

**ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday October 27, 2022 / Held Virtually via Zoom / Ashford, Connecticut
7:00 P.M.**

Present:

Judith Austin, Chairman, Garth Bean, Christina Davis, Angela DeSanto, John Kopec, Hugh MacKenzie, William Falletti, First Selectman, Ex-Officio Member

Guest: John Guskowski, Facilitator

Document supplied to members prior to the meeting:

Municipal Practice Group Update. Halloran Sage. Authorization of Remote and Hybrid Public Meetings has been Extended. 4/28/2022, 3p.

1. Call to Order

Ms. Austin called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates

A roll call was carried out. Mr. MacKenzie was seated for Mr. Varga and Ms. Davis was seated for Mr. Burnham.

3. Communications

The Chair reported on the School Oil Tank Project. The state has approved our grant application and will pay 63.57% of the cost. The total cost is \$270,000. Thanks go to Ms. Ford, School Superintendent for her work to obtain the grant.

The Chair also reported that the audit is on schedule and close to finalization.

4. Public Comments – none

5. Approve Minutes of Meeting Thursday August 25, 2022

MS. DAVIS MOVED AND MR. KOPEC SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOF REGULAR MEETING AUGUST 25, 2022 AS CORRECTED. MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR YES (AUSTIN, BEAN, DAVIS, KOPEC) AND TWO ABSTENTIONS BY MS. DESANTO AND MR. MACKENZIE.

corrections: \$ should be added to all dollar amounts in the Minutes / no. 6 terms should be Zoom, Cadlerock /p.2, para. 2 solar, para. 3, line 5 should read...issues in the Hartford area. Mr. Falletti mentioned... / the opinion of use or nonuse of commas was noted

6. New Business

a. Selectman's Update

Mr. Falletti announced a new interim part time Treasurer, Sherri Soucy who is Treasurer for Sterling, Conn. She has been hired initially for three months. New Assessor is a certified assessor and very experienced.

The STEAP grant has been approved and will be used for a road project on Southworth Dr and Pompey Lane. A special meeting may be required to set up a specific account as \$40,000 is needed for materials and supplies, and the grant dollars are not supplied until the project is completed. .

The School roof (80,000 sq. ft.) project has begun with a meeting last week with the bond counselor. A referendum will most likely be needed. The town will be reimbursed for 63% of the cost of the School's oil tank. The new Teacher's Contract for three years has been approved.

The HVAC work has been completed at Knowleton Hall and the Fire Dept. Pickle Ball courts are up and running.

There will be an important Nov. 7, 2022 6:30 p.m. town meeting as the cost of some projects is going up. \$20,000 is desired for the Social Services Dept. as some families may need help with tentative housing as rents may/are going up in units in town what with new ownership. The Salvation Army has been included in recent discussion on ways to help residents.

The Ashford Memorial Day Service will be dedicated to the honor of Leon R. Gardner, our remaining WWII veteran who has just died at the age of 99.

A small bridge on Boston Hollow Rd. has collapsed, owned by Ashford and Eastford. The road has been closed. It is reported to cost between \$50,000 and \$150,000 to rebuild. We should learn by mid-December if we receive the Brownfield Grant for the Cadlerock Property.

The owner of 135 acres near I84 and Rte 89 will be proposing another commercial use for this acreage. Not much else was known at this time.

Mr. Falletti answered a few questions: in-person meetings can start, but if a board member requires remote then that has to be provided - adding to expense / more equipment is needed to make the lower town hall meeting room adequate for hybrid meetings - perhaps ARPA funds could be used / the School roof project probably would not start construction until 2023.

6. New Business

- b. Discussion and action on in person meetings**
 - c. Review of current expense and revenue reports**
 - d. Discussion regarding 2023 meeting schedule**
 - e. Discussion regarding FY 2023/2324 budget calendar**
- All items b - e tabled until next meeting.

7. Old Business

- a. FY 2020-2021 Annual Report Update:** Mr. Burnham not in attendance. Ms. Austin will get list of departments that have not supplied a report to Mr. Falletti.
- b. FY 2021-2022 Audit Update:** discussed above
- c. Update on School Oil Tank Project:** discussed above

8. Agenda items for next Meeting, Nov. 3, 2022

New Business no. 6 above b - e.
FY 2020-2021 Annual Report Update
FY 2021-2022 Audit Update

9. Remarks for the Good of the Board

Chairman Austin reported that she had attended several of the Teacher Contract negotiations. She was very impressed with the amount of work and dedication apparent in the proceedings. BOE did an excellent job of questioning the union and did their best. She asked the BOF members to challenge themselves to be compassionate with town employees and be respectful in our future discussions on the education budget.

10. Adjournment

**MS. DESANTO MOVED AND MR. KOPAC SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AT 7:58 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted by, Valerie B. Oliver, Recording Secretary, 10/27/2022