

**SALEM BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY APRIL 13, 2017
7:00 P.M.
SALEM TOWN HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

Present: T.J. Butcher Chairman, G. Householder, Clerk, J. Griggs, H. Salas, M. Collins, W. Evanson Alt., J.Houchin Alt.

Absent: D. Cadwell

Guests: K. Lyden, P. Henry

CALL TO ORDER: T.J. Butcher called the meeting to order at 7:02

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS: None

SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

M/S/C: (Collins/Householder) to seat W. Evanson for D. Cadwell. Vote Approved Unanimously.

COMMUNICATONS:

T.J. Butcher read a communication between Suzanne Gendron and the First Selectman in which she stated her disappointment that the Public Hearing was held during school vacation. She made the members aware that many parents of school age children go on long planned vacations and were not able to attend the Public Hearing and voice their concerns. The chairman pointed out that the timing of the Public Hearing, Town Meeting and Referendum are all prescribed by the Town Charter and the Board has no option but to abide by the charter.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

M/S/C: (Griggs/Collins) to add, "approval of the auditor," as Agenda, item 4. Vote: Approved Unanimously.

AGENDA:

1. APPROVAL OF MARCH 23, 2017 BOF MEETING

M/S/C: (Griggs/Householder) to approve the minutes of March 23, 2017 Board of Finance Meeting as presented. Vote: Approved Unanimously

2. TREASURER' REPORT

- A. Revenue Summary-assets in line with liabilities, Salem generated \$164,000 in revenues during March
- B. Trial Balance
- C. Fund Balance
- D. Other

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

4. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

M/S/C (Householder/Griggs) to appoint O'Connor Davies as the town's auditor for fiscal year 2017/2018. Vote: Approved Unanimously

5. SELECTMAN'S REPORT

- K. Lyden congratulated the Board on the Public Hearing and thought they did a good job
- Good to see younger faces at the Public Hearing
- Rt. 85 update
- Lions Road Race was successful
- Seniors getting scam phone calls
- The town now owns a condo and has to pay maintenance fees, the tenant has to be out by May 1st after which the town will go to Town Meeting to sell the property
- K. Lyden may be coming back for more legal fees funding
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6. FINALIZE BUDGET FOR TOWN MEETING

The Board noted that approximately 44-48 people attended the Public Hearing. The Board went over the comments from the Public Hearing

- Memberships fees for dept. 100
- On call program
- Tax collector budget
- Why is the employee assistance program cut
- Does the school and town use the same oil company/rates
- Why did the library budget go up when told to cut
- Internet service at library
- Should we go to police force
- Is the liability insurance one policy for firehouse
- What are expendables in GLFD
- Physicals for FD
- Do trash companies bring recyclables to transfer station
- School and rec both cut weekend custodians
- Wants money for open space
- Can form letter be written to state legislatures
- Pay for SPED out of unassigned
- 6th grade teacher, is there a shortage
- SPED questions on numbers going up
- EDR
- Consider putting money back for SPED coach
- Consider returning cuts to BOE
- Restore all cuts
- Wants excel version of budget available
- More town cuts instead of BOE cuts
- Add more businesses to Salem
- Save the point .15 position
- Do more advertising about Boards and Commissions
- What if cuts are not that bad
- What if cuts are more than expected

- Staff the point .15 coach
- Talk to BOE about where the cuts come from
- Preschool and LEARN cost go to town not school
- Moved here because of schools and is disappointed about cuts
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G. Householder read an email regarding the budget process.

M/S/F (Griggs/Householder) to restore \$15,000 to the BOE.

Discussion: M. Collins stated he was not in favor of approving the increase. He stated the budget was very generous and after the discussion the previous year involving the technology position he was not inclined to fund and additional \$15,000 this year. Collins stated that this is dipping into a fund for a fix that could last for more than this year. The Board would be funding an operational expense which would then be built in.

G. Householder stated the school has shown they and the Director of Special Services have worked hard to bring back SPED children to the school, therefore saving \$250,000. He did not think an additional \$15,000 would add much to the budget, nor would it raise the mil rate. If the funds were taken out of the unassigned fund balance it would put that fund at 14.98% If they can bring back one child, they could possibly afford hiring another SPED teacher with the savings from outsourcing.

T.J. Butcher anticipates more taxes coming in than expected

T.J. Butcher believes that the additional funds for the Director of Special Services is showing support for the position and has shown she has saved the town significant money.

The Board looked at various ways they could rearrange the capital budget to possibly fund the position the following year.

K. Lyden stated that the BOF asked the town to cut a certain amount of funds and the town complied.

H. Salas believes that the BOE can find the funding to support the position.

Vote: Failed Unanimously

M/S/C (Householder/Collins) to approve the budget for presentation to the Town Meeting in the following amounts:

General Government:	3,693,384
BOE:	10,548,225
<u>Capital:</u>	<u>828,242</u>
Total:	15,069,851

Vote: Approved Unanimously

Additional Comments:

J. Griggs would like the BOE to come back with a plan to show that by hiring staff and bringing kids back that it would save money then the BOF would consider funding the position.

G. Householder asked if the Board would consider funding text books if the BOE came back at the end of the year and had \$50,000, would we entertain giving back \$19,000 for the books. The Board thought that would be a wise investment.

M. Siebert, BOE Chairman stated they came with a budget which would pass. In years past if sports, art, or music were cut, parents came out to oppose the budget because they were angry.

The goal was to get support for the budget, after budget is passed then the BOE can move things around.

K. Lyden stated the BOE has needed additional funds twice over the last four years and the BOF has accommodated the requests.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S/C (Collins/Householder) to adjourn at 8:08

Respectfully Submitted
Sue Spang