



ORANGE, CONN  
TOWN OFFICE OFFICE  
RECORDING SECRETARY  
2023 FEB -6 AM 10:07  
*Kevin Houlihan*

**Board of Finance Special Meeting**

Monday, January 23, 2023  
Meeting Room -Town Hall 5:30 p.m.

**Approved**

**Attendance**

**Board of Finance Members Present:** Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin Moffett, Joseph Nuzzo, Kevin McNabola, Ajeet Jain, and Alternate Meghan Rabuse  
**Staff:** John Cifarelli, Finance Director; Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary  
**Guests:** Michele Loso, Andrew Switaj, and Greg Hellman, Seward and Monde; Dr. Byars, Superintendent of Amity School District, Terry Lumas, Amity Finance Director

**1. Call to Order & Introduction**

- Chairman Houlihan called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

**2. Introductions**

- Chairman Houlihan asked all of the Board of Finance members to introduce themselves.

**3. Public Dialogue**

- There was no public dialogue.

**New Business**

**4. Funding Request – Chief Gagne & Paul Mongillo to Purchase New Server for Police Dept.**

- Chief Gagne discussed the importance of this new Dell server as a stand-alone digital storage for photos, videos and all digital data. Their current device will no longer be supported as of January 28<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$38,516.40, which includes a one-year maintenance fee.

***Mr. Leahy made a motion to transfer \$40k from the Capital Account to fund this new server, as was presented by Chief Gagne. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.***

## **5. Annual Audit Review – Seward and Monde**

- Ms. Loso discussed some of the new audit items such as the Lease Receivables in the amount of \$14,348,778. This line item include cell towers, military housing leases, and Racebrook Country Club.
- Mr. Switaj spoke on the Financial Statements, Governmental Funds Statement, the General Fund, the OVNA operations deficit, Proprietary Funds, Fiduciary Funds, OPEB liability, Net Pension liability, and revenues and expenditures.
- Mr. Leahy pointed out a small grammatical error and the correction was duly noted.

*Mr. Nuzzo made a motion to approve and accept the revised audit report as presented with the one correction. Mr. Moffett seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

*Mr. McNabola made a motion to move Agenda Item 9 before Agenda Item 6. Mr. Jain seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

## **6. Allocate Funding for Paving Roadways – Memo Don Foyer**

- Mr. Cifarelli discussed the possible finances for road paving. The OVNA has new management and there is hope that their current deficit will be minimized. ARPA funding might be used to fix the flooding on Pine Tree Drive. In reviewing the overall budget, Mr. Cifarelli felt that funding for the road paving must come from the Capital Account. After some deliberation, it was agreed to fund \$1 million initially and possibly an additional \$500k at a later time within the fiscal budget year.

*Mr. Leahy made a motion to fund 1 million dollars from the Capital Account for road paving. An additional \$500k might be considered when the Capital Projects are reviewed during the budget process. Mr. Moffett seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

*Mr. Leahy made a motion for a ten-minute recess, seconded by Mr. Moffett. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

- The meeting resumed at 7:05 p.m. and Chairman Houlihan welcomed Dr. Byars, Ms. Lumas, and Alternate Mr. Rabuse to the meeting.

## **7. Amity Superintendent's 2023 - 2024 Proposed Budget Presentation – Dr. Byars**

- Dr. Byars discussed their Mission Statement, the Portrait of a Graduate, and the accolades of students in the arts, athletics, and academics. The budget drivers include Federal and State mandates, contractual obligations, inflation, health care, pupil services, technology, level of enrollment, and personnel. She noted that inflation is at 6.4% and their medical self-insurance balance is at 18%. Dr. Byars also discussed the uncertainties and requirements of their Special Education Department and noted that the cost has decreased by 10.7%.

- Ms. Rabuse would like to be able to see the State and Federal Grants as they are not included as a part of the fiscal operating budget. She inquired if the grants expire and was advised that they generally do not expire.
- Dr. Byars reported that they want to hire a certified teacher as the in-school suspension tutor. The tutor will also act as a substitute teacher at the high school as needed.
- Dr. Byars reported on the different sources of revenue totaling \$942,611. She also spoke about student enrollment for next year and the allocation of the proposed budget for each of the respective towns.
- There followed a lengthy discussion about Amity's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan, which included planning for the replacement of their all-weather field. As the turf field was included as a part of their 20 year bond, Ms. Rabuse felt that putting \$35k aside each year in the budget for a replacement field was taxing residents again in the current operating budget for a turf field that had not yet expired its life expectancy of 10 years. She added that as Debt Service is dropping, these savings could be used for a future turf field. Dr. Byars cited this drop in debt service helps defray inflation costs of other items. Dr. Byars added that they plan their budget with consideration of future budgets and attempt to avoid high levels of variability. They would not want to take another 20 year second bond for a turf field that would not last the life of the bond.
- Dr. Byars reported that Amity is allowed to take up top 2% of their surplus and put it into their Capital and Nonrecurring Fund for future Capital items. The initial 2023-2024 budget began with a 5.12 % increase and was reduced to 2.93%, which results in a \$342,662 increase. The increase for the town of Orange would be \$21,240.

## **8. Vice Chairman's Report**

- As a continuation of the Amity budget discussion, Vice Chairman Leahy used this opportunity to discuss the Amity surplus and debt service. He noted that over the next four years the Amity Debt Service will be reduced by \$3,772,292, which should result in member town tax relief. He also illustrated the historic budget increases over the last fifteen years, pointing out that the surpluses in the prior year could cover the following year's budget without a significant budget increase. He pointed out that each year there is a built in surplus that is carried from one fiscal year to the next.
- Mr. Leahy took this opportunity to review each line item in the Amity proposed budget.

## **9. Discuss Schedule for All Day Budget Workshop & Budget Dates**

- Mr. Cifarelli reported that the OBOE 2023-2024 proposed budget will be discussed on March 6th at the Town Hall Meeting Room at 700 p.m. The Budget Hearing is scheduled for April 20th at High Plains Cafeteria. Mr. Cifarelli also reviewed the schedule for the All Day

Budget Workshop scheduled for Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**10. Discussion and Approval of December 19, 2022 Special Meeting**

•The Board members reviewed the minutes and made edits as necessary.

*Mr. McNabola made a motion to approve the amended December 19, 2022 Board of Finance meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Moffett. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

**11. Adjournment**

*Mr. Moffett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m., seconded by Mr. Jain. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deborah Satonick  
Recording Secretary