

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance held at 7:00 P.M., on Wednesday, March 14, 2007.

Members Present: Acting Chairman Peterson, First Selectman Kopetz, Mr. Gillen, Mr. Doheny, Mr. Feinberg, Mr. Hallahan and Mr. Freda

Also Present: Director of Finance V.E. Palmeri

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Acting Chairman Peterson.

The following materials were either mailed to the members prior to this meeting or distributed at this time.

1. Agenda – March 7, 2007
2. Minutes of Regular Meeting held on February 14, 2007
3. February 28, 2007 - Report of Budget/Overexpenditures/Special Funds
 - Report of Revenue
 - Board of Education Accounting
4. Draft – Resolutions (3) FY 2007-2008 Budget and Public Hearing
5. IOM dated 2/9/07, Estimates of State Formula Aid to Municipalities
6. IOM dated 2/15/07, Portable Classroom Lease at NHMS
7. IOM dated 2/16/07, Transmittal, Board of Education FY 2007-08 Budget
8. IOM dated 3/8/07, Fire Marshal Fees
9. Decrement List dated 3/14/07
10. Budget Recap dated 3/14/07
11. Income Budget dated 3/14/07
12. Draft Resolution dated 3/14/07, Rescue Vehicle

MINUTES

After a brief discussion of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 14, 2007, Mr. Gillen moved their acceptance, seconded by Mr. Doheny.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - Yes
	Hallahan - Yes		

OLD BUSINESS

DRAFT RESOLUTION RESCUE VEHICLE

Mr. Palmeri distributed the draft resolution. Mr. Peterson moved to bring the matter of the rescue vehicle onto the agenda.

Seconded by Mr. Kopetz.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - Yes
	Hallahan - Yes		

Mr. Kopetz stated that at the Special Town Meeting last night (March 13, 2007), it was clear that Town residents want to replace the rescue vehicle with a one more comparable to the vehicles we now have.

Mr. Doheny agreed and said that Board of Finance wants to do what is in the best interest of the Town.

Mr. Peterson stated that the Board makes a good faith effort to do what is best for the Town, consistent with fiscal constraints and he felt that the rescue vehicle as proposed earlier would have met the needs of the Fire Department. He noted that at no time in the foreseeable future shall it be the intent of the Town to transport patients under any circumstances.

Mr. Peterson then moved the following:

RESOLVED: That it is recommended that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting to take action on the acceptance of this recommendation to appropriate to the Capital Account of the FY 06-07 Budget a sum, not to exceed \$140,000., for the purchase one (1) replacement EMT/Rescue Vehicle for the Fire Department; and, be it further resolved, that the Town authorize that the cost of this appropriation be defrayed by the expenditure of a portion of the unappropriated fund balance.

Seconded by, Mr. Gillen.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - Yes
	Hallahan - Yes		

NEW BUSINESS

REPORT OF BUDGET/OVEREXPENDITURES/SPECIAL FUNDS, REVENUE AND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACCOUNTING FEBRUARY 28, 2007

Mr. Palmeri referred to these reports stating that tax collections at the end of February were at 98.9%, which is consistent with prior years. Mr. Palmeri reviewed the overexpenditure report in detail. Further discussion followed. The reports were accepted as presented.

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

Mr. Hallahan suggested that the part time line in the Election Budget be combined with the full time line since they do not use part time help.

After some discussion, Mr. Hallahan moved that the part time line in the Election Budget of the current FY be rolled into the full time line and that the sum in question be paid retroactively and for the balance of the FY, to the Registrars of Voters, subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

Seconded by Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Palmeri stated that the problem will not be fixed permanently unless it is done through the budget every year.

VOTE: Peterson - Yes
Freda - Yes
Hallahan -Yes

Gillen - Yes
Doheny - No

Kopetz - Yes
Feinberg - Yes

FINALIZE FY 2007-2008 BUDGET

Mr. Palmeri distributed a proposed decrement list and budget recap sheet.

