



ORANGE, CT  
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**Board of Finance Regular Meeting**

Monday, June 19, 2023

Meeting Room -Town Hall 7:00 p.m.

Approved

Attendance

**Board of Finance Members Present:** Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin McNabola, and Kevin Moffett

**Board of Finance Members Absent:** Joseph Nuzzo and Ajeet Jain

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

**Guests:** Bob Brinton, Town Engineer; Max Martins, Assistant Chief of Police; Rob Battaglia, Cleargov

**1. Call to Order & Introduction**

- 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**

**1. Cleargov Budget Software Presentation = Possible Vote to Purchase Software**

- Mr. Cifarelli reported that this new software would make work easier and save time for both staff as well as Board members. He explained that there are digital interaction charts and graphs and there would be no need for budget books, as everything will be digital. He introduced Mr. Battaglia, who will explain in more detail the benefits of this new software.
- Mr. Battaglia, Senior Marketing Executive for Cleargov in CT, explained that the company is a cloud-based budgeting software company that is currently being utilized by about 20% of towns in Connecticut, including Woodbridge, Branford, Guilford, and North Branford, as well as local governments across the United States. Their software will complement the town's existing Munis accounting system.

- Mr. Battaglia stated that this new software will still allow printing PDF and Excel files if desired, and there is a 2–3-month onboarding process. The software will provide built in demographics and analytics, a table of contents, multiple graphing formats, comparable data from previous years, and more. The software adheres to the GFOA best practices. Mr. Cifarelli believes that this software will eliminate potential mistakes caused by human error.
- Mr. Battaglia illustrated an entire budget process from beginning to end with a detailed demo. He explained that there is complete transparency, with an audit trail, for any changes made within the budget process. The new software will allow forecasting for future budgets as well as goal setting and benchmarks achieved. Timelines within the budget process are easily visible for viewers. The entire budget can be loaded onto the Town website and can be printable for viewers.
- Mr. McNabola mentioned that the Woodbridge Finance Director is very pleased with this software. Mr. Cifarelli added that the Finance Director in Guilford also is happy with the product. Assistant Chief Martins inquired how many users are allowed to make input changes and was told that there are unlimited users, but it is up to the discretion of the town.

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

- Chairman Houlihan called the meeting back into session at 7:54 p.m. Mr. Cifarelli stated that the cost of the Cleargov Budget software is \$19,240, with a 3% increase per year.

***Mr. McNabola made a motion to allow Mr. Cifarelli to purchase Cleargov Budget software for \$19,240, seconded by Mr. Leahy. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.***

- Chairman Houlihan suggested that Agenda items 7, 8, and 9 be moved up on the agenda before item #5.

***Mr. Leahy made a motion to move Agenda #7, 8, and 9 up on the agenda before item #5. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.***

## **5. Funding Request – New Communication Antenna at Police Station**

- Assistant Chief Martins explained that the current point-to-point communications system is almost nine years old and needs to be replaced. This system has a radio tower at the Police Station and another at High Plains Community Center. The short-term capital request for a radio tower was approved, but the microwave system has not yet been funded and approved. Doing these two projects together would save money and eliminate additional down time for the Police Department.
- The cost for this project is \$35,608.90 and Mr. Cifarelli recommended that this equipment be replaced and that funds be taken from the Capital account. Chief Martins advised that this system is critical, as it provides the link between Police Headquarters and the main radio transmitter at High Plains tower.

*Mr. Leahy made a motion to approve funding for the Microwave System Enhancement Replacement, not to exceed \$38k, to be taken from the Capital Account. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

#### **6. Funding Request – Approve Funds for Flood Control Project Old Country Road**

- Mr. Brinton advised that the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved awarding the bid for the culvert replacement on Old Country Road and Coachmans Lane to the lowest bidder, Earthworks Excavating and Landscaping Inc. of Oxford. The cost is \$992,540, plus a 10% contingency, to be taken from the American Rescue Funds. Work would begin next year, and the company will honor this price.

*Mr. Moffett made a motion to approve \$1,110,000. Which includes a 10% contingency from the American Rescue Funds to pay Earthworks Excavating and Landscaping, Inc. for the culvert replacement on Old Country Road and Coachmans Lane. Mr. Leahy seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

#### **7. Funding Request – Discussion & Possible Vote to Transfer Funds for Road Paving**

- Mr. Brinton made a request for an additional \$500k for Fall 2023 road paving. Mr. Cifarelli explained that their current spring paving went over by \$30k. He added that he also had some concerns about this request due to other Capital item requests, such as the replacement of the 2000 bucket truck. The Board members reviewed all the Capital expense items at this time.
- Mr. McNabola felt that the town would continue to run a surplus in revenue and was comfortable with awarding an additional \$500k for road paving.

*Mr. Leahy made a motion to approve \$500k for Fall 2023 road paving from the Capital Account, of which \$30k of this amount will be used to pay a \$30k overrun from spring paving. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

- Mr. Brinton reported that he put in a warranty claim for the roof at High Plains and they agreed to repair the roof under the current twenty-year warranty, which will expire in November. This repair could possibly extend the life of the roof another two years.

#### **8. Amity Update/Vice Chairman's Report**

- Mr. Leahy shared some data from the Yale School of Management on the investment performance on each state. He noted that Connecticut had the second worst investment performance compared to every other state. The state of Washington, which was the number one performing state in the USA, had a 10.93% rate of annual return and Connecticut had a 5.8% annual rate of return.
- Mr. Leahy spoke briefly on the Amity budget, noting that the current surplus as of the end of May is \$1,717,557. The Orange Board of Finance approved up to a 0.45% increase for the Amity budget for this year. While Amity does a terrific job, they could do it for less.

**9. Discussion and Approval of Minutes – Monday, May 15, 2023**

- Board members reviewed the May 15, 2023 minutes and made revisions as needed.

*Mr. Leahy made a motion to approve the revised May 15, 2023 minutes, seconded by Mr. McNabola. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

**10. Review Revenue and Expense Reports for June 2023**

Revenue Report

- Mr. Leahy had questions on several line items and addressed them to Mr. Cifarelli.

Expense Report

- Mr. Cifarelli reviewed the Expense Report with the Board members and took questions as they arose. He expects that they will “break even” with expenses and there will be a surplus in revenues.

**10. Adjournment**

*Mr. McNabola made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m. minutes, seconded by Mr. Moffett. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deborah Satonick  
Recording Secretary