

Ashford, Connecticut
ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday October 26, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting / In-Person - Ashford Town Hall, and Zoom

1. Call to Order was at 7:01 p.m. by Chairman John Kopec; other members present were Judith Austin, Garth Bean, Jesse Burnham, Christina Davis, Paul Varga.

Guest: Sheryi Soucy, Treasurer

2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates: The roll call was taken. Ms. Davis was seated for Ms. DeSanto.

3. Communications: to be discussed during related agenda items

4. Public Comments: none

5. Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting Minutes, Thursday, October 12, 2023:

Ms. Austin moved and Ms. Davis seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the regular BOF meeting October 12, 2023. Motion passed with two abstention from Mr. Burnham and Mr. Varga.

6. New Business:

a. **Selectman's Update:** Mr. Kopec noted emails from Mr. Falletti concerning legal fee overages that were to be discussed below.

b. **Annual Report Update:** Mr. Burnham noted that he was working on the dedication but that several reports still had not bee received: BOS, Transfer Station and Fire Marshall. He is asking that the Auditor's report format be made usable.

c. **Presentation by the Town Assessor, Lynn Byberg:** The presentation will be delayed until the new Auditor takes the position after the upcoming election.

d. **Discussion on Updating the 2024 Meeting Calendar:** This must be delayed because we wait for the EO Smith H.S., R19 budget dates.

e. **Year End Transfers Needed for the Audit:** Ashford Treasurer Sherri Soucy put her list of year end transfers up on the screen. She went through each specific department/area that had gone over their budgeted amount and explained the reason. She uses the Contingency Fund to cover these dollar amounts in order to make each fund whole (their line item zero). The total year end transfers were \$71,186,54.

Some of the overages were legal fees: settling personal issues, Cadlerock, union contract, and legal engineering fees in conjunction with the work of the IWWC and the PZC.

Other major overruns were due to the Dept. of Public Works and their expenses for: increased costs of gasoline and diesel fuel, tires and chains for three trucks, lubricative issues, truck parts (rebuilding a transmission, brakes, etc.), other equipment parts and repairs. The Ashford School had to replace mechanic tools as the former mechanic had used his own tools so took them when he left that position.

Ms. Davis asked why funds unused by some areas could not be transferred to cover these costs? The Treasurer replied that each line item for a department or budgeted area is a separate budget. The Contingency Fund allows one transfer rather than having to make separate individual transfers from several funds to cover each separate department overrun. She explained it really is a bookkeeping tool making transfers easier.

Mr. Varga explained that the Contingency Fund was established to be there to cover expected fuel increased costs and increased legal fees. He expressed concern that these possible overruns be discussed at the time of initial budget deliberations.

One question by Ms. Austin and others was a noted over budget cost of \$13,439 for "Signs and Signals" on page four. Ms. Soucy responded that that item was part of the larger "Roads and Bridges" budget, that did not go over its allotted amount. Therefore, that amount was not listed in the Year End Transfers.

Ms. Soucy was thanked for her presentation.

Mr. Varga moved and Mr. Bean seconded a motion to accept the noted Year End Transfers list compiled by Treasurer Soucy, and that the total amount be covered by the Contingency Fund. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Agenda Items for the next meeting: none specified as the BOF waits for meeting dates of other boards

8. Remarks for the Good of the Board: The Chairman will notify members about the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.

9. Adjournment:

Ms. Austin moved and Mr. Varga seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 7:35 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by,
Valerie B. Oliver, Recording Secretary
10/27/2023*