



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
Board of Finance

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741

BOARD OF FINANCE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 29, 2022 6:30 p.m.

This was a hybrid meeting

BOF Attendant Members

Carol Rzasa, Chairwoman
Paul Carver, Vice Chairman
Tom Stevenson
Rick Swan
Brad Thorpe
Bruce Carlson
John O'Brien

Absent Members

In Attendance

Carl Fortuna, First Selectman
Lee Ann Palladino, Finance Director
Michael Spera, Chief of Police
Jan Perruccio, Superintendent of Schools
Julie Pendleton, Director of Finance and Operations
Bob Murphy, Chairman Harbor Management Commission
Mark Caldarella, Chairman Republican Town Committee
Gerri Lewis, Clerk

1. Ms. Rzasa called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:**
Ms. Rzasa led the pledge.
3. **Roll Call:** All members present.
4. **Budget FY23 Discussions – Action Requested**

At this time, Ms. Rzasa made a motion, seconded by Mr. Swan to approve the annual budget for the Town of Old Saybrook General Government for the fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 as recommended by the Board of Finance in the amount of \$20,904,357 as follows:

General Government \$17,832,513; Debt Service \$3,071,844 and to move this budget to annual town meeting which will adjourn to referendum.

The Chair called for discussion.

Mr. Carlson noted that at the March 15 meeting he had raised 3 issues and was glad that two of those issues were going to be handled outside the Budget. Those two issues were 1.) the pursuit of Equity Coaching from Sustainable CT to help the Town identify projects that would assist in implementing the Racism as a Public Health Crisis resolution; and 2.) Funding is available through the Capital non-recurring account to fund a Personnel and Staffing Study of the Department of Police Services if the Police Commission chooses to pursue such a study.

Mr. Carlson made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Brien to decrease the debt service reserve transfer by \$25,000 and make a transfer to the General Fund budget in the amount of \$25,000 from the off budget Police Administration account. Motion did not pass: In favor: Mr. Carlson; Mr. O'Brien; Opposed: Mr. Stevenson; Mr. Swan; Mr. Thorpe; Mr. Carver; Ms. Rzasa.

Mr. Carlson made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Brien to eliminate the \$100,000 debt service reserve transfer and reduce the Police Services budget by \$100,000. Motion did not pass: In favor: Mr. Carlson; Mr. O'Brien; Opposed: Mr. Stevenson; Mr. Swan; Mr. Thorpe; Mr. Carver; Ms. Rzasa.

Mr. Carlson made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Brien that at the end of Fiscal Year 23 if there are any surplus funds they should first be applied to the debt service reserve up to \$100 thousand before any other surplus appropriations. Discussion: There was much discussion that this was not an appropriate budget motion. Motion did not pass. In favor: Mr. Carlson; Mr. O'Brien; Opposed: Mr. Stevenson; Mr. Swan; Mr. Thorpe; Mr. Carver; Ms. Rzasa.

Mr. Fortuna questioned how the language proposed would be able to become part of the budget. After the discussion and the vote, Mr. Fortuna said that he would research whether an Amendment such as the one proposed could be incorporated into a budget in the future.

The Chair called for the vote. Motion passed: 5-2-0. In favor Ms. Rzasa; Mr. Swan; Mr. Stevenson; Mr. Carver; Mr. Thorpe; Opposed: Mr. O'Brien; Mr. Carlson.

A motion made by Ms. Rzasa, seconded by Mr. Swan to approve the annual budget for the Town of Old Saybrook Board of Education for the fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 as recommended by the Board of Finance in the Amount of \$27,473,341 and to move this budget to

annual town meeting which will adjourn to referendum. There was no discussion. Motion passed: 7-0-0.

- 5. BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROPRIATE \$1650.00 FROM THE TOWN'S CAPITAL AND NON-RECURRING ACCOUNT, AND RECOMMEND TO TOWN MEETING, FOR THE PURPOSES OF ACQUIRING A PERMANENT EASEMENT AT 685 BOSTON POST ROAD. SAID PERMANENT EASEMENT IS LOCATED AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF ROUTE 1 AND ELM STREET AND THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY AND IS DEPICTED ON A CERTAIN MAP ENTITLED, "EASEMENT TO BE GRANTED TO THE TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK BY K BROTHERS LLC BOSTON POST ROAD AND ELM STREET OLD SAYBROOK, CT DATE: NOVEMBER 2021 SCALE 1" = 10' EASEMENT MAP. SAID PROPOSED PERMANENT EASEMENT IS TRIANGULAR AND CONSISTS OF 291 SQUARE FEET.**

Selectman Fortuna discussed the easement briefly and the following motion was made:

Ms. Rzasas made a motion, seconded by Mr. Carlson, that based on the recommendation of the board of selectmen, to appropriate \$1,650 from the town's capital and non-recurring account, and recommend to town meeting, for the purposes of acquiring a permanent easement at 685 Boston Post Road. Motion passed 7-0-0.

At this time Selectman Fortuna noted that this was Ms. Rzasas's last meeting and thanked Ms. Rzasas for her time on the Board of Finance. He announced that she was selected to replace Mr. Maynard, Tax Collector for the town.

6. Public Comment

Mr. Caldarella commended the board for their hard work and dedication. He thanked them for their diligence for the many additional meetings regarding the FY23 budget.

Chief Spera praised the board as well for their thoughtful dedication while discussing the FY23 budget.

Ms. Quish also thanked the Board of Finance.

7. Comments from the Chair

Ms. Rzasas thanked the board, Carl and the Board of Selectmen, Chief Spera, Jan Peruccio, Julie Pendleton, and the department directors that came before the board. She said she would miss her time on the Board of Finance but is ready for the next challenge.

Ms. Rzasas called upon Ms. Palladino for a COVID 19 update at this time.

Ms. Palladino reported that during the month of March, the Town received \$510,369.97 in FEMA funds. Therefore, the COVID 19 expenses realized to date have been fully funded.

By way of background, the Town began accruing COVID-19 related expenses in Fiscal Year (“FY”) 2020 after the declaration of emergency by the President, Governor of Connecticut and First Selectman. At that time an off-budget fund was created to accumulate the associated expenses and reimbursements related to this emergency. At the request of the Board of Finance, monthly updates have been provided on the status of this fund.

As of the date of receiving the funds noted above, accumulated COVID expenses were \$1,022,301. The town had previously received \$592,518 in reimbursements. Therefore, total reimbursements now equate to \$1,102,889, which leaves the town with a positive balance of \$80,586.97.

Chief Spera led the emergency management process of this unprecedented emergency, including the financial reporting to FEMA. The Finance team supported and validated the emergency management submissions. Excess funds may be used to cover future COVID expenses if needed. A final accounting will be completed when the COVID emergency is finalized.

Ms. Rzasz thanked Ms. Palladino.

8. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Thorpe, seconded by Mr. Carlson and was so voted unanimously at 7:17 p.m.

A video of this meeting in its entirety can be seen online in the Town of Old Saybrook’s Video Library and the Town Clerk’s Office.

Respectfully submitted:

Gerri Lewis, Clerk