

Minutes

**Board of Finance Meeting**

February 11, 2014

Town Hall Room 206 7:34 PM

**CALL TO ORDER**

Liz Mao, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. All members of the Board of Finance were present. Also in attendance was Finance Director Kate Clarke Buch. The meeting was broadcast live over Channel 79.

**CONTINGENCY TRANSFERS OVER \$5,000**

- **Planning & Zoning – RFCNRE Traffic Study \$6000 (BOS 02/03/14)**

Mr. Jeremy Ginsberg, the Town’s Planning and Zoning Director, was in attendance and has requested funding for a traffic study. Several residents of the town had voiced concern about traffic issues along Fairfield Avenue due to the redevelopment of the Allen O’Neill property, prompting the request for funds to do a traffic study. Jon Zagrodsky asked if it would make more sense to wait until the redevelopment is complete and fully occupied. Chairman Liz Mao added that spending \$6,000 dollars on a traffic study at this time is not good use of the town of Darien’s tax dollars. Ms. Mao added that once the project is complete, the study will be reconsidered. The request failed for lack of a motion.

**TRANSFERS OVER \$5,000**

- **Senior Center RFCNRE-Wiring Mather Center \$8000 (BOS 02/03/14)**

Kate Clarke Buch explained that the town would like to spend \$8,000 dollars on wiring for security cameras at the Senior Center while the walls are open. The funding was meant for the dishwasher at the current Senior Center. They decided to make do with the existing dishwasher in the Edgerton building until the move to the Mather Center. The new dishwasher is included in the Mather Center project budget. Mrs. Buch went on to stipulate that there would be a decrease in the upcoming budget because of this transfer.

Bruce Orr moved to approve. Passed 7 – 0.

**FINANCIAL REPORTING**

Kate Clarke Buch informed the Board that Public Works is over budget and getting worse due to the high number of winter storms. Ms. Buch also informed the board that snow removal on Sunday and between 12 - 7 am is double time.

Kate Buch stated that the town is in pretty good shape this year all things considered because they have only requested \$76,000 dollars out of the contingency fund. Mrs. Buch went on to say that even salary overages are tracking well due to the retirement of 3 senior people and replacements are not making as much.

Liz Mao said she is in favor of using the money in the general fund to pay for some unexpected expenses due the minimal interest we are earning. Kate Buch mentioned we should look at selling Short Term Notes for the Short Lane purchase due to interest rates being so low and use the money in fund balance to fund cost incurred due to some of the issues around Special Education.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

These were tabled until the next meeting so there is time to review them.

Gwen Mogenson moved to approve. Passed 7 – 0.

### **SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Chairman Liz Mao asked Vice Chairman Jon Zagrodzky to say a few words regarding the special audit. Mr. Zagrodzky went on to say that he asked the auditors with CohnReznick if they have found any fraud. The auditor said that they have not found any fraudulent activities but they did find a lot of sloppiness and poor record keeping. Every record they reviewed had problems. The auditor also mentioned that they have been surprised in the lack of interest from the senior staff in Special Education. They have all been very helpful but found the lack of inquiry about what they could be doing better, given all of the problems, was a bit odd. Mrs. Mao added that junior level employees are being asked to file things with the state, without review by a senior staff.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Liz Mao informed us that she spoke with Betsy Haggerty-Ross and voiced her concern about the 6 additional people they wish to employ. The new employees will be Special Education Facilitators and cost the town approximately \$86,000 dollars per year. Mrs. Mao went on to say that it looks like the Board of Education budget appears to be approximately 6% increase.

Liz Mao gave us an update on the Mather Center. Ms. Mao went on that due to a structural problem there will be a cost overrun of approximately \$200,000.00 dollars.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Nothing reported.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Jon Zagrotsky made a motion to adjourn. Frank Huck seconded the motion. Passed 7 – 0 at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Lopiano  
Clerk