

**MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**405 Main Street**  
**Middlefield, Connecticut 06455**

Minutes of the March 24, 2020 Budget Workshop Video Conference

Jim Irish started the meeting at ~7:05 pm.

Attendance:

Members

Others

X	Irish, Jim	X	Rusilowicz, Al
X	Kowal, Melissa	X	Bailey, Ed
X	Lowry, David		
X	Nick, Joel	X	Jason Wickham
X	Skelps, Michael	X	Jess Lobner
X	Wolak, Mary		

A=Absent

X=Present

**Discussion by 1st Selectman - Ed Bailey - anticipated Federal and State aid to individuals**  
*(preliminary* since Stimulus still must pass and be signed into law)

- As part of Fed Stimulus bill, unemployment is being extended by 16 weeks to 42 weeks. Anticipate additional amount of \$600/check/person for 16 of those weeks.
  - Mr. Bailey's sample calculation: for family of 4 with \$150K income, (w/ mom and dad laid off), could still collect nearly \$13000/mo.\
  - self employed could also collect unemployment
  - unemployment provisions to be extended for folks filing between 1/27/20 until 12/31/20
- Stimulus also contains \$150B for states *and municipalities*. CT share estimated at 1%~\$1.5B. Uncertain how \$will be allocated to municipalities by state....
- Federal student loan payments suspended for now.
- Federal loans/grants expected for small businesses to keep employees employed..
- CT has loan program for small businesses to borrow up to \$75K @ 0% interest
- CT is extending real estate tax due dates between 30 and 90 days. Unpaid balance after that will be at 5% interest vs. current 18%
- CT will have quarantine period for new folks coming into the state.
- CT Governor reduced public gatherings to 5 people or less

**Presentation by Public Works Leader - Jason Wickham** (2 Handouts attached)

- Overall, proposed budget for FY21 starts at ~\$29K lower expenses and ~\$1500 lower capital set-aside.
- Expenses: Payroll down based on employ age turnover. Snow removal proposal lower - full inventory of salt. Garage proposal up because of new \$2500 item - need yearly pumping of oil/water separator tank beneath garage. Decided to add \$500 to item "7612 Sundry Expenses" to pay for

physicals for staff - required to maintain CDLs (Commercial Drivers Licenses). new line total=\$7350.

- Jason also expressed a desire to add a future, part-time, seasonal employee down the road.
  - New Total Public Works expenses: \$501,634
- Capital Equipment: New large dump truck ordered in 2020. continue set-asides for all 4 at just over \$20K each truck/each year. Payment in 9281 small dump truck will enable order/purchase in FY21 of new 1 Ton Dump w/plow (to be new 9281 line title). Current GMC will be repurposed as back-up - no replacement set-aside needed for it.
  - Very creative play on Guard Rail tractor/mower replacement - Balances currently in 9291 Guard Rail Mower and 9296 Tractor & Brush-hog will be combined to purchase a Guard Rail Mower and Tractor. Current mower head to be saved as spare. Current tractor to be repurposed as replacement for current Brush Hog Tractor, extending life. Existing brush hog tractor will be sold if possible. Will look at continuing this “rolling-over tractor duties plan” by evaluating \$ effect of changing Guard-rail mower/tractor lifetime to 15 years from current 20 and minimizing set-aside for 9296 Brush-hog and its tractor.
  - Item 9293 John Deer Loader 444J is workhorse for town. If anything, reducing lifetime and/or increasing \$ set-aside is what Jason would recommend.
  - AS one option, Jay suggested FY-21 set-aside on 9294 Kubota mower could be transferred to 9293 Loader this year!
  - 9296 Brush-hog and repurposed tractor may not need set-aside. Part of analysis of potentially shorter life for 9291.
- Thanked Jason for an excellent budget preparation and discussion. Board of Finance had not had personal discussion of Public Works proposal in many years. Also, grateful for his leadership in keeping our town public surfaces and facilities on the improvement!

#### **Presentation by Levi Coe Library Leader - Jess Lobner (Handouts attached)**

- Overall budget expenses proposal up ~\$11,600.
  - Increases: Payroll up ~\$6K, insurance up ~\$2.5K, Materials up ~\$3K (adding books because circulation up in both adult and children’s sections), building expenses up with new item - \$1.5K vent cleaning.
  - Other items same or down.
- Capital item: discussion of walkways - both from walkway and stair cases are in need of repair. Front walkway very rough for anyone with cane, walker, or slow travel. Original quote to repair everything out of date. Current quote is \$21K for front and \$8.5 for stairways.
  - Current FY-21 capital plan has \$19.3 K available balance for walkways and windows, and \$4.6K set aside planned for windows. Suggest moving forward in July with Front Walkway repair. Can move FY21 set-aside from windows to walkway and take balance needed (~\$1700) from current windows balance. Jess delighted with plan.
- Thanked Jess for her ongoing leadership of our town library, and the continual expansion of activities and exposure our resident’s enjoy from this excellent resource.

#### **General Discussion/clarification of budget items**

- Tax collection rate: Finance Director determined that only 1/3 of town property taxes are escrowed; therefore, need to use well-considered collection rate in final budget proposal. He will continue to evaluate (with input from Tax collector) and recommend later in budget process.

The meeting was adjourned at ~8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Irish