

Town of Southington  
Board of Finance  
Wednesday, September 14, 2016

STENOGRAPHER'S NOTE: The Minutes are now being prepared in summary style. Please refer to the audio or videotape for more details.

Approved to date.....	\$	0
Approved this meeting.....		<u>0</u>
Total Appropriations.....	\$	0

Appropriations with Revenue Offsets:

Approved to date.....	\$1,105,580
Approved this meeting.....	<u>30,000</u>
Total Appropriations.....	\$1,135,580

Chairman John Leary called the Regular Meeting of the Town of Southington Board of Finance to order at 7:0 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall with the following members in attendance:

Joseph Labieniec, Edward Pocock, Jr., James Coleman, Sr., & John Moise

Also in attendance: Emilia Portelinha, Finance Director  
Garry Brumback, Town Manager

ABSENT: Kevin Beaudoin, Board member

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited by everyone in attendance.

**JOHN LEARY, CHAIR, Presiding:**

**III. Public Hearing Items**

None

**IV. Old Business**

1. Approval of Minutes from the meeting of July 27, 2016.

Motion to approve by Mr. Coleman seconded by Mr. Moise and Mr. Pocock. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

**V. Assess current financial state of the town**

**1. Review revenue vs budget**

Ms. Portelinha noted we are two months into the fiscal year, already. Currently our interest on tax is about \$10,000 over budget, building permit and fees is \$25,000 above budget. Interest on investments is about \$20,000 above budget. Grant (Municipal Revenue Tax Sharing Sales Tax Sharing) came in at \$100,000 more than we budgeted but we were aware of that --- hoping for that. The State has decided that on some of the grants, rather than giving us an annual installment they're going to give us quarterly installments --- even months. The Town Clerk fees are currently about \$60,000 above budget and one of the factors for this past month is we had the Griffin property on Loper Street sold and they collected about \$30,000 in conveyance tax. The CIRMA equity, we did not budget this as we were uncertain whether we would receive it. It came in at \$47,450 and \$30,000 of it I'm requesting to be appropriated toward the library roof which is one of the items on the agenda tonight.

**2. Review expenses vs budget**

She reviewed the expenses versus budget and the only thing that stands out is that due to the chemical spill we had at Light Metal Coloring, a lot of our firemen were there for a period of time. That falls under fire extra duty. They'll bill and then collect. It's timing. We're paying the firemen now and billing to the company and when we get the money it will come back in.

What we do as a placeholder, we put \$5,000 in the revenue and expenditure budget but we'll have to go back for more again, with the revenue to match.

Police and highway were also involved. We're billing Light Metals for all of it and the owner has stepped up. It's not going to be an issue.

**3. Review Capital Projects in Budget (Quarterly)**

This will be reviewed at the next month's meeting.

**4. Sub Committee Reports (Emphasis on financial aspects)**

**A. Sewer Committee (Mr. Moise)**

Mr. Brumback reported. Only three things of financial significance were talked about. (1) We are embarking on and we've gotten a report back on the SSES (evaluation of the sewer system). And, we budgeted about \$500,000 to do the necessary repairs. We have identified the top priority of about \$411,000 which should reduce the infiltration. Right now it's about 74,000 gallons and day and it should reduce that fairly significantly. (2) One unscheduled item that was not budgeted but there are resources within the fund to take

care of was a pipe that is part of the water heating system. Extremely old cast iron pipes and one is completely disintegrated. That's probably a \$15,000 to \$20,000 repair. (3) We talked about gearing up for the education process to support the referendum. We've divided the PTOs, service clubs and various organizations we'll reach out to to educate the public on what the referendum entails and why it is necessary.

Members of the BOF would be available, as well, added the Chair.

**B. Public Works Committee (Mr. Pocock & Mr. Coleman)**

Mr. Pocock reported. The Chief of Police gave a report on the wall at the hospital. No problems with the walkers to the school. Parents have been very good. It's on it's way. The town manager also gave a report on the timeframe for the wall.

Meriden Waterbury Road has been paved by the state and it is completed.

The transfer station closes at 3:00 pm. We had one complaint. Everybody seems to be happy with it. The hazardous waste collection is this Saturday, the 17<sup>th</sup> at the highway department building. It's 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

We purchased a VacAll which is a sweeper combination. It should be in mid-October. A big help.

