

**TOWN OF DARIEN
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2016**

ATTENDANCE: Jon Zagrodzky, Chair; Frank Huck, Vice Chair; Bruce Orr, James Palen, James McLaughlin, David Lopiano

ABSENT: Diana Maguire

STAFF: Jennifer Charneski, Finance Director

OTHERS: Ed Gentile, Director of Public Works, Shirley Nichols, Darien Land Trust

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Zagrodzky called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. A quorum was present.

TRANSFERS FROM CONTINGENCY

Noroton Fire Department - Motorized Equipment Repair (\$6,914)

Ms. Charneski explained that there were unexpected and unbudgeted repairs to Ladder 30.

| FROM: | | | TO: | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount | Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount |
| 1070400-86600 | BOF Contingency | \$6,914 | 10303425-82040 | Motorized Equip Repair | \$6,914 |

**** MR. ORR MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$6,914.**

**** MR. LOPIANO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Noroton Fire Department - Motorized Equipment Repair (\$7,484)

The second transfer, for repairs to Engine 32, was discussed by the Board.

| FROM: | | | TO: | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount | Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount |
| 1070400-86600 | BOF Contingency | \$7,484 | 10303425-82040 | Motorized Equip Repair | \$7,484 |

- ** MR. HUCK MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$7,484.**
- ** MR. LOPIANO SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

TRANSFERS OVER \$5,000

Human Services - Full Time Salaries (\$16,774)

The Human Services Department recently had a retirement and requested converting two part-time positions to one full-time position. The Board discussed the need to carefully review all new positions due to the significant long-term cost. Mr. Zagrodzky said net cost over 20 years could be \$1.5 million to the town.

Mr. Lopiano said he would like to understand the entire cost of the employee and any additional revenue generation for the town.

Mr. Zagrodzky said the Board should invite Ms. Hauser to the next meeting to talk about why this position should be full time. He said the Board should provide a standard template of questions they need answered for this position and for future full-time staff requests.

- ** MR. ORR MOVED TO TABLE THE TRANSFER PENDING FURTHER PRESENTATION BY MS. HAUSER**
- ** MR. PALEN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Public Works RFCNRE - Street Light Acquisition (\$16,000)

Mr. Gentile presented a request to transfer \$16,000 for a street light audit as the initial step in the process of purchasing and retrofitting all street lights from Eversource. The audit will result in a complete count of the lights and will identify each with GPS coordinates. The information will be delivered to the town electronically in GIS format.

Mr. Gentile talked about the proposal and a discussion followed about how much the town would save in the future by owning the retrofitted lights. The savings will be about \$100,000 per year.

| FROM: | | | TO: | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------|--------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount | Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount |
| 30441014-908805 | Infrastructure Reserve | \$16,000 | TBD | Street Light Acquisition | \$16,000 |

- ** MR. ORR MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$16,000.**
- ** MR. HUCK SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Parking Capital - Noroton Heights Access Study (\$25,000)

Mr. Gentile presented a request to transfer \$25,000 for Darien’s 10 percent match for a LOTCIP grant for the Noroton Heights Train Station Access Study. The study will look at infrastructure, vehicular and pedestrian access, bicycles, scooters, sidewalks, right turn lanes and improved signalization.

| FROM: | | | TO: | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount | Acct. Number | Account Name | Amount |
| 34848014-84025 | Capital Maint/Major Repairs | \$25,000 | TBD | Noroton Heights Access Study | \$25,000 |

- ** MR. PALEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$25,000.**
- ** MR. MCLAUGHLIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACCEPTANCE OF A GIFT OF \$137,500 FROM THE DARIEN LAND TRUST FOR THE PURCHASE OF LAND AT 41 HECKER AVENUE AND REFER TO THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

Mr. Zagrodzky presented an overview of the planned land purchase. He explained that the land could provide flood mitigation and open space. The land, 1.2452 acres, is owned by Spring Grove Cemetery. It will be funded by the gift from the land trust and a state watershed grant and except for closing costs, will not require any town money to acquire the land.

Mr. Zagrodzky said approximately \$10,000 would be needed to put in a path and clean out the non-native vegetation.

Ms. Shirley Nichols of the Darien Land Trust answered some questions from the Board. Ms. Nichols showed a schematic of the area.

Mr. Lopiano asked who would be responsible for maintaining the area. Ms. Nichols said she believed it would be Park & Rec.

- ** MR. LOPIANO MOVED TO APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF THE LAND FROM THE DARIEN LAND TRUST**
- ** MR. HUCK SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSSION OF BOF CONTENT ON TOWN WEBSITE

Mr. Zagrodzky explained that Jim Cameron had pointed out at a recent Board of Selectmen meeting that many town officials have no email or phone numbers on the town website.

The board concluded that they will make their phone numbers available and will look further into having .gov email addresses.

FINALIZE BUDGET ASSIGNMENTS AND MEETINGS

Mr. Zagrodzky suggested the goal is to cut back on department meetings while still completing a comprehensive review. He suggested the best way to accomplish this was to break down into teams, and watch the Board of Selectmen Budget Meetings on video, and contact department heads if there are questions on the budget.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Palen, referring to the General Fund Activity, asked about year-to-date activity at the same point last year.

Mr. Zagrodzky said they could do a 5-year average to show what the percentage of budget was used. Ms. Charneski said it could be done with some work.

The Board had a discussion about overtime. Mr. Zagrodzky said we can we do a better job of budgeting for overtime going forward.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**** MR. LOPIANO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2015.**

**** MR. PALEN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The January 12, 2016 minutes were amended to add the word "Special" to reflect Board of Finance Special Meeting.

**** MR. HUCK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED OF JANUARY 12, 2016**

**** MR. LOPIANO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

There was not a quorum present to approve the minutes of January 19, 2016.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Huck reported on the OPC meeting on January 28. He mentioned a sales tax increase and gas tax increase proposed by the Governor to go toward transportation. The Town leases the train station from the state and there is some concern that the State might look at these train stations for further revenue. The State is not renewing any leases at the present time.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Zagrodzky suggested that the board should only have to review salary adjustments of \$5,000 for an individual and more than \$15,000 within a department. He said any switch for part-time to full-time would also have to be presented to the BOF. He said temporary hires do not have to be approved by the Board.

Mr. Zagrodzky also stated he wants to get out an explanation about why contributions to pensions have decreased. He said people have been asking about this.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. PALEN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. LOPIANO SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Zagrodzky
Chairman, Board of Finance

Prepared by,

G. Venuto
Telesco Secretarial Services