Mr. Peterson stated that the decrement list contains items that are recommended to be eliminated from and/or included in the Town Government Budget. The proposed increase in the Town Government Budget is 12.4%, the Board of Education will increase 4%, with an overall proposed increase of 7.9%. The current mill rate is 27.80 and the proposed mill rate for FY 07-08 would be 26.95. Mr. Peterson explained that the jump in the Town Government Budget is due to the debt service for the high school which is 4.91% of the increase, Pension/Social Security which is 1.14% of the increase, utilities which is 1.07% of the increase and operations which is 5.28% of the increase.

Mr. Kopetz stated that the decrement list contains a factor for raises for non-bargaining unit personnel which is in line with or less than increases granted to the Town's bargaining units.

Mr. Hallahan stated that \$4 million has been cut from the Capital Budget and this cannot continue to happen. He asked the Board if they were going to pursue the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund.

Mr. Peterson said that they are, but wanted to get through this budget first. He noted that the fund can be approached more intelligently once we know how much will be available in the Fund Balance, over and above the required 7%-9% of total budget.

Mr. Kopetz stated that he strongly supports the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund and that money should be taken from the Fund Balance and put into this fund rather than taxing for it at this time. We need to address capital items such as equipment, vehicles and infrastructure.

Mr. Feinberg felt the increase in the budget is too high for taxpayers. He suggested that they look at their assessment to calculate what their tax increase will be. He said that the reality is that the library will still be closed one day and that the pool hours will still be reduced.

Mr. Freda stated that he felt it was a bare bones budget and the only way to significantly reduce the budget would be to lay people off and cut programs, which the Board does not want to do.

Mr. Gillen agreed and said that if the budget doesn't pass both the Board of Education and the Town would have to share the burden of any reductions – not just the Town alone.

Further discussion followed.

At 7:55 PM Mr. Peterson suggested that the Board recess for 15 minutes +/- to review in caucus the proposals discussed thus far. The Board agreed, recessed and reconvened at 8:15 PM at which time the Chairman invited additional comments.

Mr. Doheny then moved the following:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Finance recommends to the Public Hearing a FY 2007-2008 Town Government Budget of \$37,541,592.

Seconded by Mr. Peterson.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - No
	Hallahan - No		

Mr. Doheny then moved the following:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Finance recommends to the Public Hearing a FY 2007-2008 Board of Education Budget of \$40,403,198.

Seconded by, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Hallahan made a motion to amend the resolution to read:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Finance recommends to the Public Hearing a FY 2007-2008 Board of Education Budget of \$40,603,198 representing a decrease of \$200,000/½%, (rather than \$400,000/1%), the additional cost of which could be defrayed by revenue to be received from Town Clerk fees.

Seconded by, Mr. Feinberg.

Mr. Peterson noted that the law allowing collection of the Town Clerk’s fees which Mr. Hallahan proposes to spend, sunsets at the end of this FY and may not be there at all. Moreover, he said, the State budget is less clear this year than ever before and it is no time to be speculative or liberal with the revenue estimate. Mr. Palmeri noted that the estimates for both revenue and expense will be updated both for this version of the budget and for the final version.

VOTE:	Peterson - No	Gillen - No	Kopetz - No
	Freda - No	Doheny - No	Feinberg - Yes
	Hallahan - Yes		

Mr. Peterson then called for a vote on the original resolution.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - No
	Hallahan - No		

Mr. Freda moved the following:

RESOLVED: That a FY 2007-2008 Budget recommendation of \$77,944,790. be presented to the Public Hearing to be held on Wednesday, April 4, 2007, with the Board of Education Budget to be presented first, beginning at 7:00 P.M., followed by the Town Government Budget, to begin no later than 8:00 P.M., with general discussion to follow as may be warranted.

Seconded by, Mr. Peterson.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - No
	Hallahan - No		

OTHER

None.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM, seconded by Mr. Feinberg.

VOTE:	Peterson - Yes	Gillen - Yes	Kopetz - Yes
	Freda - Yes	Doheny - Yes	Feinberg - Yes
	Hallahan - Yes		