Memorial Park had a splash pad ordered and it'll be installed this fall. A little drainage issue up there is going to be taken care of.

West Center Street Bridge is starting in the spring. One-way traffic controlled by a traffic signal.

Spring Street Bridge is under preliminary design.

A lot of the school access walks have gone out to the residents.

The library roof will be done.

The Pleasant Street demolition bids are still coming in. That'll be brought up at the next meeting.

The demolition on the Brandenburg house was done.

**C. Calendar House Building Committee (Town Manager)**

Mr. Brumback said they are continuing to progress toward design. We have a hard stop number at \$9.4 million. That's with about \$7.5 million for construction costs. They're continuing progress and hoping to get the design done by the end of the year or early spring

and begin construction in the spring of 2017 to be completed by the summer of 2018.

**D. Open Space Committee (Mr. Pocock)**

Mr. Pocock reported there are some scouts working on an ADA compliant boat launch at the Mill Street dog park area. That's in the works. Mr. Lavallee is in charge of that.

We've had complaints at Crescent Lake and the police are going to do a little extra patrol up there to keep that in line.

**E. Self-Insurance Committee (Mr. Labieniec & Mr. Moise)**

Mr. Moise noted the meeting is at the end of the month. Mr. Labieniec advised the first meeting is at the end of September. We have one month in and we are \$75,000 under budget and \$200,000 under prior. We're still waiting to finalize last year's numbers.

**F. Investment Committee (Mr. Coleman & Mr. Beaudoin)**

The Chair said it seems like we are getting more interests on investments than we ever did even with the limited selection of investments we can choose from. Mr. Coleman noted the rates are climbing a little bit. Three weeks from now will be the end of the quarter. We'll have something to report at the next meeting.

**G. Parks Board Liaison Report (Mr. Beaudoin)**

No report.

**H. Economic Development Strike Committee (Mr. Coleman)**

No meeting, no report.

**I. Other Committees**

No reports.

**4. Board Communications**

Mr. Moise stated at the last meeting we talked about Sun Valley Drive. We got a synopsis of why the asphalt was there and maybe they were still going to put the chip seal on. Any more information? When I drove by it looked like everything was level to the sewer and it was done. Mr. Brumback said whatever they were going to do, they're done.

Mr. Moise asked what determines whether you put asphalt or chip seal? Mr. Brumback said it depends on the shape of the road. The major criteria are the speed and the volume. Most of the chip seal is targeted for inside residential subdivisions, which this would be. I

don't know why they would've done what they did. But I'll find out.  
Discussion.

Mr. Moise noted the roads by Hawks Landing and Kelley School have a lot of traffic. Why is one asphalt and one chip seal? Mr. Brumback again stated he would find out.

In June at the meeting, we had a discussion on the town hall parking lot. Mr. Moise said it was back and forth. We had a situation where some members were worried about the parking spaces. I believe it was agreed there would be signs for town hall parking. This is for the lower lot. Mr. Brumback agreed there were handicapped signs. Mr. Moise said they would be signs for parking for town hall business, only. Mr. Pocock agreed that was discussed.

Mr. Moise said the Cultural Arts Center has a lot of visitors and they use the handicapped if need be or the upper parking lot. But a lot of elderly people come to town hall to do their business. For them to have to parking in the upper lot --- there were supposed to be designated spots, town hall business, only. That's what we had discussed and I thought we came to that agreement. Mr. Brumback will look into it.

Mr. Moise, still on signs, noted the new street signs. What is the situation? Are they up to spec or not? Mr. Brumback said they are. Unequivocally. The original new signs had some areas up to spec and some that weren't. So we changed them out. The size is based on the speed limit. They didn't meet specs, they replaced them at no charge.

Lastly, Mr. Moise reminded the Board, we have to try to set a date with the BOE and the Town Council regarding the budget for next year. We talked about this for October or November and it is September now. Keep it on the front burner. The Chair said he would put some potential dates out. He wants to have a separate dedicated night rather than after one of our meetings or one of theirs so we have enough time. He will put together an agenda which will include coming to an understanding of some scenarios of what we would do if the state should cut. Where we think we should be for next year and going back to a multiyear look at the budget and hearing the pros and cons of looking at the budget over multiyear. It's really all about what do we do if the state cuts.

