



Board of Finance Regular Meeting
Monday, February 27, 2023
Meeting Room -Town Hall 7:00 a.m.

Approved

Attendance

ORANGE, CONN.
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
RECEIVED FOR RECORDS
2023 MAR - 7 AM 10:13
Stephanie B. [Signature]

Board of Finance Members Present: Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin Moffett, Joseph Nuzzo, Kevin McNabola, and Ajeet Jain

Board of Finance Members Absent: Alternate Meghan Rabuse

Staff: John Cifarelli, Finance Director; Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order

- Chairman Houlihan called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and asked the members to introduce themselves.

2. Public Dialogue

- There was no public dialogue at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Amity Update & Vice Chairman's Report – Mr. Leahy

- Mr. Leahy attended the Amity Finance Committee meeting earlier in the evening and advised that they plan on voting on the superintendent's proposed 2023-2024 budget later in that meeting. On March fifteenth, the Amity Board of Education will likewise vote on this same proposed budget.
- Mr. Leahy reported that the proposed Amity 2023-2024 budget was reduced from 2.93% to 2.56%. The Orange Board of Finance, however, agreed to support only up to a 0.46% increase in their budget for next year. Mr. Leahy noted that despite this budget reduction, Amity continues to overtax residents with its surpluses. He added that Debt Service will reduce by \$3,772,292 over the next four years and this savings can allow Amity to focus on Capital Expenditures and tax relief to member towns. Mr. McNabola inquired if Amity submitted a 5-year Capital Plan and Mr. Leahy used PowerPoint to display their 5-year Capital Plan.
- Mr. Leahy reported that while Woodbridge and Bethany's share of the Amity budget has increased, the Orange share of the Amity budget has decreased from approximately 50% to 48.5%, as reflected

in a decrease in the number of Orange students at Amity.

- Mr. Leahy discussed the referendum costs of \$24,870, as Amity budgeted for three referendums this year and removed that cost in the proposed 2023-2024 budget, citing it as a budget reduction. Mr. Cifarelli indicated that there is an agreement with Dr. Brady that the Town of Orange will pay for one referendum and Amity will pay out of their own budget for any additional referendums. Mr. Leahy also mentioned that the Governor signed an emergency authorization to increase the reimbursement rate for Special Education Costs.
- Mr. McNabola would like to hold or to decrease the mill rate this year if possible. He noted that the Town of Orange has a very healthy Fund Balance at approximately 15% and has been sustaining a sizable surplus over the last seven years. This is due to increased revenue along with underrun expenditures. Chairman Houlihan stated that the Amity surplus funds returned to the Town of Orange have also contributed to our healthy Fund Balance.
- Mr. Cifarelli mentioned that property revaluation will begin next year. He also indicated that he should have the Grand List by their next meeting. Chairman Houlihan stated that the Orange Board of Education does not present an inflated budget every year expecting that it will be cut by the Orange Board of Finance. Rather, they present a realistic budget that is on target each year.

(Mr. Nuzzo arrived at 8:07 p.m.)

- Mr. Nuzzo reported that the Amity Finance Committee approved a budget increase for the Amity 2023-2024 budget up to 2.25% in a 5-1 vote.

4. Discussion and Approval of Minutes – February 3, 2023 All Day Budget Workshop

- The Board members reviewed the minutes and made revisions as needed.

Mr. Leahy made a motion to approve the amended February 3, 2023 All Day Budget Workshop minutes, seconded by Mr. Jain. All were in favor, with Mr. McNabola abstaining. The motion PASSED.

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

(The meeting resumed at 8:28 p.m.)

6. Funding Request – Fire Marshall James Vincent Memo Requesting Funds for New Vehicle

- The Fire Marshal submitted a Memorandum requesting a replacement vehicle for their 2013 Ford expedition, citing significant rot and corrosion. Mr. Vincent was able to find a suitable vehicle and a quote has been provided for the Board members. The car is a Chevrolet Tahoe and the base contract price is \$38,586. The new vehicle will be used by the Deputy Fire Marshall. Mr. Cifarelli recommended that this purchase be approved subject to Board of Selectmen approval. He suggested that the funding come from the Account #21 in the General Fund. The 2013 Ford will go to auction.

Mr. McNabola made a motion to approve the purchase of the Chevrolet Tahoe as presented by the Fire Marshall, subject to approval by the Orange Board of Selectmen. Funding will come from the following accounts: \$20k from 21420011-55200 Insurance-Auto and \$34k from 21420061-55200 Insurance-Umbrella in the General Fund. Mr. Leahy seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

7. Review Expense and Revenue Reports

- Mr. Cifarelli discussed the revenues and expenses to date. He reviewed the reports by each line item and took questions from the Board members.

8. Budget Discussion

- The next Board of Finance meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 6th, and the Orange Board of Education will be presenting their 2023-2024 budget. The Town Budget Hearing is scheduled for April 20th. Mr. Cifarelli advised that there may be a request for funds for a traffic study for Fred Wolfe Park. He also mentioned that the Clerical Union Contract is going before the Board of Selectmen for approval. The new salary information will be distributed to the Board members at Monday's meeting. In addition, the Police will be received retro pay for about six months.
- Mr. Cifarelli mentioned that there is bill in Hartford that will allow towns to put their legal notices on the website versus the newspaper. Should this bill pass, this could result in a significant savings to the town of about \$30k.

9. Adjournment

Mr. McNabola made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m., seconded by Mr. Moffett. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Satonick
Recording Secretary