

**March 16, 2020**  
**Board of Finance and Finance Committee**  
**#2 Department Budget Hearings**  
**2021-2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lainie McHugh called the virtual meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom. All those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board of Finance members present / absent:

**PRESENT**

Michael Barker  
Elaine Hammers  
Marty Isaac  
Lainie McHugh  
Paul Timpanelli  
Steve Chol  
Vincent DeGennaro – Alternate  
Marc Mascola – Alternate  
Christine El Eris – Alternate

**ABSENT**

**Also present:**

First Selectman Vicki Tesoro; Maria Pires, Finance Director; Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer; Cynthia Katske, Chief Administrative Officer; Therese Keegan, Internal Auditor; Mary Isaac, Finance Committee; Carole Hans, Finance Committee - Alternate; Kevin Shively, Finance Committee; Dawn Cantafio, Finance Committee; Ashley Gaudiano, Finance Committee.

**01060800 – Trumbull Community Television**

**Kate Donahue & Lara Walden**

- 2020-2011 the government meetings are going into zoom and live streaming on Facebook so we can track the number of people tuning into the CVCT Facebook page. Brings the government to the people and shows how people are interested.
- Budget changes are ok except for \$11,800 Capital Outlay, need to replace 2 encoders in the THS studio. One transmits from Frontier to the customers; the second one records all studio programming and is failing. Without the second one we cannot record the elections night or the debates. The second encoder will allow us to stream to the following: Facebook, UTube and Video.

**01022600 – EMS**

**Chief Leigh Goodman**

- Volunteer numbers have gone up. At times we have more than we can use.
- Wants to increase staff and be able to have a paramedic in fly cars at all times so they can divert ambulances if not necessary.
- Calls being missed; however, call volume dropped so much during pandemic that she is waiting to see what happens when things return to “normal” before actively seeking these calls.
- Move to the stable staffing environment created problem with regard to salaries so she wants to reinstate the vacation line. It was noted that any discussion regarding salaries, etc., will require the Board to go into executive session with Mr. McCarthy and will resume this issue then.
- Capital outlay – lease expense is in their budget. One ambulance is bonded with a payment of \$250,000. Reduction of an additional ambulance \$250,000. Needs to make sure EMS vehicles are reliable at all times. Use of 5 year lease plan. \$100,000 to remount, saving \$150,000.
- Additional cardiac monitor needed. Have 3 in service; 1 needs to be replaced and we need to invest in an additional one. Would like to trade one in this year.
- Not collective bargaining units; however, Mr. McCarthy recommends going into executive session.

The following attendees were asked to join the executive session meeting. First Selectman Vicki Tesoro; members of the Board of Finance and alternates, EMS Chief Leigh Goodman, Thomas McCarthy, Director of Human Relations; Maria Pires, Finance Director, Dawn Cantafio, Town Council Chairman/Finance Committee ; Mary Isaac, Finance Committee; Ashley Gaudiano, Finance Committee.

--By unanimous consent the invited attendees went into executive session at 9:20 a.m.

--By unanimous consent, the invited attendees came out of executive session at 9:55 a.m.

### **01030000 – Public Works Director**

#### **George Estrada, Director**

#### **Dayonara Aviles, Comptroller**

- Covid complicated all areas in Public Works.
- Safety was of the utmost of importance. They implemented procedures with limited impact to work force that was split into teams – 50% on and 50% off – to preserve services to the town.
- Dmitri was instrumental in making it all happen with cleaning protocols and set-ups.
- Highway – plowing – all healthy individuals who are able to do the job.
- Currently experiencing Covid impacted resources, especially in the Parks Department.
- Delayed filling position – Operations Director – HR is beginning discussions with Union.
- Continuing with response to Covid needs.
- Energy savings need to be discussed with attorney.

### **01030025 – PW-Street Lights**

#### **George Estrada**

- Street lights needed for vehicular safety. Expansion of lights in town; establish reason for lights.
- Cost has risen 5.9%; transition to LED cost savings; adding lights erodes savings; more lights requested by residents due to car burglaries..

### **01030100 – PW-Highway**

#### **George Estrada**

- Salary budget changes ok.
- Overtime for leaf pickup reduced by FS; if there is an early snow leaves will stay.
- Increase equipment rental for leaf pickup so we don't have to wait for trucks to return keeping the leaf pickup in progress.
- Capital outlay reduced \$19,800 by FS – defer equipment purchases of \$19,400. He is okay with this.
- Last year they purchased a new plow and truck that can be used to plow. Some of the equipment that was deferred is starting to cost money due to the size of the repairs. Schedule of equipment replacement to be provided to Board.
- Wants to upgrade 4 men and add a jr. maintainer rather than go outside to replace a senior grade operation due to a retirement.

### **01030101 – PW-Snow Removal**

#### **George Estrada**

- Fleet kept on the road due to the competence of Doug and his maintenance crew. Parts were obtained when needed and trucks were back on the road in a short period of time.
- Driven by what nature gives us.
- Snow budget is depleted;
- OT reduced by the First Selectman to 2021 level.

