



INSTR # M2023000671

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DEBORAH SZEGEDI

TOWN CLERK

EASTON CT

Town of Easton CT

Board of Finance – Regular Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Tuesday November 14, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Location: Easton Senior Center, 650 Morehouse Road; also on Zoom

Recording: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/easton-board-of-finance>

Attendees: Members in person: Art Laske, Andy Kachele, Ira Kaplan, Jackie Kaufman, Michael Gutowski
Members on Zoom: Paul Skrtich
Alternates in person: Maureen Williams, Gregg Saunders (one alternate seat vacant)

Absentees: None

Guests: Christine Calvert, Treasurer and Finance Director
Dave Bindelglass, First Selectman
Danielle Alves, Park & Recreation Director
Rocky Sullivan and Carolyn Oppenheim, Park & Recreation Commission Chair and Member
Ed Nagy, Department of Public Works Director

Call to Order: By Chair Art Laske at 7:00 pm

1. (Agenda item #1) Election of New Officers
Nomination of Art Laske for Chair, by Ira/Jackie.
Nomination of Andy Kachele for Chair, by Paul/Jackie.
 Vote on Art election: 4 in favor (Ira, Jackie, Mike, Art) – 1 against (Paul) – 1 abstains (Andy)
 Result: Art Laske elected Chair
Nomination of Ira Kaplan for Clerk, by Jackie/Mike. Result: passes 6-0.
2. Discuss and approve the meeting minutes of October 3, 2023. (7:04)
Motion to approve minutes, by Andy/Jackie. Result: passes 6-0.
3. Discussion and possible action on allocating funds from the Field Use account for the Ford Pick-up truck.
 Danielle explains needed engine replacement, steps to seek diagnosis and repair, and that it is past warranty. Park & Rec Field Use account at \$193,041 with \$123,041 available. Danielle confirms unused funds will return to Field Use account, and describes estimates obtained, requesting \$15,000. Motion to authorize use of up to \$15,000 from Field Use account to replace engine in pickup truck, by Andy/Mike. Result: passes 6-0.
4. Discuss and possible action on allocating funds from the Activity account for the Dog Park and windows.
 Danielle explains why fencing for Dog Park needs replacement, and replacement options. Park & Rec Activity account at \$131,858 with \$61,858 available. Danielle requests \$17,000 for fence.
 Danielle explains need to reimburse schools for three broken windows, broken by rocks launched by equipment used by Park & Rec, for \$4,160. Motion to allocate \$4,160 from Activity fund to Park & Rec to cover reimbursement cost for three windows, consistent with figures presented, by Jackie/Mike. Result: passes 6-0. Motion to authorize expenditure up to \$17,000 from Activity Fund for fencing around Easton Dog Park, by Andy/Jackie. Result: passes 5-1 (Paul votes no).
5. Discuss and possible action on allocating funds from the unassigned fund balance to cover the cost of repairs on the Town Hall chimney and boiler. (7:26)

Ed explains he is presenting information and is not making a request at this time. He describes water leaks by police department, and discovery of problems with town hall chimney. Slate roof and chimney are from 1937. Ed discusses different options for addressing issue, including considerations for boilers and oil tanks. He describes different bids for chimney work. He describes redundant boilers used in different buildings as backup boilers and for supplemental heat. Gregg and Jackie ask about historical significance of chimney. Dave explains high cost of switching to natural gas. Paul asks about alternative heating options. Ed expects to go forward over next few weeks with chimney bid at \$11,850, with money from Maintenance & Repair, and says we can deal with replenishing funds in next budget cycle.

6. Update from the EMS Planning and Building committee. (7:55)
Art reads 11/11/23 email from committee Chair Bill Andrews (attached to these minutes) on status. Describes search for architect, issues with property, timeline, and project coordination. Dave says two more architects might soon be in the mix. Andy raises procedural questions about environmental testing, committee minutes, invoices, actions and authority of Justin Giorlando, possible ground contamination, and need to test existing property because of soil disturbance.
7. Treasurer's Report. (8:06)
Chris describes us as in spend mode this time of year. Gregg notes favorable % Collected vs. Budget. Chris explains levels of delinquent taxes, and confirmed the report still shows the 6/30/2022 Undesignated Fund Balance.
8. Discuss and possible action on Munis Financial Report for appropriations and revenue presented by the Finance Director. (8:10)
Chris says we are in good shape, and notes collected interest is much higher than budgeted. Preliminary indications suggest Pension will need about \$100,000 infusion, and that Easton's % share of Region 9 costs will decrease (with some Easton students going to private school rather than Barlow). Easton Board of Education just recently announced return of \$427,000 to town from fiscal year ended 6/30/23. Art asked about expenditures for town attorney, and Chris explained it is for assessment appeals and South Park issue, but said she did not expect to fall short on annual budget. Gregg asked about finalizing lease on South Park tenants and Dave said he plans to finalize within a week.

Art mentioned that we have an open seat for an alternate member, and Dave said he expects a selection at the 12/7/23 Board of Selectmen meeting.

9. Motion to adjourn by Ira/Jackie. Result: passes 6-0 at 8:15.
Next regular meeting Tuesday, December 5, 2023.

Submitted 11/15/23 by Ira Kaplan, BOF Clerk

----- Forwarded message -----

From: William Andrews <wandrews178@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Nov 11, 2023 at 11:48 AM

Subject: EMS Building Committee Update

To: Art Laske <acl@laskelaw.com>

Hello Art

Congratulations on the election.

Here is the status of the EMS building.

Architect

Despite having ~16 inquiries, we only received information from 2 architects. We intend to ask a sample of those who did not submit RFQs the reasons why. This exercise will purely be to assess any problems we did not foresee.

We will be interviewing the two architects with the intention of making a choice that will eventually be a recommendation to the BOF.

Property

Work is being done on the property in anticipation of the renovation. Firms have been engaged to perform site work, determine wetlands and septic work. Additionally, a firm has been engaged to perform a Phase 1 test of the land to be purchased. A Phase 1 report is expected by the end of November. The expectation is that the Phase 1 work will result in the need for a Phase 2 study.

There has been no change in negotiations on the purchase of the property pending results of Phase 1.

The CT DOT stated that a response regarding approval would be sent within 30 days.

Timeline

Given the current deliverables of the subcontractors, the timing presented to the BOF is moving at least one month later to allow for Phase 2 work. While we will work to select an architect, we will not engage a firm until we have a better understanding of the Phase 2 work.

Coordination

I am pleased to report that much of the vendor work is being coordinated by Town Hall with particular leadership by Justin Giorlando. Justin has technical knowledge of site work and has the time to focus on the coordination of vendors.

Please let me know if you would like to chat about any other updates or more details.

Bill Andrews