

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

Minutes of the June 8, 2020 Special Meeting via Zoom

Jim Irish called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Attendance:

Members

Others

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

A=Absent

X=Present

Approval of the Agenda

Jim Irish added Public Comment to the agenda.

Mary Wolak made a motion, seconded by Melissa Kowal, to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes from 5/14/20 regular meeting, 5/21/20 public hearing and 5/22/20 special meeting

Mary Wolak made a motion, seconded by Melissa Kowal, to approve the minutes from the 5/14/20 regular meeting, 5/21/20 public hearing and 5/22/20 special meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### Last mid-year FY20 YTD Variance Analysis - Al Rusilowicz

Al Rusilowicz reviewed that the revenue information was through the end of May and the Municipal Projects grant of \$248,000 was received this past Saturday which means the town has received all state funding for the year. Land Use and Town Clerk revenue will come in pretty close to budget.

Ed Bailey added that the town is closing tomorrow on the 171 Hubbard Street property which will be around \$50,000. The town will also be selling a truck and they hope to get between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

Mr. Rusilowicz also noted that the town has received the final payment on the Joseph E. Coe Trust today. After posting May tax revenue, that account now stands at 102 percent with an excess of \$299,000. Jim Irish thanked Anne Olszewski for that excellent work.

Looking at the expense side, Al Rusilowicz reviewed several areas that are over budget, including the computer consultant and insurance deductibles. Mr. Rusilowicz does not expect to see any election expenses in this fiscal year and that will be substantially under budget. The GIS system is over budget by \$13,000 and will require Board of Finance approval. The cost of the William Street storm drains is expected to be about \$14,500 and they will look to take that out of another account near the year end. There were a few unanticipated garage expenses. Mr. Rusilowicz does feel that Public Works, as a whole, will be significantly under budget, especially with storm-related and overtime expenses.

Jim Irish asked about Police overtime in the fourth quarter which is felt to go up because of activity at Wadsworth Falls and Mr. Rusilowicz explained that the town will probably receive that bill before final transfers are made.

Fire Department communications cost is over budget due to removal of a siren. The Fire Department is under budget as a whole and Mr. Rusilowicz expects that to continue until the end of the year. To date, Fire Department COVID-related expenses total \$1,944.09 and that will continue to come in. There are COVID-related costs under Emergency Management as well.

Inland Wetlands Agency is \$12,687 over budget and will likely come in near \$15,000 over at year-end. That will require a Board of Finance transfer.

Al Rusilowicz reported that District 13 has been fully paid for this fiscal year. Mr. Irish summarized that only the Assessor's office and Inland Wetlands will require a transfer from outside their department.

Mr. Rusilowicz also reported that he attended an OPM webinar for all finance directors statewide regarding COVID-19 reimbursement. The Town of Middlefield had submitted a request for \$8,500 in unanticipated costs, but realized that that would be shy of what will ultimately be spent. He explained that the \$8,500 only represents 25 percent of the total cost as the state will reimburse 25 percent and FEMA would reimburse 75 percent. Mr. Rusilowicz did feel that they would come in with less than \$34,000 in total expenses and would therefore be fully reimbursed. OPM assured the finance directors that all towns would be made whole, regardless of whether FEMA pays or not. It could take a very long time to get reimbursement from FEMA.

Mr. Rusilowicz noted that the health district has provided quite a bit of PPE and thermometers as well as other supplies. Ed Bailey felt that Durham may join the health district at some point as well. He also noted that the IT network improvements that were made a couple of years ago have enabled everyone to work remotely in a very seamless manner. Mr. Bailey also mentioned that the State has committed \$41

million for COVID-related expenses for this year and will commit more for July 1<sup>st</sup> through December 30<sup>th</sup>. Al Rusilowicz explained that FEMA expenses are done quarterly, so they will try to get all expenses done by June 30<sup>th</sup> to submit for the reimbursement in July. The State wants all expenses in by August 31<sup>st</sup>. He added that the State will not pay unless FEMA has approved or disapproved the request for reimbursement. Mr. Rusilowicz also mentioned that he will be asking the Board of Finance to set up another COVID-related account in July relative to the Registrar's Office. Ed Bailey added that the State had initially offered \$3,000 to each municipality for election expenses, but that may be changing.

### Old Business

#### A. Results of school board budget adoption vote 5-7-20

Jim Irish reported that the Board of Education adopted their proposed budget with a zero increase from last year.

#### B. Discussion and motions to adopt FY21 Middlefield town budget and set FY21 mill rate

Ed Bailey had prepared a resolution and went on to review it for the Board members. The resolution basically went through the timeline of circumstances that led to the budget being voted on by the Board of Finance tonight. This resolution will become part of the permanent record.

Jim Irish asked for a vote on the resolution and it was unanimously approved, with the correction of Mary Wolak as Secretary.

With this having been his first budget process, Michael Skelps expressed his appreciation and respect for all the members of the Board of Finance as well as Ed Bailey and Al Rusilowicz.

Mary Wolak made a motion, seconded by Michael Skelps, to adopt the Fiscal '21 Budget Proposal for the Town of Middlefield, CT with a total town expenditure of \$16,538,870 (for July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021). Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Wolak made a motion, seconded by Joel Nick, to set the Town of Middlefield, CT mill rate at 32.23 mills for fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021). Motion carried unanimously.

Jim Irish also mentioned that he has received multiple comments that people are pleased that the town will offer a slight reduction in the mill rate. Ed Bailey then noted that sewer rates will probably have to go up.

Al Rusilowicz asked if the Board needed to approve the Capital and Nonrecurring budget, but Jim Irish explained that that is part of the total budget.

### New Business

Jim Irish reiterated Michael Skelps' comment and felt that the Board of Finance did a really good job this year. He specifically noted that Ed Bailey's original budget proposal was already below last year's mill rate and the Board of Finance was able to modify it and still come in with a respectful budget. Ed Bailey thanked Al Rusilowicz for his assistance as well. He also cautioned everyone that the fiscal impact of COVID-19 will be in FY '22.

Public Comment

None.

Jim Irish stated that he will cancel the Board's meeting for this coming Thursday, but they will have meetings in July and August. Ed Bailey added that in-person meetings are currently suspended until September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Adjournment

David Lowry made a motion, seconded by Melissa Kowal, to adjourn the meeting. Motion was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz  
Alwaz First