Discussion.

Mr. Coleman added we also discussed that the board would be getting together to further flesh out the debt ceiling issue. The Chair said in August we received a revised proposal of an accounting firm to look at the policy. They originally sent a proposal that had language I didn't like and I sent it back. I got another one back and I need to follow up on that. I will do that.

The idea is we would ask them for some guidance on an appropriate way to set it and then we would take that into consideration. There'd be a small fee to pay the firm to do some research and comparative work and come up with something that was reasonable for us to have as a policy.

The Chair said he would get the policy out to all the board members for their review.

## **VI. Public Communications (Excluding Public Hearing Items)**

(1) Arthur Cyr, 105 Berlin Avenue. He talked about Item VIII.2 on the Agenda which is the transfer of capital funds. I am very familiar with this request. I have done walk thrus of the Pleasant View Stables property. It was proper to buy the property and preserve it. In the past we've bought open space and not maintained it.

Discussion.

If we don't maintain and continue to hay a lot of the fields, they will turn back into woods. I am firmly in agreement on spending the money to start maintaining. If we own it, we should maintain it.

I was shocked Monday night when the town council wanted to veto the BOFs authority to transfer this money and let the voters decide. Mr. Brumback and the BOF transfers hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars every April to June in surplus budget funds.

I do not believe the town council should be allowed to take away your fiscal responsibility for finances in this town. This is another case where the town council is trying to take away your fiscal responsibility and you should do it because it is the right thing to do.

Discussion.

Regarding this expenditure, I hope you approve it and stand firm as the BOF with a 5-0 vote when you vote on this on your agenda.

I went to the Board of Police Commissioners meeting last week. We've done an excellent job repaving our roads in the past few years. The problem with the newly maintained and paved road is we have speeders all over the place. The speed poles up by DePaolo School were discussed.

The police department has one speed trailer. I asked them to include a request for additional funds in next year's budget for a second speed trailer. Please keep in mind that request for next year's budget. I believe it is a matter of public safety.

Discussion.

I went to the BOE meeting three weeks and they are talking about the anticipation of meeting with the BOF in workshops in October and November in preparation for the budget.

I have two words for you: transparency in their budget and finance and how they move things around and cooperation which is a two-way street.

Discussion.

Solar panels on various schools was discussed. The town manager gets a report every month on the savings. You should be able to look at what the BOE has budgeted for every school for electricity and look at the savings.

Finally, this is a multiyear budget as proposed twice by the BOF to the BOE. This is year two. I don't want to hear percentages, they should be holding the line on a zero budget increase and not coming in with a three to five-million-dollar increase in their budget again this year. This is the year to hold their feet to the fire. I and a lot of other taxpayers will be watching closely.

(2) Giuseppe (Joey) Calandria, Troop 3 out of Waterbury, CT. I'm second class in scouts.

I'm here because I am doing communication merit badges and one of the requirements is to go to a town meeting.

He explained about merit badges. It's more than doing something to get a hobby. It is something you can do to learn something. It helps you get a hobby or gain an interest in different careers. It extends your idea of what you can do.

Thank you.

## **VII. Review Long Range Plan and Priorities**

### **1. Review status of LRP items in current fiscal year budget**

#### **A. Status /Reprioritizations**

#### **B. Strategy Discussion - Road Millage**

Mr. Brumback wanted to introduce the idea which he has used in other towns he has managed with quite a bit of success. We've asked for \$22 million from the taxpayers over the last four or five years and we are now in year four to improve our road network which consists of about 201 miles of road. Roads in New England last between fifteen and twenty years which would be doing about ten miles a year of maintenance in order to preserve the quality of our roads.

Discussion how the town had woefully underspent on maintenance up to that point.

So we don't have to go back to the taxpayers in future years for another referendum, I'm asking for discuss the idea of creating a millage, a piece of the millage just dedicated to road maintenance that'd be worth between three and four million dollars which is what is estimated we would use every year in order to do the ten miles.

We have a multi-dimensional program now. Explained it has chip seal, crack seal along with other methods.

It kind of sequesters a certain amount of the mill rate so as the value of a town grows, the millage grows in conjunction with the Grand List.

