

RTM Finance & Budget Committee - Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes 1/22/2015

Present: J. Palen, R. Cardone, T. Duffy, J. Davis, G. duPont, M. Banks, S. Anderson, K. Hoffman, D. Ritchie

Absent: A. Millar, B. Hayes, J. Boulton, M. Thorne

With 9 of 13 members present consisting of quorum, J. Palen called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. in the Cafeteria extension of the Mather Center. The agenda was unanimously approved.

R. Cardone moved (15-) **RESOLUTION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN REGARDING THE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE DARIEN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AND THE DARIEN BOARD OF EDUCATION.** J. Davis seconded.

J. Davis noted salary steps compared to DRG peer group as well as healthcare benefits and costs. J. Palen further explained step schedule changes from last contract and cycle of Darien's negotiation versus peer/neighborhood towns. Group discussion around step changes in different years. J. Davis noted that BOE tried to achieve smoothing effect taking into account last 3 years of step changes. J. Davis noted that F&B should receive scatterplot of other form of data that clearly shows how many BOE employees are in each step.

S. Anderson expressed that meeting with BOE focused on legal aspects of negotiation and would be helpful next time if BOE focused more on budget aspects and decision drivers rather than legal aspects. J. Davis noted that during meeting with BOE, counsel noted that arbitrations of teacher collective bargaining agreement often take into account town's ability to pay as a factor. Group discussion on aspects of arbitration.

K. Hoffman noted that the total estimated cost increase from the proposed contract did not seem unreasonable in isolation, but was still larger than inflation rate, particularly in light of larger past increases. S. Anderson noted that none of the increases appeared to be tied to inflation or any sort of cost or wage index. T. Duffy noted that F&B should receive indication of any type of index used in negotiation process. Also noted that negotiated increase was above most accepted inflation rates, but not likely large enough to offset risk of arbitration. M. Banks also noted that F&B should receive better explanation in future behind increases embedded in contract. Group discussion on aspects of increased costs.

Vote was then taken on above resolution and approved unanimously.

S. Anderson moved (15-) **RESOLUTION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS 00/100 (\$200,000) FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF SANITARY SEWER PUMPS AT THE NEARWATER AND STONY BROOK PUMP STATIONS.** M Banks seconded.

J. Palen relayed Public Works explanation on sewer fee background including charges and operation of reserve account, and how depletion of reserve account necessitated resolution. S.

Anderson noted support for resolution but wanted to see future similar requests accounted for in capital plan as well as thorough assessment of sewers so similar problems to not occur. J. Davis noted that sewer assessment should follow 5-10 year capital plan. R. Cardone questioned whether it was better to buy several pumps at once to achieve discount/maximize maintenance savings or purchase as needed to ensure technology up-to-date. R. Cardone also noted that the summary provided to F&B was confusing as to how many bids were actually obtained for work. J. Palen to follow-up on this. S. Anderson noted that this ambiguity illustrated that summary provided was insufficient and should be provided/available to entire RTM prior to vote. Suggested summary follow form previously set out by M. Banks and RTM warning packet should contain summary or clearly note where summary can be found.

Vote was then taken on above resolution and unanimously approved.

S. Anderson moved **(15-) RESOLUTION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF NINETY-EIGHT THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED NINETY-EIGHT DOLLARS 00/100 (\$98,498) FOR EXPENSES RELATED TO ACQUISITION OF SEWER LINE AT STEPHANIE LANE, STEPHANIE LANE SOUTH.** T. Duffy Seconded.

J. Palen relayed background on resolution provided by Public Works included history of private installation. Group discussion on resolution. Vote was then taken on above resolution and unanimously approved.

D. Ritchie moved **(15-) RESOLUTION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DARIEN APPROPRIATING AND APPROVING THE PAYMENT OF THIRTY THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED FORTY-THREE DOLLARS 00/100 (\$30,843) FOR EXPENSES RELATED TO SEWAGE BACKUP INTO THE BASEMENT OF 27 LAKESIDE AVENUE, DARIEN, CT.** J. Davis seconded.

J. Palen relayed background on resolution from Public Works. J. Davis asked whether house had required coupling and whether there might be a cause of action against the builder. S. Anderson mentioned that many houses on Lakeside were on older side and may make action against builder difficult. S. Anderson also brought up annual sewer inspections to avoid repeat as well as potential for larger contingency budget so there was not need to come in front of RTM for similar cases. R. Cardone questioned whether RTM would set any precedent by approving payment with this resolution. Group discussion followed.

Vote was taken on above resolution which passed with 8 votes, 0 against, 1 abstention. J. Palen, T. Duffy, J. Davis, G. duPont, M. Banks, S. Anderson, K. Hoffman, D. Ritchie voted in favor of resolution. R. Cardone abstained. No voted against resolution.

S. Anderson made motion for formal F&B ask to RTM Rules Committee to initiate rule that as of April 1, 2015, no resolution will be brought to vote in RTM or any of its committees without a full executive summary in the form previously outlined by M. Banks and provided to Rules Committee. T. Duffy seconded. Vote was taken and motion unanimously approved. J. Palen will communicate motion to Rules Committee.

J. Palen led general discussion on BOE and BOS budgets. Calendar was discussed including timing for F&B to relay committee thoughts to Board of Selectman and Board of Education on budgets.

G. duPont stated that it was important that F&B take some early vote on sense of committee as to BOS and BOE budgets to relay thoughts in fashion that provides BOS and BOE to make additional changes. Also stated that thought that budgets should be based on starting point that is as flat as possible compared to previous year but take into account the minimal contracted for increases. Group discussion, including on next meeting. February 2nd was suggested as potential date to vote and relay thoughts. J. Palen to review calendar and send out final details on date.

J. Palen stated that approval of prior minutes would be pushed until next meeting due to time constraints on room.

T. Duffy motioned to adjourn meeting. K. Hoffman seconded. Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.