

MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF FINANCE
405 Main Street
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

Minutes of the Thursday, November 10, 2022 – Regular BOF Meeting

Attendance:

Members

Others

X	Skelps, Michael	X	Rusilowicz, Al
X	Kowal, Melissa	X	Bob Yamartino
X	Lowry, David	X	Paul Pizzo
A	Boyle, Kevin	X	Jim Irish
A	Lee Matterazzo		
X	Wolak, Mary		

A=Absent

X=Present

Michael Skelps, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of the Agenda

Agenda was amended as follows.

Item 4A added. Approval of October minutes.

Item 4B added. Discussion of celebration and memorial for Ed Bailey

Item 4C added. Request from Planning and Zoning for Transfers.

Dave made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Mary seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were reviewed from October with no corrections. Dave made a motion to approve the minutes with the correction noted. Mary seconded. Motion passed unanimously, with the exception of Melissa Kowal who abstained.

Public Comment

None

Discussion of celebration and memorial for Ed Bailey

Bob Yamartino stated that the Board of Selectman was in favor of erecting a sundial and benches in Peckham Park. He requested BOF approval of a transfer not to exceed \$10,000 from contingency to First Selectman Office Expenses to fund this project. Al reviewed the town finances and felt that the town was in good position financially and recommended approving the transfer. The town has received \$88,000 unexpected municipal revenue sharing. Tax revenues are above budget. He also anticipated an overage in interest income as well. Dave suggested that there should also be an active request to raise private donations for this project. Lee made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed \$10,000 from contingency to First Selectman Office Expenses. Mary seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Planning and Zoning request to transfer funds

Paul Pizzo stated that the intersection of Jackson Hill and Main Street, which is greater than a 90 degree turn is very difficult for fire trucks to make the turn. There was a plan drafted some years earlier regarding to sidewalks. LOCIP funds may be available, but we would be required to complete the engineering design in order to submit an application for a LOCIP grant. There was \$12,000 in the Capital Plan for improvements at Route 66 which is no longer actively planned (Design Review Guidelines). He proposed directing that amount to the engineering study of this project and then adding another \$13,000 to have \$25,000 total. This could give the town the potential of receiving \$1 million in the form of a LOCIP grant to re-do the intersection and add sidewalks on town property (not private) from Town Hall to Strickland Road. Al suggested that \$25,000 would not be sufficient. Paul said that they were only designing 25% of the project, so the amount would likely be enough. Al suggested that we need more detail and definition of the project prior to allocating funds. Melissa agreed about needing more detail. Melissa and Dave concurred. Paul said that this project was not urgent. Bob stated that there were other sources of funding available for a project like this, including the Safe Streets grant, but he didn't know the specific requirements. Dave made a motion to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to add an item to the Land Use Department's Capital Non-Recurring for funding not to exceed \$25,000 to be put into a specific separate account for engineering purposes related to the Town Center sidewalks to come out of undesignated General Fund Balance at Town Meeting on December 5. Lee seconded. Mike expressed concern that this project which is not time sensitive is being put forth prematurely, particularly if the Board of Finance is to present this at Town Meeting. Melissa agreed. Al also said there was another potential source of funds called TRIP money, which he said he would explore further in a meeting at the end of February.

Dave said he was hoping this would be on the agenda next month, once more information is available. Dave expressed an interest in withdrawing the motion. Some parliamentary procedures were discussed, after which Mike asked if there was any objection to withdrawing the motion. Hearing none, the motion was withdrawn.

Chairman's Report

Mike reported that the RSD13 Union negotiations were underway. The process is continuing. There is one more negotiating session on December 1, followed by a mediation session on December 6, if required.

Lucy Petrella, Chairman of the BOE, has revived the BOE Finance Committee and is seeking representation from the Boards of Finance of Middlefield and Durham. Mike asked if any other member would be interested in sitting on this committee. Dave asked what the charge of that committee is. Bob said that his understanding is that the committee would help support important decisions with recommendations based on financial data and analysis at a deeper level than BOE members would be able to. Dave reiterated that he was seeking specific information on the charge and authority of this committee in order for it to be worthwhile. Mike said he would request further clarification on this topic from Lucy. Mike said he would invite her to the BOF's next meeting.

Monthly Variance Analysis

Cyber Liability Insurance was difficult and more expensive to purchase this year, making it over budget. The first delivery of oil was received. The price of oil is very volatile and difficult to predict, but we will definitely be over budget for the fiscal year for Community Center and Fire Department costs. Also, with the passage of early voting (whenever that goes into effect), we can expect election costs to rise significantly. Some items were over the pro-rated YTD amount due to pre-payment of expenses (mostly insurance and software costs). School allocation was received, reducing Middlefield's allocation by 0.15% which is \$35,000 on last year's school budget. Based on expected salary increases for teachers, it is expected that Middlefield's portion of the school budget will increase, despite this allocation reduction.

Adjournment

Mary made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Lee. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.