

**BOARD OF FINANCE
SALEM, CONNECTICUT
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 13, 2014**

PRESENT

George Householder
TJ Butcher
Carole Eckart
David Kennedy
Janet Griggs
John Dolan, Alt
Jenifer Lee, Alt (Late)

ABSENT

Robert Sartori
Hernan Salas, Alt

GUESTS

Bill Weinschenker
Phil Teixeira
George Jackson

CALLED TO ORDER

TJ Butcher called the meeting to order 7:02 pm

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

There were no visitors that wished to be recognized in attendance

SEAT ALTERNATE IF NEEDED

M/S/C- Householder/Eckart to seat John Dolan as a regular member for this meeting in place of Robert Sartori.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from Bill Weinschenker, Re: Salem School Construction Fund (See file copy)
Email from Marcia Marien, Re: Response to Weinschenker letter (See file copy)
Letter from Christine Lindo, Re: FOI request on Public Safety Study (See file copy)
Letter from Susan Spang, Re: Response to Lindo FOI request (See file copy)

M/S/C- Griggs/Kennedy – To approve \$166,019.00, the premium paid from the sale of the school bonds, to remain in the General Fund.

Approved: Approved Unanimously

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

10- Executive Session-Re: Reason for additional appropriation –Dept. 126 Town Counsel requested by Kevin Lyden

M/S/C- Householder/ Eckart – add to agenda, 10- Executive Session-Re: Additional Appropriation.

Vote: Approved Unanimously

AGENDA,

- 1. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 09, 2014 REGULAR MEETING M/S/C- Householder/Griggs to approve the August 14, 2014 meeting minutes as submitted**

Vote: Approved Unanimously

Abstained: Dolan, Eckart, Butcher

- 2. TRESURER'S REPORTS**

The Treasurer, Pam Henry, presented her reports (See File Copy).

- a. Revenue Receipts- % of Budget**

- b. General Fund Balance Sheet**

- c. General Fund Budget vs. Actual**

- d. Capital Non-Recurring Fund, Budget vs. Actual**

Householder questioned if 410-P, Oil Water Area Upgrade, is completed.

Lyden stated that the project is ongoing.

Householder questioned if 645-P, Replace Press Box, is completed.

Kennedy/Henry stated that it is complete but there could be additional invoices to be paid.

- 3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bill Weinschenker of Music Vale Road spoke to the Board

Phil Teixeira of BOE spoke to the Board and gave the Board two handouts

1. Salem School 10 Year Capital Plan 2015-2016 (See file copy)

2. Salem School District Organizational Chart 2014-2015 (See file copy)

George Jackson of the BOE spoke to the Board.

- 4. SELECTMAN'S REPORT- ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION-DEPT 126 TOWN COUNSEL**

Kevin Lyden presented his reports to the Board.

Lyden stated that the number of families the Mobile Food Pantry was able to help was up from last month with a total of 50 this month.

Lyden stated that the Salem School Efficiency Study is underway and most staff has been interviewed already. Lyden stated that a rough draft from the study should be available by the end of January 2015. Lyden stated that there is a school survey currently available for residents to complete. The survey is available online and paper copies are available at the town hall, library, and front desk at Salem School.

Lyden stated Salem School received the Safety Upgrade Grant in the amount of \$159,478.00. Lyden also stated that the Salem School Renovation Project is almost complete.

Lyden spoke to the Board regarding the Public Safety Service Study. He stated that a committee will be put together to review the study and decide what recommendations to act on. He feels some recommendations could be implemented fairly easy while others will take some time. He stated that some of the recommendation might not happen at all. Lyden stated he is sorry for any hurt feeling associated with the study but feels overall the study has a lot of good recommendations.

5. 2013/2014 AUDIT PRESENTATION DISCUSSION

Butcher stated that he is pleased that Salem's grade has gone from a B+ to an A-. Householder stated that the auditors felt the town's internal controls and operations have improved from a D to an A-. Eckart thanked Lyden for pushing for the additional position in finance; she feels it has helped keep the records very clean. Householder stated he feels the position of Salem Treasurer should be a hired position and not an elected position to maintain a treasurer with the needed qualifications. Householder stated that in the audit presentation, *appendix 3, page 11, ending taxable/receivable comparisons*, shows an increase in uncollected taxes. Householder asked Cheryl Philopena if there are procedures in place to collect these outstanding taxes. Philopena told the Board there is nothing in the statutes that govern the procedure for collecting back taxes. Philopena told the Board that her procedure is to try and set up a payment plan to collect back taxes with a formula that involves the taxpayer's current monthly income. Philopena stated that if a payment plan can't be made on real estate back taxes or isn't held up once agreed to she sends a forbearance letter or places a lien on the property. Philopena stated that back motor vehicle taxes are collected when the taxpayer needs to reregister their motor vehicles. Householder stated that in the presentation by the auditors it was stated that Salem's amount of back taxes is high. Philopena disagreed and offered to set up a meeting with the Board to view the tax collection books. Eckart and Butcher asked Philopena to put her collection policy/procedure into writing so the policy is clear. Philopena said she will put together a draft copy of her collection policy/procedure for the Board to review.

6. PUBLIC SAFETY STUDY DISCUSSION

Butcher stated he feels the study was very detailed. Butcher stated that while the study looks like there is more equipment than is needed he doesn't feel a 25% reduction in inventory is the way to go. Butcher stated that the excess inventory will allow for leaner years in purchasing equipment to get inventories more inline. Householder stated that two safety recommendations for the firehouse, ventilation for diesel exhaust and nonskid floors, should be corrected in the capital plan; possibly one this year and one next year. Kennedy stated that he feels hiring a full time fire chief and assistant fire chief could become a financial burden to the town. Kennedy stated that doing so could also mean hiring administration help for the chiefs which would grow the Salem government. Butcher stated he would not like to see Salem go to one fire station but to have a more unified structure

between the two stations. Kennedy stated that he spoke to members of both firehouses and that all are willing to work together.

7. AUDIT PROPOSAL FOR THE 2014/2015 YEAR

The Board discussed putting out RFP's for the 2014/2015 year. Lyden/Weinschenker will prepare the RFP for the Board to review.

M/S/C- Dolan/Householder to send out RFP's once draft is approved by the Board.

Vote: Approved Unanimously

8. PREPARATION FOR THE 2015/2016 BUDGET

The Board reviewed the letter sent out to all departments and commissions from last year and made several changes. (See file copy)
Virginia Casey to update letter for the Board.

9. BOF 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE

The Board reviewed the 2015 Meeting Schedule (See file copy). Eckart will check schedule against the school schedule to make sure there are no conflicts.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION- RE: PENDING LITIGATION

M/S/C – Dolan/ Griggs to enter into Executive Session at 8:51pm

Vote: Approved Unanimously

M/S/C- Griggs/Eckart –to adjourn executive session at 9:05pm

Vote: Approved Unanimously

M/S/C- Householder/Griggs to transfer \$10,000.00 from Unassigned Fund Balance to Town Counsel 5-126-208.

Vote: Approved Unanimously

M/S/C- Householder/Eckart- to adjourn at 9:08pm

Vote: Approved Unanimously

**Respectfully Submitted
Cindy Noe,
Recording Secretary**