### **01030105 – PW-Construction**

#### **George Estrada**

- Provide a capital plan. Every 4-5 years, an outside firm does analysis of roads and gives us their suggestions. Milling a prep work also done by outside firm. Engineering works out the groups of streets to be done in order to do the work most cost efficiently.
- Request dropped from \$484,000 to \$100,000; use available Locip funds and TAR fund totaling \$526,000.

### **01030200 - PW-Building Maintenance**

#### **George Estrada**

- Ok with budget.
- Funds reside in the Park Department.
- Identify what we are spending on the Building and Parks departments. In maintenance you will see a 20/80 split and in parks, 80/20 split.
- Do not need trades people in both departments; they reside in the park department.
- They are always busy and support one another.
- Dmitri updates plans, etc, Makes sure maintenance contracts are in place.
- We have a full complement of resources today

### **01030300 - PW-Fleet Maintenance**

#### **George Estrada/Doug Bogden**

Mechanic retiring; not replacing; will operate with 5 due to updating fleet.

We maintain the fleet rather than do major repair work, due to updated equipment.

### **01030400 - Recycling Center**

#### **George Estrada**

- Staffing is an issue. 1000 cars on a Saturday in the summer and 700-900 cars a day during week. Increase in volume believed to be Covid related.
- Increase in TIP fees this year.
- Control recycling from cradle to grave; however, we go through a bidding process.
- Difficult to control cost; expenses continue to rise; TIP fees are higher and there is no place to send the recyclables; no place for plastic and clean glass to go,
- Pilot program to install container for liquor bottles and wine bottles, since there is a market for these. Once broken, the bottles are considered dirty and can't be used. Possible reduction in TIP fee.

### **01014800 - Inland Wetlands Commission**

#### **George Estrada / William Maurer**

- No change in the budget.
- Can put notices on line for now. Not sure if we are going back to posting in newspaper.

### **01030500 - Town Engineer**

#### **William Maurer**

- Able to get Strobel Road finished; due to Covid and school being closed.
- Also finished Chestnut Hill Road and Moose Hill Road.

### **20100000 - WPCA**

#### **William Maurer**

- Finish pump station upgrade at Beardsley Park.
- Failures that need to be contained and will be working on them this year.
- Budget same as last year with minor changes.
- Challenges – reduction of \$50,000 for services – professional – it will be difficult to accomplish goals.

- There was no intent to short change the account \$50,000; when developing budget we became aware of potential of single expense; Bridgeport is under order by DEP to do major improvement to 2 facilities. We have a window of time where we have a lot of work to do. The T/C tabled this. Bridgeport needs to do a design and the cost is not available at this time; however, we must be present to assess what impact there will be to the taxpayers of Trumbull. We must be there in their planning, etc, since we are the largest contributor.
- They believe that they have sufficient funds in the budget to meet their goals.
- Mr. Estrada indicated the \$50,000 will be reinstated as a precaution.
- OK with reduction to \$25,000 for maintenance service.

### **01080400 – Recreation**

#### **Dmitri Paris**

- All activities came to a stop last year and that is where everything remains.
- Camp is coming up this year with better numbers. Depends on available space.
- Dr. Semmel - fall 20-21 in the school system is likely to look as it has in the past; full operational use.
- Making full time for camps and regular programs – may be able to use school auditoriums- as soon as the numbers open up to us from the state.

### **01080600 – Parks**

#### **Dmitri Paris**

- All trees are in the database.
- The Ash tree blight has not been cleared up, We are now having a problem with the Oak trees.
- Field use contract reductions; however, decreased usage did not occur. Spring predictions took place in summer.
- Savings came in between \$15,000 - \$17,000.

### **01080800 - Tree Warden**

#### **Dmitri Paris**

- Warren Jacques is now a part-time employee.
- We have 2 part-time tree wardens.
- We must have tree warden on staff who must be well trained.

### **01060600 - Business Education Initiative**

#### **Dan Neuman**

- Nothing has changed from last year; we are trying to do what we couldn't do last year.
- Why isn't this a part of the Board of Education Budget. Initially, they could not get the Board of Education to fund so it went to the Town, since Mr. Annick deemed it to be necessary. It isn't limited only to the public school system.
- There were 3400 students who experienced this program over the last FY, prior to Covid, and we are looking for approximately 5,000 students this year.

### **01010800 – Elections**

Jean Rabinow and Tracy Vonick

- No changes.

### **01040000 Health Department**

#### **Vicki Tesoro (for Director)**

- No changes.
- The director was not available to speak since there are vaccine clinics running in several places today and during the week in Town..
- Questions can be sent on to the director.
- Vaccine schedule will soon be accelerated.
- No issues with the vaccines; just issues with receiving the supply.

## **01010600 – Probate**

### **Judge T.R. Rowe**

- No changes.
- Budget is a function of the State; however, three towns contribute for the upkeep.
- Went to e-filing; however, we are still required to print and keep a paper file.
- \$12,350 was Trumbull's portion last year and this year it is \$12,430.
- Stayed open during Covid; people continued filing and we kept up and now we are getting busy.

