

Town of Easton CT
Board of Finance – Special Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Thursday March 7, 2024 – 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, Michael Gutowski

Alternates in person: Gregg Saunders, Maureen Williams, Joe Glavan

Absentees: Members Paul Skrtich, Jackie Kaufman

Guests: Christine Calvert, Treasurer and Finance Director

Dave Bindelglass, First Selectman

Kristi Sogofsky and Nick D'Addario, Board of Selectmen

Justin Giorlando, Land Use Consultant

John Foley, Planning & Zoning Commission Chair

Jason McKinnon, ER9 Superintendent

Randy Hicks, Easton Board of Education Chair

Sara Scrofani, ER9 Director of Finance, Operations and Technology

Stephanie Pierson Ugol, ER9 Assistant Superintendent

Call to Order: By Chair Art Laske at 7:02 pm

Art appoints Gregg as alternate in place of Paul, per Paul's request.

Art appoints Maureen as alternate in place of Jackie, per Jackie's request.

1. Review Budgets for the Following:
 - a. Planning & Zoning (7:03)
 - b. Board of Education (7:17)

Justin and John presented (a) and discussed increase in consulting fees, gateway signs, and capital project requests. Jason and Randy presented (b) with slideshow. They discussed contractual salaries for teachers and paraeducators, special education costs, transportation, grants, enrollment changes, staffing changes, pre-K population, reductions in certified teachers at SSES, Excess Cost grants, new kindergarten entry age, and breakage. The Chair called a recess at 8:46.

2. Discuss and possible action on a request from the Board of Education for a special appropriation to cover a shortfall in the Special Education budget. (8:51)

Jason reviewed the drivers of the increased costs, noting the difficulties in hiring new paraeducators. Jason, Sara, and Stephanie discussed the spending freeze in place to mitigate costs. Dave asked what the BOE would do if the request were not approved, and Randy discussed health care reserves and staff cuts. We discussed if the request for \$600,000 was enough, or if there should be an increase for additional surprises, with Randy concluding that \$600,000 will suffice. Dave explained that the BOS will have a special meeting on 3/8/24 to call a special town meeting for Monday 3/25/24, conveniently the same night as the BOF Public Budget Hearing. Motion to recommend to town meeting the approval of a special appropriation of \$600,000 to the BOE from the undesignated fund balance, by Andy/Gregg. Result: passes 6-0.
3. Any other budgets as deemed necessary.

Chris said Cemetery Committee would present on Tuesday 3/12/24.
4. Motion to adjourn by Andy/Mike. Result: passes 6-0 at 9:23.

Next meeting: special meeting Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Submitted 3/8/24 by Ira Kaplan, BOF Clerk



INSTR # M2024000170
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DEBORAH SZEGEDI
TOWN CLERK EASTON CT