

Minutes of the Special Board of Finance meeting held on Monday, May 15, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Lyme Memorial Town Hall, 52 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, CT 06371.

To join this meeting by phone dial +1-605-472-5727 and enter access code 3819718.

Present in Person: Regular Members: David Kelsey, BJ Bernblum, Jude Read,
Andrew Russell, Kim Thompson
Alternate Members: Maria Marchant, Matthew Olson,

Present in Person: Timothy Griswold, First Selectman, ex-officio

Present via Phone: Regular Members:
Alternate Members:

Absent: Regular Members: H. P. Garvin III
Alternate Members: Katherine Thuma

Guests: Jeri Baker, Lyme Senior Center
7 Old Lyme Fire Department Members

Mr. Kelsey called the meeting to order at 9:30 p.m. and stated that Mr. Garvin will not be present. Therefore, a motion was made by Ms. Read, seconded by Mr. Russell, to have Ms. Marchant vote for Mr. Garvin in his absence. Motion carried.

Setting of the Mill Rate for Fiscal Year 2023-24

Mr. Kelsey detailed the Mill Rate Calculation at the Town Meeting stating that the Grand List – net assessment before Board of Assessment of Appeals of \$1,594,762,435. The Estimated Collection Rate of 98.50%, net Taxable Grand List of \$1,570,840,998 and Net Property Tax Req. - \$37,390,494. Add: Elderly Tax Relief of \$30,000, EMS/OLFD Volunteer Tax Abatement (30 of 66 took abatement) - \$30,000, HOPE abatement at 100% - \$7,000, Ryefield Tax Abatement at 80% - \$21,000, and Lymewood Tax Abatement at 80% - \$22,000, and Gross Property Tax Req. - \$37,500,494.

A motion was made by Mr. Bernblum, seconded by Ms. Read, to approve using \$600,000 out of surplus with a resultant mill rate of 23.50. Motion carried.

Lymes' Senior Center Discussion

Mr. Griswold stated that the Senior Center expansion project held Public Information Meetings on 8 & 9 May. Ms. Baker said communications about the informational meetings were sent via newsletters and email blasts and to parents via the school communications and press releases. There was a discussion regarding the use of a paper ballot. Mr. Griswold stated that, although a referendum would cost \$4-5,000, it would make more sense to have a referendum rather than a Town Meeting to enable a greater number of citizens to vote. The referendum will most likely be held in mid-June.

A motion was made by Mr. Russell and seconded by Ms. Marchant, that the Board of Finance recommends to the Board of Selectmen to have the Lymes' Senior Center renovation project be sent to a Town Referendum for approval. Motion carried.

Old Lyme Fire Department Discussion

Mr. Kelsey stated that the Fire Department has some overruns that the Chief wants to make the Finance Board aware of. Firefighter Mr. McCarthy explained that the operating budget will be overbudget because of fuel cost and electricity costs.

Washer & Dryer Discussion: Mr. McCarthy stated that the funds for the washer and dryer didn't include the expense for the electrician to hook up the appliances. The cost for the electrical box and labor will cost approximately \$4,000.

Knox Box Allocation: Mr. McCarthy explained that \$2,000 is needed to complete the Knox Box project.

There was a discussion about combining the three budget requests and approving one amount at the time the work is completed. It was decided to wait on approving a final amount until the June 20th meeting.

Minutes of April 11, 2023 Special Meeting

The Minutes of April 11th were reviewed.

There being no corrections noted, a motion was made by Mr. Bernblum, seconded by Ms. Marchant, to approve the minutes, as written. Motion carried.

Other Business

Mrs. Thompson stated that the Board of Finance Agenda should include a Public Comment section. She said that she looked at several Board and Commission agendas and most of them have Public Comment either at the end or the beginning of the meeting agenda. There was a discussion about whether the Board of Finance should have Public Comment as part of its agenda as well as whether there should be a time limit for speakers because the meetings are usually lengthy. Mr. Kelsey stated that the Board of Education limits Public Comment to three minutes. It was decided to add Public Comment after Other Business on future agendas and put a time limit on discussions.

Mrs. Thompson reported that the Cross Lane Playground needs to have a new layer of mulch and weed removal around the playground area. It has been several years since new mulch was added.

Mr. Kelsey stated that the next Board of Finance meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Hall of the Town Hall.

A motion was made by Mr. Bernblum, seconded by Ms. Read, to adjourn the regular budget meeting at 10:30 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michele E. Hayes
Secretary