The Pavement Management System was discussed in response to a query by Mr. Labieniec. Information can be found on the engineering webpage.

Mr. Moise asked if there was a date stamp on the Pavement Management System when a road would be redone once it was done. Extensive discussion followed and Mr. Brumback agreed that was a good suggestion.

#### **VIII. Conduct Administrative Business**

##### **1. Consent Agenda**

A.	Appropriation Programs (Spec Rev)	\$895 *	Youth Services - Outside
B.	Appropriation (Spec Rev)	\$1,075 *	Highway - Property Maintenance
C.	Appropriation Maintenance (Spec Rev)	\$1,230 *	Streetlights - Equipment
D.	Appropriation (Spec Rev)	\$5,000 *	Town Clerk - Program Services
E.	Appropriation Program Supplies) Sp Rev)	\$2,200 *	Information Technology -
F.	Appropriation Programs (Spec Rev)	\$500 *	Youth Services - Outside
G.	Appropriation Programs (Spec Rev)	\$1230 *	Youth Services - Outside



H.	Appropriation Services (Spec Rev)	\$5,000 *	Town Clerk - Program
I.	Appropriation Library Roof	\$30,000 *	Capital Budget - Southington
J.	Appropriation Maintenance (Spec Rev)	\$4,199 *	Streetlights - Equipment
K.	Appropriation Programs (Spec Rev)	\$667 *	Youth Services - Outside
	Appropriation Closet (Spec Rev)	\$1,727 *	Youth Services - Kristen's
	Appropriation Rev)	\$159 *	Youth Services - STEPS (Spec

Mr. Labieniec and Mr. Coleman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda in its entirety. Mr. Pocock seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

## 2. Manager's Memos

1. Transfers \$250,00 Capital Fund- Town Property Renovations

Mr. Brumback gave an overview on this item. He advised the FHC is a recently created committee of the town council. They need some resources to do the work they're trying to do. They've laid out four immediate projects and are requesting \$250,000 to begin.

They've got to demo some facilities that are existing buildings on properties. They are developing a master plan that identifies and categorizes not only just farm land but the other valuable open space we want to preserve and maintain.

Lastly is an immediate need to do some irrigation at the Lewis Farms property off of Belleview Avenue.

Estimates have been gotten. Emilia and I have been able to identify some resources so they could award this and get this started after which they'll come forward requesting through the normal process any additional resources they need going forward.

They've asked for \$250,000. That's what we felt we could come up with and these are the four projects they intend to spend that initial money on:

- Demolition
- Cold Storage Roof Repair

- Master Plan
- Irrigation for Belleview property.

The Chair noted emails received by the BOF members with deeper explanations.

Mr. Labieniec made a motion to approve for discussion. Mr. Pocock seconded.

Mr. Coleman noted this is a brand new committee. He referred to the email and what he read in the papers. He'd like to have someone fill him in.

Mr. Brumback noted the whole effort has several components: preserving and maintaining some of the farm land and open space we've already acquired. It's the mission of trying to collaborate with the BOE and develop a curriculum for and support for the Lewis Agriculture and Educational Foundation (LEAF). Those are the two primary things I'm aware of that the committee has been doing.

Mr. Coleman discussed the value of demolition. The Grosky farm was brought up. We don't own the property, yet. And, we're requesting funds to demo the house there. I want to understand. We're buying a property we want to keep as open land and demolishing the old farmhouse which is part of the character of the property. We estimate the cost at \$125,000. That seems like a lot of raze a building. Mr. Brumback said there are four buildings: Three buildings at Pleasant View Stables and one on Grosky. They need to come down because they're falling apart. Explained.

Restoration and reconstruction, added Mr. Brumback, was in the millions of dollars. It was cost prohibitive.

Mr. Coleman asked if they have been tagged a health hazard. Mr. Brumback said some are. We don't condemn our own property, however. Some are inhabitable.

Discussion.

Mr. Coleman asked about the master plan. Do we know what that is and the ultimate cost? Mr. Brumback said the master plan is going to be a compiling of and an analyzing all of the historic (sic) properties in town to include the farm land. We know it is going to cost approximately \$30,000.

Mr. Coleman noted this plan then deals with the entire town and not just these two properties. A grant for that cost was discussed.

