

APPROVED
MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF FINANCE REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2009

A regular meeting of the Board of Finance was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2009 in the Town Hall Conference Room at 7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Marty Heiser, Chairman; Peter Gomez, Vice Chairman; David Ulmer; and Jill Bornstein

Members Absent: Robert Cascella

Town Officials: Kevin Redmond, Controller; Jane Berendsen-Hill, Tax Collector

A G E N D A

1. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
2. Tax Collector's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Controllers Report:
 - a. November YTD Revenue and Expense Review
5. CAFR Discussion
6. BAN Discussion
7. 2010 Meeting Schedule
8. Old Business
 - a. New Business
 - b. Communications & Correspondence
9. Adjournment

Mr. Heiser called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETINGS' MINUTES

Mr. Heiser made and Mr. Gomez seconded a motion to approve the BOF minutes for the September 15, 2009 meeting.

Vote: 3 – 0. (Ms. Bornstein abstained) Motion **APPROVED**.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT

Tax Collector's Report

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2010

Prior YTD

(in millions)	Budget	Q1	Oct	Nov	Y-T-D	% Cltd	% of Actl
Current Taxes	\$ 107.2	\$ 32.3	\$ 21.2	\$ 2.6	\$ 56.1	52.34%	52.01%
Supplemental MV	0.6		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00%	0.00%

Prior Year Collections	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.8	151.42%	44.74%
Interest & Lien Fees	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.5	159.74%	30.07%
As of November 30, 2009	\$ 108.7	\$ 33.4	\$ 21.3	\$ 2.8	\$ 57.5	52.87%	51.88%

Ms. Berendsen-Hill explained that she started out to collect past-due taxes on fourteen properties; had announced tax sales for eight properties, only four of which went up for sale. One piece of property sold for a lot less than the amount of taxes due because it is empty land which is taxed as a buildable lot, but it is not a buildable lot. Of the remaining three properties sold, two have been redeemed by their owners when the owners were able to obtain reverse mortgages. To date Ms. Berendsen-Hill has collected \$896k (\$491K in prior year taxes; \$347k interest and lien fees; \$52.5K current year taxes) using effective collection tools. Ms. Berendsen-Hill said she feels good about tax collections to date and, apart from the \$896, anticipates that tax collections will reach the budgeted amount. Supplemental motor vehicle tax bills (in the amount of \$525k/\$550k) are being printed tomorrow. The amount is below budget but Ms. Berendsen-Hill anticipates making the overall budgeted amount in spite of that. One piece of property that was thought to be primarily in Danbury, and has been paying the majority of its taxes to Danbury, has recently been surveyed and found to be 84% in Ridgefield and only 16% in Danbury. Ridgefield will receive three years of back taxes plus the current year's taxes on that piece of property. The tax assessor anticipates about \$50k in additional revenue.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Investments as of December 15, 2009		
Ridgefield Bank	\$ 6,539,016.93	0.40
STIF	\$ 552,119.84	0.38
Union Savings	\$ 212,924.69	0.38
Union Savings CD	\$ 4,000,000.00	0.80
Wachovia	\$ 1,802,863.15	0.40
	\$ 13,106,924.61	
YTD Interest Earned as of 12/15/2009		
Ridgefield Bank	\$ 17,819.99	
STIF	\$ 657.61	
Union Savings	\$ 6,704.07	
Wachovia	\$ 923.51	
	\$ 26,105.18	

Mr. Redmond explained that the \$6.5MM in Ridgefield Bank will be reduced by about \$3MM next week when principal and interest (on bonds) payments are made. Ms. Berendsen-Hill noted that tax collection rates are fairly consistent in that approximately 20% of total taxes are collected in each collection month. She was, therefore, confident in predicting \$20MM in tax revenue in January.

Mr. Heiser expressed some satisfaction with the progress made toward a thorough cash-flow analysis. Ms. Bornstein asked what the time line was for getting the finished cash flow analysis, and Mr. Redmond responded that he is currently working on implementing the new purchase order software. The Connecticut towns Glastonbury and Bristol both use the software that Ridgefield intends to purchase. Mr. Redmond referred to them as "slick" saying that they have great operations which are much more like a corporate environment than Ridgefield is. Mr. Redmond said he needs BOE input regarding their disbursements and some assumptions on payroll for the cash flow analysis. He anticipates having a high-level forecast for the next BOF meeting in January 2010.

CONTROLLER'S REPORT

Mr. Redmond apologized for the lack of revenue amounts in the November financial review, saying Selina Mochello (the woman who does the posting) had a death in the family and has been out of the office for a week. He indicated that the revenue situation was not very different from what was discussed at the November meeting. Mr. Heiser asked Mr. Redmond to email the revenue amounts to the BOF when they become available.

Mr. Redmond opined that revenue amounts may end up being on budget. On the expense side he does not currently anticipate any issues, but revenues are trending lower than last year. Department Heads continue their diligence regarding spending.

Mr. Hesier asked if there is still a hiring freeze in place, and Mr. Redmond responded that the Selectmen have to approve any new hires. He reminded the BOF that Assistant Controller, John Mannuzza, is retiring in February and said that a job posting has been sent out and some resumes have been received. He hopes to have some "side-by-side" time with Mr. Mannuzza and his replacement.

Regarding expenses, Mr. Redmond said he thinks there is some "upside" on the Town Attorney's budget. Mr. Ulmer asked where the Town stands regarding Bennett's Pond where there is a new lawsuit. Mr. Redmond said that year-to-date the Town has \$37k of legal expenses for Bennett's Pond which comes from the Capital account.

Mr. Redmond noted that the fire department's over-time budget "looks good" now that the department is fully staffed. He said the police department's personnel is down as one officer retired and another officer is on leave from the department while he is on contract in Afghanistan.

Mr. Gomez noted that Parks & Recreation revenues are down and operating expenses are up. The BOF asked that Parks & Recreation Director, Paul Roche, be invited to the January 2010 meeting.

Mr. Redmond opined that Ridgefield will have a surplus on the expense side of the budget, but there could be some risk on the revenue side.

CAFR DISCUSSION

Mr. Redmond said he was hoping to have a draft ready for this meeting, but he does not. The Blum Shapiro auditors will attend the BOF's January meeting. The audit report has to go out by December 31, 2009.

BAN DISCUSSION (Bond Anticipation Note)

Mr. Redmond explained the necessity for the doing a bond anticipation note in January for about \$1.5MM to pay for the 2008/2009 capital projects that have been advance funded. If the Town were to wait any longer, the "18-month rule" would prohibit the Town from issuing a tax deductible bond. The capital accounts are currently in a deficit position. The First Selectman and the Controller will meet with Janette Marcoux to affect the BAN.

2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

The Controller presented the BOF with a 2010 meeting schedule as follows:

Regular Monthly Meetings: January 19, 2010; February 16, 2010; March 16, 2010; May 18, 2010; June 15, 2010; July 20, 2010; September 21, 2010; October 19, 2010; November 16, 2010; December 21, 2010.

Annual Public Hearing on Proposed Budget: Monday, March 29, 2010.

Budget Deliberations: March 30th and 31st. April 1st, 7th, 8th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th.

There is no scheduled Board of Finance meeting in August 2010.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

The BOF received a Notice of Hearing and Order to Show Cause from the Connecticut State Freedom of Information Commission based on a complaint alleging an illegal meeting in September wherein confidential information was shared by electronic mail among the members of the BOF. The hearing is scheduled for December 28, 2009 at the FOI Commission's office in Hartford.

COMMUNICATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Gomez and seconded by Mr. Heiser to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Vote: 4-0. Motion **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Rodgers, Recording Secretary