



**Town of North Stonington
Board of Finance Special Meeting
North Stonington Education Center & Zoom Meeting March 27, 2024
7:00 PM**

Minutes:

1. Call to Order: (7:09 pm) Michael Anderson, Chairman; Dan Smith, Vice Chairman; Louis Gingerella, Winona Berdine, Amy Friend, Gary Annino, Carl Johnston, and Sarah Nelson (online).
2. Public Comments: None
3. Correspondence: Letter from Pat Lewis in regards to Wheeler Athletics.
4. Board of Selectman & Board of Education Present Budget Revisions, if applicable:
 - Board of Education Chairwoman Stephanie Mastroianni presented a revised budget for the North Stonington Board of Education with a reduction of approximately \$82,000. After intensive review, Superintendent of Schools Troy Hopkins also found that contractual obligations were off in budget lines 14, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 43, 55; a discrepancy between contract increases vs step increases; revealing \$156,509. Discussion of lines 14, 20, and line 55 having direct correlation to new retirements; all of this increasing monies already budgeted to \$270,834.11 and as a result, the Board of Education budget ask has an increase of only 1.79%, as opposed to the 3.336% increase as was originally proposed, a \$238,509.71 difference.
 - First Selectman Bob Carlson presented a \$16,750 total reduction in the Selectman's Budget. This reduction reduced the highway department's snow removal overtime (B27.08B) by \$15,000, as well as, removing funds from 501C3 organizations that have not requested funding. \$1,000 was added back to the town's Recreation Commission(B16) budget. \$255,259.71 moved from said budget could be a 40% of a mil reduction.
 - Brief discussion of capital going forward. Together, the boards have been able to reduce the budget without touching capital, looking to a potential underspend of \$255,259.71, raising the question of reducing the mil rate, push into undesignated fund, or pushing to capital. An unofficial straw poll by the Board of Finance unanimously resulted in moving towards a mil rate reduction for 2024/2025.

- Discussion of when to vote to go to public meeting. Gary Annino motioned to bring the Town of North Stonington/Board of Education budget to town meeting as proposed, with Dan Smith in to second that motion. Gary Annino amends motion to include the date of town meeting to take place on Monday April 22, 2024, with Dan Smith as the second on that motion, as amended, and the vote is 6-0-0.
 - Review of Minutes: Tabled
Noted: Public hearing will be 4/22/24 and is led by the Board of Finance. The Town Meeting will be May 6, 2024 and is led by the Board of Selectmen. The Town Budget Referendum is expected to take place May 20, 2024.
 - Public Comments: Heard
5. Meeting April 3, 2024, cancelled; Next meeting will be April 10, 2024.
6. Adjournment: Gary Annino motioned to adjourn with Dan Smith in to second that motion, with board voting to adjourn at 8:20pm, 6-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Friend

North Stonington Board of Finance

*Please connect to the link provided for the complete recording of said meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/live/3v40nGTMDHU?si=zTsyahAI794arLLf>