



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
Board of Finance

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302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741

BOARD OF FINANCE VIRTUAL JOINT MEETING WITH  
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

**February 9, 2021 6:30 p.m.**

BOF Attendant Members

David LaMay, Chairman  
Carol Rzasa, V. Chairwoman  
Tom Stevenson  
Barry O'Neill  
Rick Swan  
Paul Carver

Absent Members

In Attendance

Carl Fortuna, First Selectman  
Scott Giegerich, Selectman  
Matthew Pugliese, Selectman  
Lee Ann Palladino, Finance Director; Treasurer  
Michael Spera, Chief of Police  
Larry Bonin, Director, Public Works  
Susan Beckman, Director, Economic Development  
Gerri Lewis, Clerk

Selectman Fortuna called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman LaMay called the meeting to order for the Board of Finance noting all present.

Selectman Fortuna announced Bruce Carlson was appointed to the Board of Finance, but not sworn in as of yet.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance:**

Chairman LaMay led the pledge.

**3. Comments from the Public**

Selectman Fortuna announced Bruce Carlson being the only member of the public.

**4. Comments from the Selectmen**

Selectman Fortuna noted that next Tuesday the Board of Selectmen will be working on the final version of the budget.

Ms. Rzasa inquired about a referendum. Selectman Fortuna noted that he wasn't sure.

Selectman Fortuna noted that expenditures were trending well. He noted that revenues were trending slightly over last year at this time.

## **5. Business Before the Board – Budget Review**

### **A. FY 2022 Budget Review**

Selectman Fortuna turned it over to Ms. Beckman, Director of Economic Development. She introduced Carol Conklin, Vice Chair of Economic Development and noted that she was present at the virtual meeting.

Ms. Beckman shared her screen and launched her PPT presentation. She covered the following:

- Structure and Staffing
- Goals and Accomplishments
- Cost Containment/Process improvements
- Conclusion

She noted that her budget was flat except for contractual obligations. Ms. Beckman noted the following accomplishments of the Economic Development Board:

- Completed the Strategic Plan for Old Saybrook's Thriving Local Economy adopted as a section of the PoCD in June.
- Extended Geofencing marketing assistance to OS businesses giving the businesses access to this digital marketing tool at an affordable rate and leveraging the EDC marketing budget.
- Wrote successful 2020 STEAP Grant and Community Connectivity Grant applications resulting in \$128,205 and \$596,413 in state funding for town projects.
- Increased the # of local businesses reached through email communications from 125 to 573.
- 40 new businesses registered Trade Names in 2020.
- Ms. Beckman was invited by CCM, CT Main Street and the Middletown business incubator to share Old Saybrook's Economic Development Response to the pandemic and discuss how a small town EDC's can assist entrepreneurs.
- Purchased 20 colorful Adirondack chairs for the Town Green to expand safe, outdoor, socially distanced seating options for the public.

At this time, Selectman Fortuna wanted to recognize and thank Susie Beckman for her contribution with regard to the grants brought into the municipality. He noted that she was the point person for grant writing.

Ms. Beckman noted that EDC's focus will continue to be supporting the local business community through the end of the pandemic and into recovery.

Ms. Beckman also noted the following:

EDC will be implementing the Strategic Plan for Old Saybrook's Thriving Local Economy.

- Continue to market Mariner's Way as a redevelopment opportunity to attract developer interest and implement the Mariner's Way Plan.

- Continue Digital Marketing efforts to attract businesses in targeted industries, new residents, and visitors year-round using social media and Geofencing.

Support the Arts & Culture sector through rotating exhibits in the Community Art Hallway and participating in the planning and execution of activities that celebrate the arts and draw people to Town.

Improved and expanded partnerships will lead to continued collaborative efforts in support of the business community.

She noted that Old Saybrook is now viewed as a model for small town economic development programming. The EDC will continue to pilot innovative programs and outreach to improve economic development outcomes.

Ms. Rzasa noted that Ms. Beckman should be praised for the grant money she helped bring in. She also thanked Carol Conklin and the committee for their hard work as well.

Chairman Pugliese noted that Susie also worked very hard on the covid recovery task force and other committees and wanted to recognize her for all of these things as well.

Mr. Stevenson inquired about 9-town transit data. Carl noted that Middletown Transit and 9-Town Transit will be merging. He noted that 9-town transit wasn't meant to be a money generator but more a way of helping people to get to their jobs and a source for people with disabilities. Selectman Fortuna noted that inviting Mr. Comerford to a BOF meeting could be beneficial. He suggested that perhaps April might be a good time.

Chairman LaMay thanked Ms. Beckman.

At this time, Mr. Bonin gave his PPT presentation. He noted the following:

- Public Works Department Staff provides diverse services:
  - First Responders – 24/7 (Hurricanes, Floods, Snow, etc.)
  - All Certified Hazwooper Trained
  - Community Safety & Protect Public Health
    - Storm Water Management
    - Leaf Compost
    - Refuse/ Recycling
    - Dead Animal pickup
    - Catch basin cleaning
    - Road sign maintenance
    - Guard rail repair
    - Road resurfacing
  - Maintain the Infrastructure

- Work collaboratively with most departments
    - Facilitate Economic Development/Land Use endeavors (Ingham Hill Rd.)
    - Work closely with the Town engineer
    - Provide in-kind services to the Board of Education (\$4.3k)
    - Maintain Town buildings and vehicles
- DPW Administration
  - Salaries of \$650,134 represent 60% of the DPW admin budget. Mr. Bonin noted that he would like to move an employee up from Maintainer II to Maintainer III.
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  - Core Responsibilities of Public Works:
    - Emergency Response Operations
    - Maintain approximately 75 miles of Roads, 750 storm drains
    - Provide support to other departments and community events
  - The major goals for the DPW:
    - To provide quality cost effective services in a timely manner.
  - Major Challenges
    - Aging Roads and Storms systems – In this regard, Mr. Bonin has requested \$10k increase in paving budget
- Transfer Station Administration
  - Salaries of \$211,697 represent 60% of the TS admin budget
    - The TS has one full time position and three 26 hour positions
    - This budget contemplates replacing a part-time worker with a 26 hour TS operator. The cost of this upgrade is \$23k, which is partially offset by reduced OT in the amount \$6k for a net change of \$17k
- Total budget for DPW
  - PW admin - \$1,091,883
  - PW Highway & Streets - \$590,280
  - PW Snow & Ice - \$74,874
  - PW Vehicle Repair - \$81,000
- Total DPW = \$1,838,037 with a requested increase of \$32,084 or 1.75%. The majority of the increase is associated with an increase in the paving budget and a salary adjustment to maintainer III.
- Requests for DPW capital will be funded through the DPW reserve

Mr. Stevenson inquired about the boiler at town garage. Mr. Bonin noted that Mr. Moran has put it out to bid. Ms. Rzasa was shocked that it still worked. Also Mr. Stevenson and Ms. Rzasa concluded that the lawn mowers needed to be replaced as well.

Chairman LaMay thanked Mr. Bonin.

Chairman LaMay reminded everyone of the regular meeting on February 16th, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Palladino discussed the Capital Budget briefly. New to this budget is a request from Y&FS for a fire panel for a cost of \$4,200.00. She noted that the grand total to Capital Budget is \$745K.

Selectman Fortuna thanked the Board of Finance for their time during this process.

**This meeting was recorded on the Town's YouTube video website.**

### **7. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Chairman LaMay, seconded by Ms. Rzasa at 7: 48 p.m. and was so voted unanimously.

Submitted:

Gerri Lewis