

Town of Easton
Board of Finance – Special Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Thursday, March 15, 2022 – 7:00 pm
Location: Easton Senior Center
650 Morehouse Road, Easton, CT and
And Virtual meeting using the Zoom app.
A recording of this meeting is located at:
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/easton-board-of-finance>

Attendees: Members: Art Laske-Chair, Jackie Kaufman-Clerk (Zoom), Andy Kachele, Paul Skrtich, Ira Kaplan, Michael Kot; Alternates Present, but not seated: Michael Gutowski (Zoom), Gregg Saunders (Zoom), Maureen Williams
Absentee(s): --
Guest(s): Christine Calvert-Finance Director/Treasurer; Dr. David Bindelglass-First Selectman, Kristi Sogofsky, Second-Selectman
Call to Order: Meeting called to order at: 7:04 pm by: Art Laske

I. Appointment of Alternates

NONE.

II. Discuss and Approve the Meeting Minutes of March 1 & 2, 2022.

Chairman Laske proposed to review minutes at a later time to make time first for special guests. No objections from the Board.

III. Review Budgets for the Following:

A. Registrar of Voters

- Dori Wollen, Registrar for 1.5 years, and David Smith, presented on behalf of the Registrar of Voters.
 - In the fiscal year ahead, an \$80,000 approximate budget was proposed and represents a \$4000+/- increase from last year. Elections are the primary budget driver (5 elections: November, May Budget vote, possible referendums; and 2 miscellaneous, as necessary); each vote requires a different number of people and therefore is budgeted accordingly. Cost of poll workers has increased due to increase in minimum wage.
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- Service to the public is our responsibility, “Gatekeepers of Democracy”. Mr. Smith shared that you want to make sure you are spending enough money to ensure all ballots are counted.
 - Costs include having enough ballots; we cannot predict who will show up and we cannot run out. Travel costs, non-union wages, continuing ed and certification fees for staff, moderators, postage line items discussed.
 - Ms. Wollen and Mr. Smith answer questions from the Board regarding budgets for recounts; differences in costs between absentee and regular ballots (there are no differences); the split district fees for voting districts 1&2 (no substantial cost increase); the average number of elections.

B. Conservation

- Dori Wollen presented on behalf of Conservation
- Budget has modestly/minimally increased: wages & benefits/personnel increase which the First Selectman agreed to; operational costs: legal notice fees and postage fee increase, continuing education, removal of trees (completed), storm resiliency and clean up. We plan to use money for other maintenance by Heritage Drive, fix the entrance, so people can approach the open space, we need to finish the job; and open space on the Morehouse Property.
- Ms. Wollen answers questions of the Board regarding maintenance of the open spaces and storm resiliency/cleanup.

C. Health

- Marc Cooper presented on behalf of the Aspetuck Health District and Doreen Collins (Board Member/Easton Representative) Westport/Weston Health District (on Zoom)
- Cost of operations shared between Towns on a per capita basis and state allows us to look at different formulas, such as amount of activity and Easton is about 14% of the total and budget request is lower, as a result of using this formula (Approx. \$125,000).
- Mr. Cooper answers questions from the Board about the consulting firm hired to guide the health district; reserves and grants; revenue v. expenses; programming; staffing; office expenditures.

D. Public Works, 660 Morehouse Road, Recycling, Street Lights

- Ed Nagy presented on behalf of Public Works.
 - Mr. Nagy answered questions from the Board regarding: recycling contracts; garbage removal; school building needs; budgetary needs for the small items custodians cannot cover and the occasional need for outside vendors; roof conditions & associated costs to repair same for town buildings, such as the
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schools; timing of capital projects and expenditures; longevity payments/stipends; roadway paving and associated costs.

- Review of 22-23 budget and transfer of funding from this year to next year. \$36,000+/- necessary to see through items from this year budget. That number is not a line item and should be included.

IV. Any other budgets as deemed necessary.

- Ms. Calvert advised the Board that a Special Appropriation may be necessary for the Town Clerk due to changes in Town Clerk staffing. Dr. Bindleglass presented that the Assistant Town Clerk will require additional hours to train to be prepared to take the position of Town Clerk and that associated budgetary changes will also result (benefits, hours, subsequent replacement for Assistant Town Clerk position). Ms. Calvert said next year's budget will be adjusted accordingly. Ms. Calvert will report on the amount of the Special Appropriate amount in the future.
- Ms. Calvert discussed anticipated refinements to certain budgets that are expected and requests made to date for other departments to come back and associated scheduling of same. Discussion among the Board Members regarding requests for department call backs.

V. Adjournment

Action/Motion: M. Kot made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 pm.

Motion (Second): Motion Seconded by I. Kaplan.

Result: Unanimous approval to adjourn.

Submitted by,



Jacqueline O. Kaufman – Clerk