

**TOWN OF SALEM  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.  
SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING, VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

**Per State of Connecticut, Governor Lamont Executive Order Number 7B, the Town of Salem Board of Finance Special Meeting on May 28, 2020 will be following the suspension of in-person open meeting requirements.**

**Please click the link below to join the webinar:**

<https://zoom.us/j/99177424192?pwd=a1Btd3dDSDglWkNKWWJSa3paZDlnQT09>

**Password: 675351**

**Or Via Telephone:**

(312) 626 6799, (646) 558 8656, (346) 248 7799, (669) 900 9128, (253) 215 8782, or (301) 715 8592

**Webinar ID: 991 7742 4192 | Password: 675351**

**PRESENT**

William “Skip” Dickson, Chairman  
Marshall Collins, Clerk  
Corinne (Cory) Bourgeois  
Janet Griggs  
Hernan Salas  
John Bernier, Alternate  
Maryann Casciano, Alternate (*seated*)

**ABSENT**

Deborah Cadwell  
Dean Wojcik, Alternate

**ALSO PRESENT**

First Selectman Kevin Lyden

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Dickson called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**SEAT ALTERNATE IF NEEDED:**

**M/S/C: Collins/Griggs to seat Alternate Board Member Casciano for Full Board Member Cadwell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.**

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

- a. A copy of an e-mail from Former First Selectman Peter Sielman seeking assurance from the Board that the top priority behind the renaming and renumbering of the Fire Companies budget line items will be to achieve financial savings and that the Board will be monitoring their budgets.
- b. A copy of Clerk Collins’ response to Sue Spang’s comments, in which he offered to meet with her to discuss her concerns.

**AGENDA:**

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MAY 21, 2020 SPECIAL MEETING**

**M/S/C: Collins/Griggs, to approve the Board of Finance May 21, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor.**

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS (attached)**

*E-mail Public Comments to [financepubliccomment@saalemct.gov](mailto:financepubliccomment@saalemct.gov) or place in drop box located by the entrance to Town Hall prior to 7:10 p.m.*

The following public comments were received and summarized:

Kathleen Lyden, 50 Forest Drive, expressing her appreciation to the Board for their dedication, hard work, and sincere concern for the town's residents.

Elby Burr, 44 Emerald Glen Lane, commending the Board on a good job drafting, what he feels is, a very fair budget for fiscal year 2020/21, and ensuring that the town maintains its financial health.

Ann and Joe Duncan, 320 Hartford Road, expressing their wish that the "local taxes stay in check".

Larry & Cathy Benedict, 310 Round Hill Road, stating their hope that the taxes will not be raised this year.

Sue Spang, 129 Hartford Road, wrote regarding the BOE budget and comments that were primarily directed to one of the Board Members. Chairman Dickson stated that her comments have been responded to and will be dealt with accordingly. She also submitted questions regarding the Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company's lawsuit against the Town of Salem, which, Chairman Dickson felt, might be better directed to the Board of Selectmen.

Joseph Onofrio II, Superintendent of Schools, submitted two comments stating that the amount needed to support the Teachers Retirement Incentive is \$75,000.00 and the need to fulfill the requirement to fund the entire cost of the oil tank replacement and school roof project and ensuring the receipt of the State reimbursement. In response, Chairman Dickson stated that the Board has discussed the issue and plans to discuss and determine the mechanics of its funding in the near future. Clerk Collins suggested the possibility of requesting the status and clarification of the School Construction State Reimbursement formula from their State Senator and Representative. Board Member Griggs agreed, on the condition that a response is provided prior to the deadline date. Clerk Collins agreed, adding that the request should include the need for a response to be received before their next regular meeting so that they could begin discussing and planning the project's funding. The item will be added to their agenda.

Dave Kennedy, 330 Round Hill Road, wrote in opposition to a tax increase at this time, given the negative financial effects many of the townspeople are currently experiencing as the result of the pandemic.



**3. UPDATE BUDGET TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL \$20,000.00 FOR TOWN COUNSEL, TOWN ISSUES, LINE ITEM 5-126-208**

Chairman Dickson stated that the additional appropriation was discussed and approved by the Board during last week's meeting, but was not included in their budget calculations.

**4. FINAL BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS**

The Board discussed the possibility of reducing Line Item 14, BOE Teacher Retirement Incentive, in the Capital Plan as only three (3) teachers have accepted the Incentive before the deadline. It was felt that maintaining the additional funds would ensure that funding is available should the BOE offer the Incentive during the next school year. First Selectman Lyden stated that, in accordance with the Town Charter, a Town Meeting would be required should the requested amount for the additional appropriation meet or exceed \$32,000.00.

Clerk Collins suggested decreasing the line item by \$25,000.00 and increasing Line Item 5-126-208, Town Counsel, Town Issues by \$25,000.00, rather than by \$20,000.00, thereby balancing the budget evenly. In support of the increase, he added that the members of the Board of Selectmen originally proposed a request of \$50,000.00 and that the legal fees could easily exceed the currently budgeted amount. Discussion ensued regarding whether they could allocate more than the requested funds.

Board Member Casciano expressed her concern, feeling that maintaining the additional funds in the Teacher Retirement Incentive Line could set a precedent of permanently offering the Incentive. In response, Chairman Dickson stated that neither the Line Item nor the offer is permanent and that the Board may discuss the issue in the future, should they wish to offer the same or similar incentive in the following year(s).

**M/S/C: Salas/Bourgeois, to increase the funding amount for Line Item 5-126-208, Town Counsel, Town Issues, by \$5,000.00 for a total of \$49,600.00. Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 5-1. Voting in Favor: Board Members Bourgeois, Collins, Griggs, Salas, and Dickson. Voting in Opposition: Board Member Casciano.**

**M/S/C: Collins/Salas, to reduce Line Item 14, BOE Teacher Retirement Incentive, in the Town of Salem Capital Plan from \$150,000.00 to \$125,000.00. Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 6-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Board Members Bourgeois, Casciano, Collins, Griggs, Salas, and Dickson. Voting in Opposition: None.**

**5. ADOPT TOWN OF SALEM JULY 1, 2020 – JUNE 30, 2021 BUDGET**

**M/S/C: Collins/Bourgeois to approve and adopt the Fiscal Year 2020/21 Budget as follows:**

General Government	\$ 4,032,859.00
Board of Education	\$ 10,975,886.00
Capital Improvement	<u>\$ 1,111,143.00</u>
	\$ 16,119,888.00

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

**6. SET MIL RATE**

**M/S/C: Collins/Casciano, to maintain the mil rate of 32.2 for Fiscal Year 2020/21.**

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

First Selectman Lyden commended and expressed his appreciation to the Board Members for their hard work and diligence. Chairman Dickson thanked all of the members on the Board for all of their hard work in crafting a budget that, he felt, is fair to all of the residents of the town.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**M/S/C: Casciano/Bourgeois, to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 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