## **01013800 – Town Hall**

### **Maria Pires**

- This account is used for everything not covered in any other department.
- This is the account where we budget for the floater; there is a request for one this year.
- Property and liability insurance increased by 8%; includes the schools and police department along with the town. We have cyber insurance and all equipment taken home is insured.
- We are using compensating balances to off-set banking fees.
- We are in CCM at this time; we are eliminating other contributions until things get better.

## **01013000 – Human Resources / Civil Service**

### **Thomas McCarthy**

- Covid 19 took over. We were able to create policies and procedures to protect employees and town residents, limiting access to employees and resident access to buildings.
- Hiring freeze put in place; concessions negotiated with unions
- Transition to new state Insurance plan completed.
- EMS Department was removed from Civil Service; Director has more room making hiring decisions.
- Increased clerical fees for meeting for 12 months.
- Police officers are leaving for more money and/or Pension Benefits.
- Finished dealing contracts and concessions left undone by predecessor.

## **01013000 – Employee Benefits**

### **Maria Pires & Thomas McCarthy**

- Health Insurance increased by 4%.
- Workers Comp was reduced this year because we negotiated settlements and we able to settle claims in an effort to move on to replace individuals.
- The ARC for the Police went up \$300,000 whereas the ARC for the Town ARC declined slightly.
- Valuation discount rate was reduced from 7.5% to 7.25% and we will need look into changing the mortality tables next.
- Unemployment went up and we are not sure what the impact will be depending on the Covid reimbursement by the government.

## **01010100 – Nature Commission**

### **Shirley Bauman**

- No changes.
- Virtual programs and limited in house programs.
- Now have a website – getting lots of coverage.
- Teaching program on nature for all second graders: Beaver Habitat and Nature Walk (field trip)
- \$10,000 grant from Amazon for Neighbor Good.
- \$10,000 grant from Henckle last year to be used for Education

### **01012200 – Purchasing**

#### **Kevin Bova**

- Overtime reduced; needs to have it reinstated for him and clerk. It will exceed the \$1000 reduction.
- BOE is not cooperating with the Purchasing Policy in place. The only town where purchasing agent covers both BOE and the Town. He wants a stipend for work done on behalf of the Board of Education. We are reimbursed in kind by the state 30%. Per Mr. McCarthy cannot discuss at the meeting. Mr. Bova feels that he gives 30% of his time to the BOE.

### **01040400 - Nursing / Senior Wellness**

#### **Lynn Steinbrick**

- Still have nurse even though Senior Center closed. Assists wherever needed and wants to get back to the walking club.
- No changes.

### **01060200 - Nursing / School Nurses**

#### **Lynn Steinbrick**

- No changes.
- The town lags behind in pay rate; need to increase pay rate..
- Nurses left this year due to Covid, or new positions for increased salary rate or to retire.
- Hiring rate is low; nurses are non-union.

### **01060400 – Non Public School Nurses**

#### **Lynn Steinbrick**

- No changes.
- The town lags behind in pay rate; need to increase pay rate..
- Nurses left this year due to Covid, or new positions for increased salary rate or to retire.
- Hiring rate is low; nurses are non-union.

### **01050200 - Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Ctr.**

#### **Lynn Steinbrick**

- No changes.
- Still has an open position that they will be interviewing to fill.
- Large surge in requests for counseling; need to fill open position and then see if additional counselor is needed.

### **21100000 - Golf Commission Tashua Knolls Golf**

#### **Don Espach / Joe Gaudiano**

- No changes.
- We are a week or two away from opening; we are having computer issues.
- Budget is fairly flat except for the minimum wage increase for seasonal employees.
- There are maintenance issues coming due that have been ignored. As bonds decrease and funds are added back we are looking to invest in projects and equipment needed for the course.
- We have the new golf cart lease, new point of purchase sale software and tee time scheduler.

## **01090000 - Debt Service**

### **Maria Pires, Finance Director**

- Total debt payments are \$13,700,000 includes the BOE projects and Town projects.
- Going to Town Council for approval to do a refunding that will show a savings of \$1million dollars but we cannot show it in this budget and cannot reduce the debt directly. Will not be included when we do the mill rate.
- Town has \$7.2 million in debt; BOE has \$6.5 million in debt.
- Overall \$300,000 increase.

## **Revenues**

### **Maria Pires, Finance Director**

- Projected revenue for this year.
- State revenue remained the same for both years. Not cuts
- Grand list went up slightly.
- Permits and Fees are fluctuating due to Covid.
- Implementing a fee for haulers using the Transfer Station and anybody that comes in to drop off their garbage. Estimating income at \$1 million. Fee was requested a number of years ago; however, things have changed. We are experiencing an increase in expenses and loss of revenue. \$97.16 per ton is a blended rate to get rid of the material that are disposed. Fee to transfer is \$18 per ton. The fees will just cover the expenses. Expenses are going up and recyclables no longer have a market to offset our expenses. There is never going to be a good time to do this.

By unanimous consent the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis C. Collier

Phyllis C. Collier – Board of Finance Clerk