

**TOWN OF SALEM  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.**

Per State of Connecticut, Governor Lamont Executive Order Number 7B,  
the Town of Salem Board of Finance Meeting will be following the suspension of  
in-person open meeting requirements. Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/92106717631?pwd=MmJRM2hqUUFKUGh0bjd2Vis4a01Hdz09>

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Or Via **Telephone:**

(312) 626 6799, (646) 558 8656, (346) 248 7799, (669) 900 9128,  
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**Webinar ID:** 921 0671 7631 | **Password:** 312826

**PRESENT**

William “Skip” Dickson, Chairman  
Marshall Collins, Clerk  
Corinne (Cory) Bourgeois  
Deborah Cadwell  
Maryann Casciano  
Janet Griggs  
John Bernier, Alternate

**ABSENT**

Joseph Duncan, Alternate  
Dean Wojcik, Alternate

**ALSO PRESENT**

First Selectman Kevin Lyden

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Dickson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:** *none*

**SEAT ALTERNATE IF NEEDED:** *none*

**COMMUNICATIONS:** *none*

**ALTERATIONS TO THE AGENDA:** *none*

**AGENDA:**

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 18, 2021 REGULAR MEETING**

**M/S/C:** Griggs/Cadwell, to approve the Board of Finance March 18, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor.

**2. TREASURER'S REPORTS**

**A. REVENUE SUMMARY**

**B. TRIAL BALANCE**

**C. FUND BALANCE**

**D. OTHER**

The Board reviewed the Treasurer's Reports. First Selectman Lyden reported that the tax collection rate has reached 100.3% of the budgeted revenue for this fiscal year.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** *none*

Comment at [FinancePublicComment@salemct.gov](mailto:FinancePublicComment@salemct.gov)

**4. SELECTMAN'S REPORT**

First Selectman Lyden reported that the Board of Selectmen appointed and welcomed Sue Sullivan to the Board of Selectmen to fill the vacancy left by Selectwoman Terri Salas, who recently relocated to Florida. Ms. Sullivan, who has resided in Salem for over 30 years, is a Registered Nurse, who recently retired after serving for 28-years as the Medical Program Director at Waterford Country School, which cares for the special needs of children and families. She currently works with Cornell University to enhance best practices for working with high-risk youth and families and HELP Mission International, Inc., which supports Haitian churches and orphanages, and has traveled to Haiti several times for relief work. She has also penned a children's book based on a true story; 100% of the proceeds go to the Haiti orphanage and for the purchase of medical supplies.

First Selectman Lyden congratulated and thanked Salem Resident State Trooper Chris Pariseau who was awarded a new assignment with the Polygraph Unit at the CT State Police Meriden Complex. He expressed the town's appreciation of Trooper Pariseau's dedication and commitment to the town, its businesses, and residents with whom he has built a positive relationship and wished him the best. Resident State Trooper Ben Duffy, who has been with the State police force for nine years, will now be working the day shift for the town.

Residents have been notified regarding the revaluation for the 2021 Grand List. He noted that, while the mil rate in certain towns is lower than that of Salem, their property values tend to be higher, resulting in a comparable tax rate.

The town is encouraging residents to Shop Local and help support our local businesses that continue to experience difficulties due to the pandemic.

The Friends of Salem Free Public Library will be hosting its Annual Plant Sale, which features locally grown trees, shrubs, perennials, vegetables, herbs, annuals, and houseplants, on:

Thursday, May 6, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.,

Friday, May 7, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and;

Saturday, May 8, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The town will be celebrating Earth Day with a Clean-Up Day on Saturday, April 24 between 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Salem Town Hall. Volunteers are encouraged to pick up a free Salem trash bag(s), select a town road, and enter a raffle for a chance to win a Soilsaver™ Compost Bin for the backyard or a Countertop Compost Pail for the kitchen. For safety purposes, the town is asking that only adults-only take part in the event. After collecting the garbage, the trash bag(s) may be left on the side of the road to be picked up by one of the town's Public Works employees.

Baseball Opening Day will be held on Saturday, April 24, at 10:00 a.m. at the Lou Ulffers Sports Complex on Round Hill Road.

In response to Clerk Collins regarding the re-opening of the Library, First Selectman Lyden stated that the Library employees have all returned to work and most have received their initial vaccination. He is hoping to open the Library by the first week of May after all of the employees have received their second vaccination.

