

North Stonington Board of Finance Meeting

Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020

North Stonington Media Center "Old" M/H School/Zoom Meeting @7:00pm

North Stonington, CT

1. **Call to Order:** 7:03pm, Members present: Chairman Dan Spring, Alternate Brett Mastroianni filling in for Paul Simonds, Dan Smith, Anne Akin, Carolyn Howell, Michael Anderson, Alternate Sarah Nelson
2. **Public Comments:** none
3. **Appropriation Request: A-2021-002** N. Stonington has been given a STEAP grant of \$126,860 to use for milling and paving Kingswood and Cedar Ridge neighborhoods. This grant requires a \$175,000 match from the town, these funds were in the 2020-2021 approved budget. The grant also requires the town to spend the money to complete the project before the funds are reimbursed by the state. Motion from Chairman Dan Spring to approve the Board of Selectmen's request for an appropriation to C1.18 in the amount of \$126,860 for use on a STEAP grant for milling and paving the Kingswood and Cedar Ridge neighborhoods. 2nd- Anne Akin

Discussion-STEAP grant will match dollar for dollar what N. Stonington spends on the project up to \$126,860. Money received from state for reimbursement will be put back into the undesignated fund. \$175K in 2020-2021 budget, line item B27.02, was earmarked for this specific project, not just a general repaving budget open to any road in town that needed repaving work. Still have LOCIP money (B27.00) and state aid for improved town roads (B27.01) to cover other paving needs in the town.

Vote: 6/0/0 Appropriation approved

4. **Reports: Profit/Loss BoS/BoE, Tax Report, Student Activity Report:**
 - a) Profit/Loss BoS July-Oct2020- All capital project money should be considered spent since it has come out of the general fund and been put into specific line items. The only at risk expenditure identified is for 298 Norwich Westerly Rd. which is already overspent.
 - b) Profit/Loss BoE Oct2020- some discussion on two different software packages used to generate BoE and BoS P/L reports, and the need to find a single platform capable of supporting both. Also discussed transfers in BoE budget and how according to Policy 2016-001 a monthly summary of these should be made available to the BoF.
 - c) Oct2020 Tax Report- no significant changes from last month.
 - d) Student Activity Report- This is new to us. We will now be receiving this as a quarterly report due to a state directive brought to our attention by the town auditor.
5. **ReVal 2020 Update:** No new information. All properties have been assessed. Currently reviewing 60 building permits submitted to see if the build was completed, done to code, and did it increase the value. Reval must be completed by mid-December. Values have increased by more than 8%, aren't expecting the mil rate to decrease by the same amount, but there will be some adjustment.
6. **BoF Policies Review:**

- a) Policy 2016-02, End of FY Budget Reconciliation- Sarah Nelson has drafted a revision of this policy that she will send to all board members for review.
- b) Undesignated Fund Balance Policy- Brett Mastroianni will share information he has gathered with Anne Akin and Dan Smith, and the group will meet within the next week to discuss
- c) Policy 2017-1, Loss of Outside Revenues- Revision of policy will reduce it to “actions taken in event of a loss of outside revenue will be driven by state statutes” and links to relevant statutes will be provided.
- d) Policy 2016-001, Appropriations, Transfer Requests- revisions have been submitted, discussion will be tabled until next meeting.

7. Previous Minutes:

- a) 16Sept2020- Section 5-Strike sentence beginning “ Hope to recover”. Remove item 3c5 if there is nothing that should be in this section.
Motion by Chairman Dan Spring to approve the minutes of 16Sep2020 as amended. 2nd- Dan Smith
Mike Anderson will abstain as he was not present for this meeting.
Vote: 5/0/1 Minutes approved as amended.
- b) 21Oct2020- Item 4c, question on paying expenses on middle/high school should be moved from 4c to 4a.
Motion by Chairman Dan Spring to approve the minutes of 21Oct2020 as amended. 2nd- Mike Anderson
Dan Smith will abstain as he was not present for this meeting.
Vote: 5/0/1 Minutes approved as amended.

8. Future Strategies, Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Planning, Annual Report, Meeting Schedule:

- a) Scheduling some training on OpenGov software would benefit most of the BoF members. Christine Dias will look to provide this at our next meeting.
- b) An annual summary of appropriations and transfers from the BoS and the BoE would be helpful with the annual audit as well as reducing a lot of questions that get asked several times during the budget process. It is also tied into the bigger picture of the town budget and will help identify trends.
- c) Budget planning for 2021-2022- Should we start earlier? Selectman Nita Kincaid has proposed a tri-board meeting, Monday Nov. 23rd, to discuss the schedule of the budget process and how it can be improved and made more useful to everyone. Chairman Dan Spring will attend and will designate a second board member to attend as well. It will be a Zoom meeting, so all board members can observe.
- d) Annual Reports- Most but not all are in. We expect the audit report by the end of the year so that Chairman Dan Spring can complete the BoF annual report. Christine Dias has the approval of the BoF to send out a notice to delinquent departments saying that the BoF will be using reporting compliance as part of their analysis of the upcoming budget requests.
- e) Cancelled Meetings- Recent meeting cancellations have been due to lack of reports leading to very little to discuss. Request that cancelled meetings be turned into workshops so the board can complete policy revisions or other tasks that don’t require a formal meeting.

9. Public Comment:

- a) Sean Murphy- Has a question on C2.01, mac truck refurbishment, what is the plan for this? Christine Dias indicated that this was for the '87 or '97 truck at the transfer station and the money has not been spent yet. Sean Murphy would like clarification on whether this refurbishment is to be done on the truck that is scheduled to be replaced with an electric vehicle. Christine Dias needs to check before she can answer this. Sean Murphy would like to know if the BoF gets a manager's report on the capital items. Thinks it would be a good idea since the P/L report does not indicate progress on capital items. The BoF does not currently get a manager's report on capital items.
- b) Joe Gross- Board only got part of definition for encumbrance, did not get definition of encumbrance at the end of the year. This is the first meeting where he has heard the P/L statements discussed as much as we did. If we compared monthly P/L statements we would see what is happening. The BoE hides nothing, the transfers are there. Believes every board and commission throughout the year should operate according to their needs, but at the end of the year, the BoF should state the format we want the info presented in so that we can clearly understand it. Confused, 2% could be a heck of a good profit for ? Tri-board meetings- sees a lot of people playing nice during the tri-board meeting, but as soon as they go back to their individual meeting they run everybody down lie crazy and don't discuss the items that should be brought back for discussion, has facts from past to support this position. Chairman should provide new board members with the Boards of Finance handbook so that they would know exactly what they are doing on the board. Tonight's meeting has been a lot of talking, and no doing. Budget is a 12 month process, not an end of year thing. We should be very grateful for all the work Christine Dias does for this town, and we are not using her as much as we should. Chairman Dan Spring has a lot of interaction with the BoE and should be able to answer most of the BoF questions that come up regarding the BoE. Public is not here to be against the BoF, they are here to help and he is willing to help us in any way he can.

10. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 9:32pm by Chairman Dan Spring, 2nd by Dan Smith. Approved 6/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Akin
BoF Secretary