Mr. Coleman asked what happens if we approve this \$250,000 and instead of \$125,000 to raze the buildings it costs you \$90,000? Mr. Brumback responded the money stays in the capital line item. We're going to create a line item called: Town Property Renovations.

We are requesting to seed that with \$250,000. These are the things we know we need to do imminently. If it doesn't require all of this, then we won't spend it.

Mr. Coleman asked the full definition of what is encompassed within this line item, do we know that? Mr. Brumback responded: Town property renovations. It'd be demolitions, reconstruction.

Mr. Coleman said it could be for this building and not just open space. Mr. Brumback said theoretically, but it's under the control of the FHC. And, we have a line item for town hall renovations.

Mr. Brumback said they could add other properties going forward. The Chair noted the properties would be open space and town owned property that is not currently used or in service.

The discussion of what open space actually is followed by Mr. Coleman.

This being an educational tool for the schools was discussed.

Mr. Coleman asked what the hay was used for. Mr. Brumback said some goes to the local farmers but also the VOAG consumes a lot of hay which we right now are purchasing. One condition to hay it, would be they donate back all of the needs VOAG has.

Discussion of what we need the hay for and the discussion of town and the BOE owning horses, llamas, et cetera.

Mr. Coleman said he understood, however he is concerned that we hear that the town council wants to rush this thru and take away our authority to pass it. Mr. Brumback responded nobody is taking your authority. The reason it is here is because they did not want to take your authority. Mr. Coleman said he understood that. They can technically do what they want. Mr. Brumback explained they know they shouldn't and that is why we are here. They deliberately made the recommendation to send this to you to get your blessing.

The Chair suggested a briefing from Mr. Pocock and Mr. Palmieri to come down and tell us at a later meeting as to what this whole new initiative is. That would include LEAF and the FHC. We can move on this tonight.

Mr. Pocock agreed we need communication. Mr. Coleman said the communication is terrible. Explained the request was made and then to come up with estimates that could be significantly higher, I understand we want to move it forward. The integrity of the committee is such that we should understand exactly why we're approving it something and not just shuffling it along. That's my point. The letter could have been written more clearly and with more information. If they did come in and address, we could've had the information. That's my only comment.

The Chair asked they be invited to the next meeting. Ask for one representative, if not more, to come in and fully bring us completely up to speed on LEAF and the long term vision for FHC and LEAF.

Discussion.

Mr. Pocock cautioned not confuse the stand on the corner with LEAF. For LEAF you have to go in through Blueberry or Strawberry Lane to get to it.

Mr. Pocock said he didn't feel comfortable having vacant buildings that belong to the town. Anything is a hazard in this day and age. That barn up there is a definite hazard. These are the things to look at. I do believe we've got to get more communication going.

When I went on the open space committee, I was told it was an acquisition committee, just acquire the property and then after that it is town maintained. That's been a really bad situation.

Mr. Moise said the line may be blurred on what the perception of open space is. It appears the FHC is taking care of A, B & C. I have no complaints about Pleasant View Stables coming down. Any building vacant is trouble. Get them down as quickly as possible.

He discussed the cold storage roof repair. Mr. Brumback explained it is under the FHC as this is currently on Lewis Farms.

The master plan is all encompassing he noted. And, the irrigation, would be the LEAF area.

Mr. Moise said he hadn't a problem with any of this.

He felt it looked like, let's discuss this at the council, put a number out there and by the way, let's send it to the BOF. It's a foregone conclusion because they have the votes they need. The perception to me is the reality. Whenever I see money coming out of the council, this is a big ticket item, come to us and let us do our job and ask the questions we have to. I want to be sure the buildings come down sooner than later so I am going to hold this up a month, even though I would've liked more information. Just to let you know where I'm coming from. When it comes down to the dollars and cents, we have to take action. I want to be sure we're at the forefront of what happens come the budget season. I want fairness with the board.

Discussion of the town council having the ultimate decision, anyway between Mr. Coleman and Mr. Moise.

Discussion on the importance of communication.

After further extensive discussion, motion passed 5 to 0 on a roll call vote.

IX. Meeting Adjournment

Mr. Moise made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Coleman. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 o'clock, p.m.)