## **5. FINALIZE BUDGET FOR TOWN MEETING**

In response to Clerk Collins regarding the Federal funds, the First Selectman stated that the town is expected to receive \$403,126.00 through the American Rescue Plan (ARP); the funds must be expended by December 2024. The funds may be expended for necessary sewer, water, or broadband infrastructure improvements. Because of the vague nature of the allowable expenditures, further clarification has been requested. The Board of Education is expected to receive \$181,000.00. Board Member Griggs suggested the possibility of investing the funds to establish public water and sewer for an Industrial (or Business) Park in an effort to attract businesses. Similarly, Clerk Collins proposed the possibility of establishing a broadband network, helping those who work remotely and avoiding any possible environmental issues which might arise from the establishment of an Industrial/Business Park. Information regarding the parameters for the expenditure of the funds is not expected to be received before the budget is finalized.

Chairman Dickson briefly reviewed the comments received by the public during the Public Hearing and the following responses to their questions were provided:

Possible Resident State Trooper Savings – The rank of the Resident State Trooper who will be filling Trooper Pariseau's position is unknown at this time.

The Emergency Services Director is paid an hourly rate of approximately \$25.00 and works 5 to 12 hours/week. The Director and the Selectman Liaison meet with both the Gardner Lake and Salem Volunteer Fire Company Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs on a regular basis.

The Acting First Selectman signs the necessary documents and acts as the First Selectman in his absence. He is a very active member who also serves as the Selectmen Liaison to Emergency Services; the position carries a certain amount of responsibility, justifying the proposed stipend.

Preliminary discussions ensued regarding possible ways in which the budget shortfall of \$693,376.00 (or 1.8 mils) could be made up. Clerk Collins stated the importance of informing and ensuring the public understands that the proposed budget could result in a 1.8 mil increase and the resulting ramification of their total tax bill, especially in light of the current revaluation. Clerk Collins expressed caution regarding the usage of their Unassigned Fund Balance and was adamant about not utilizing those funds for ongoing expenses.

The Board reviewed the Capital Plan Budget. Board Member Casciano suggested the possibility of expending some of their Assigned Fund Balance on some of the Public Works items, including the Road Improvement, Bucket Truck, and Field Groomer. First Selectman Lyden stated the possibility of utilizing the Federal ARP funds for the road improvement, which would be considered an infrastructure improvement. He expressed his opposition to delaying the purchase of the bucket truck, which is 32 years of age and is often used. He suggested the possibility of financing the vehicle to help spread out the costs. He also reported that the contractor has reviewed the paving and resealing of the Salem School Parking Lot with the Public Works Director and found that the front parking is in very good shape and would not require paving. As such, the cost would be reduced in the FY2022/23 Capital Plan budget. There is approximately \$1 million in the town's Assigned Fund Balance and they are limited to expending no more than \$100,000.00 of the town's Unassigned Fund Balance to keep within the Board's Fund Balance Policy and not affect their bond rating. Former Board Chairman TJ Butcher suggested the possibility of splitting the difference and paying for half of the shortage through the Assigned Fund Balance and raising the mil rate to cover the remaining shortfall. Clerk Collins proposed that, unless changes are made to the budget, the Board should conceptually think about utilizing \$693,000.00 from their Assigned Fund Balance to close the gap.

**M/S/C: Collins/Cadwell, to accept and send the FY2021/22 Budget with a total expenditure of \$16,373,682.00 to a virtual Town Meeting to be held on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. The Budget will be as follows:**

General Government	\$ 4,191,824.00
Board of Education	\$ 11,050,886.00
<u>Capital Expenditures</u>	<u>\$ 1,130,972.00</u>
	<b>\$ 16,373,682.00</b>

**Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 6-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Board Members Bourgeois, Cadwell, Casciano, Collins, Griggs, and Dickson. Voting in Opposition: None.**

## **6. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

BOE (Board of Education) Subcommittee (Board Members Cadwell and Griggs)

Board Member Griggs provided summaries of the BOE's recent meetings.

Fire Safety Subcommittee (Board Members Bourgeois and Casciano) – *no report*

**OLD BUSINESS** – *none*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**M/S/C: Collins/Griggs, to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem