

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET MEETING
(HELD JOINTLY WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL)
Thursday, March 1, 2007**

BOARD OF FINANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Cody	Virginia Lastner
Kathleen Corbet	Roger Smith
Robert DiPanni	Robert Spangler
John Laird	Dan Ward
Judy Neville, Chairman	

TOWN COUNCIL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Barbara Beall	Paul Foley
Ken Campbell	Ruth Smithers
Kit Devereaux	Dick White
Dr. Mark DeWaele	Penny Young
John Emert	

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Hussey; Mr. O’Dea

ALSO PRESENT: George Maranis, Administrative Officer; Gary Conrad, Chief Financial Officer; Police Chief Edward Nadriczny; Police Commissioner Jim Cole; Selectman Johnny Potts; Jeb Walker, Chairman, Park & Recreation Commission.

Judy Neville called the meeting to order at 8:10 pm and took the roll of the Board of Finance, noting the presence of all the members. Ms. Young took the roll of the Town Council, noting the presence of all the members except Dr. Annunziato, Ms. Hussey, and Mr. O’Dea.

Mr. Conrad reviewed the amounts budgeted for revenue for 2007-2008, and there was some limited discussion of the components thereof. Mr. Conrad noted that two items of revenue were still uncertain, and will not be included in the budget pending legislative approval and/or the Governor’s signature – these are (1) approximately \$1 million of conveyance tax (due to “sunset” at June 30, 2007), and (2) approximately \$600,000 of additional school aid (still requiring legislative approval and the Governor’s signature.)

Police Chief Nadriczny then responded to questions from Mr. Smith and other members of the Board of Finance on staffing and related salary expense items in the Police Department’s 2007-2008 budget. There was a lengthy discussion on the interplay of staff complement and overtime, with the Chief responding to questions on the increase in overtime expense, given the apparent increase in the complement of officers.

Mr. Cole then reported on an agreement between various school officials and others to appoint a study group to evaluate the Board of Education’s request for capital expenditures in the 2007-2008 budget of \$863,000 for elementary school interior door and hardware upgrades totaling \$725,000, and elementary and Saxe Middle School entry access control systems totaling \$138,000. He explained that it would take about 4 to 6 weeks to complete the study and, in the meantime, he suggested that these items be left in the budget as a “bookmark” pending the group’s recommendations. Note was made of the fact that another \$725,000 was budgeted for interior door and hardware

upgrades for Saxe Middle School for 2008-2009, and a suggestion was made that these items be studied at the same time and, if approved, all the work be done simultaneously to take advantage of efficiencies of scale, volume discounts, etc. Ms. Lastner then recommended, with the general approval of the members, that an amount of \$1 million be left in the 2007-2008 budget as a “bookmark” for all of the above.

Mr. Conrad then briefly reviewed the amounts for debt service included in the 2007-2008 budget

Mr. Conrad next addressed the agenda item dealing with the proposed increase in pension payments to current pensioners. He referred to the related supporting documentation previously provided to members of the Board of Finance and the Town Council, including a point outline recently prepared by Mr. Maranis. After some brief discussion, Mr. Smith suggested that the pensioners be awarded an increase of 2% applicable to each of the years 2004, 2005 and 2006. The Town Council responded favorably to this and, on the motion of Ms. Smithers and the second of Mr. Campbell, the Council unanimously recommended (to the Board of Finance) that a 2% increase be given to pensioners for each of the years 2004, 2005, and 2006, to be paid prospectively from January 1, 2007.

At this point, 9:45 pm, the bodies voted unanimously to go into Executive Session to discuss real estate matters (the New Canaan Playhouse.) The bodies voted unanimously to return to Regular Session at 10:05 pm, at which time Ms. Neville asked for the reaction of those present to the current draft of the Request for Proposals (RFP) in connection with the transfer of interest of the New Canaan Playhouse,. With the exception of Dr. DeWaele, the members of both bodies unanimously endorsed the Master Lease/Option to Purchase RFP, and agreed that it should be issued as soon as possible

There being no further business for the Town Council, the members voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:07 pm.

Mr. Conrad next reminded the Board of Finance that it must address the matter of the First Selectman’s salary, to be effective for the two years beginning November 1, 2007. Ms. Neville left the room while these deliberations ensued and, after some discussion, the Board voted unanimously, on the motion of Mr. Smith and the second of Mr. Ward, to award the First Selectman a salary increase of 3 1/2% for each of the years beginning in November 2007 and November 2008.

The Board then discussed a broad array of budget items affecting a number of departments. The members were reminded that there would be a final budget meeting on Tuesday, March 6, 2007, and Ms. Neville suggested that the meeting start at 7:30 pm instead of the scheduled 8:00 pm.

There being no further business, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert DiPanni, Secretary, Board of Finance

Penny Young, Secretary, Town Council

