

June 22, 2023

Minutes

Finance Committee Members in attendance: Ben Thomas, Chair, Karen Dunn, Clerk, Stephen Steele, Erica Liu, Abigail Seibert, Ron O'Brien and Mark Bailey

Others in attendance: David Castellarin, (Finance Director); Julie Kirrane, School Director of Finance, Daniel Brosgol, Chair School Committee

Chair Thomas calls the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Reads Remote Meeting Guidelines

Calls the Roll of Committee Members in attendance.

I. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Public Comment

None

Chair Thomas introduces new Committee member Mark Bailey. At the request of Chair Thomas, Member Bailey provides a brief summary of his background and association with Bedford.

2. Review/Approve Minutes

Chair Thomas asks for comments on Minutes for January 5, 2023 meeting

None received.

Motion to approve Minutes for January 5, 2023 Finance Committee meeting by Member Steele.

Second by Member Seibert

Roll call of Members in attendance.

Vote: 6-0-0 Motion carries

Chair Thomas asks for comments on Minutes for January 19, 2023 meeting.

None received.

Motion to approve Minutes for January 19, 2023 Finance Committee meeting by Member Steele.

Second by Member Bailey

Roll call of Members in attendance.

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion carries

3. Reserve Fund Transfer Votes

Snow and Ice

Mr. Castellarin notes that when reviewing and voting to approve the Snow and Ice Transfer at the last meeting, the Members requested further information. Mr. Castellarin has now provided a detailed memorandum concerning the costs involved in the Request

Chair Thomas asks for any Member comments.

None received.

Legal Expenses

Chair Thomas notes the Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund for Legal Expenses and asks for Member comments.

Member Steele asks whether the legal expenses trend will continue.

Mr. Castellarin states that this has already been adjusted and it was a unique time period.

Member Seibert states that amount seems to be a small and reasonable overage.

Motion to approve the Reserve Fund Transfer to Legal - 0115102-53009 in the amount not to exceed \$100,000 by Member Dunn.

Second by Member Bailey.

Roll call of Member in attendance.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion carries.

Schools

The Schools are represented by Julie Kirrane, Schools Director of Finance, Daniel Brosgol, Chair, School Committee.

Chair Thomas welcomes Ms. Kirrane and Mr. Brosgol and notes the cover letter submitted by the Schools to accompany the Reserve Fund Transfer request.

Chair Thomas states that he would like to see the Schools work on a complete budget and not need a Reserve Fund element.

Ms. Kirrane notes that she agrees and they are working toward that goal.

Member Seibert asks about Circuit Breaker accounts.

Ms. Kirrane explains them as being controlled by Special Education laws. Reimbursement is based upon percentages and this has varied over the years. State is now at 75% which is good for Bedford. Districts can keep a reserve for unpredictable expenses.

Member Seibert asks what is involved in the determination.

Ms. Kirrane discusses the policies involved.

Member Seibert asks for a 10 year summary.

Ms. Kirrane states that she has such a document and passes it out to the Members.

Chair Thomas asks about volatility by year. Ms. Kirrane notes that it varies with this year about \$200,000 over. She notes we they have a reserve for this.

Member Steele notes that this covers students going out of district for school.

Ms. Kirrane agrees.

Member Seibert asks what are the reserve amounts and for what.

Mr. Castellarin notes that the state caps the amount.

Chair Thomas states that he likes the look ahead provided for September and October.

Ms. Kirrane agrees and will be continuing this.

Member Liu asks about the process for determining who is a special needs student.

Ms. Kirrane notes that this is all regulated by Federal and State law.

Ms. Kirrane notes that these students are evaluated each year.

Member Liu asks what percentage of all students are considered special needs.

Ms. Kirrane notes about 18%.

Member Bailey asks if this number is consistent.

Ms. Kirrane notes that it is pretty much.

Member Dunn moves to approve the Reserve Fund request in the amount of \$198,451.

Second by Member Steele.

Roll call of Members in attendance.

Vote: 7-0-0

Chair Thomas notes the additional request for a transfer for a security study for the Schools.

Member Dunn moves to approve the request for a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$49,950.

Second by Member Steele.

Roll call of Members in attendance.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion carries.

4. MUNIS Demonstration

Mr. Castellarin provides an overall description and explanation of the MUNIS budget software now being used by Bedford. It is a fully functional accounting program substantially advanced from the system long used by the Town. Provides a brief summary of what it can do and how it does it. Substantially more efficient.

Ms. Kirrane notes that it took some time and a lot of work for the School Department to make the transition but she and all in the finance department love it.

Mr. Castellarin provides a slide presentation of the MUNIS System and its benefits.

Ms. Kirrane also contributes comments during the presentation.

Both Ms. Kirrane and Mr. Castellarin believe the time and expense involved in the transition to MUNIS will prove well worth it.

II. RECURRING BUSINESS

1. Meetings Attended

Member Seibert discusses attending a meeting with the School Committee chair. General discussion of School effort establishing an updated security plan.

Chair Thomas discusses attending Select Board meeting. Discussion of usual contracts. Also discussed Town Manager search. Discussed PEG Access Agreement. Also notes that next Monday's Select Board meeting will include discussion of water and sewer.

Chair Thomas also notes that there are openings in the Capital Expenditures Committee which need to be filled.

2. Finance Committee Adjourns

Motion to adjourn by Member Steele.

Second by Member Dunn.

Roll call of Members in attendance.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion carries.

Time: 7:55 PM

John B. Connarton
Recording Secretary

DOCUMENT LIST

Agenda for June 22, 2023 Meeting

Minutes for Finance Committee Meeting for January 5, 2023

Minutes for Finance Committee Meeting for January 19, 2023

Memorandum from Mr. Castellarin concerning Snow and Ice Additional Funds for FY2023 6-20-23

Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund for Legal Expenses 6-14-23

FY Model 06-22-23