. There was no discussion. All in favor; **motion carried.** S. Merchant Sr. adjourned the meeting at 9:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Recording Secretary  
Jeannette Bell