

BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING
TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH
323 ROUTE 81
KILLINGWORTH, CONNECTICUT 06419

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
December 10, 2024

Chair Annie Stirna called the December 10, 2024 Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Front Meeting Room of the Town Hall Office Building.

Members present: Chair Annie Stirna, Vice Chairman Marcel Couture, Sarah O'Brien and William Kosturko. Members absent: Clerk Tara Amatrudo and Michael Kovacs. Also present: First Selectman Eric Couture, Finance Director Regina Regolo, Secretary Sherry Lee Hynes, Barry Bernabe from the Phoenix Advisors (via telephone), Scott Hawkins as well as other members of the Parmalee Farm Committee and residents Eileen Blewett and Tim Gannon.

A. Stirna entertained a motion to move Barry Bernabe from Phoenix Advisors to before "Visitors".

M. Couture **MOVED** to take up Parmelee Farm Committee Budget – Scott Hawkins before "Visitors". S. O'Brien seconded the motion. Discussion: none. Voting in favor: A. Stirna, M. Couture, W. Kosturko and S. O'Brien. Opposed: none. Abstentions: none. The motion **carried**, 4-0-0.

Parmelee Farm Committee budget – Scott Hawkins

A. Stirna brought up a concern that the budget year is only half over and the budget is almost used up. Scott Hawkins advised that:

- a. The vendor they used for major repairs to major equipment left the area. Some volunteers addressed some of the repairs along with a local repair person. The local person did not wish to come on as a vendor. Some major equipment repairs needed vendors experienced in specific brands of equipment to handle the repairs. All this led to unanticipated major expenses.
- b. There are fewer volunteers to help maintain the equipment and/or property, due to age. The Committee now has a new vendor for equipment maintenance and repairs, at a higher rate than the previous vendor.
- c. Another major expense was the failure of the HVAC system which had to be replaced.

Hawkins noted that the proposed budget for the Farm has been diminished

by the Town over the past few years while expenses have gone up.

Enclosures. The Board of Finance and S. Hawkins discussed the need and particulars as to the portable enclosure(s) that are bidded out and for which they have a quote. They are temporary structures that provide additional shelter to existing buildings that can be put up for events or other activities and then taken down and stored when not needed. The Board felt that had the Town known about proposed purchase the expenses may have qualified for ARPA funds but it is too late. It also felt that the expense could have been in the capital plan.

The Board asked to be informed when large projects or expenses are anticipated.

S. Hawkins asked that a letter from Peg Scofield of the Parmelee Farm Committee sent to the Board of Finance be made a part of the record. A. Stirna advised it would be. See addendum to these Minutes.

Barry Bernabe from Phoenix Advisors Bond Rating Overview

Barry Bernabe from Phoenix Advisors Bond Rating gave an overview of the process and how it related to the Town of Killingworth, using a handout which was distributed prior to the meeting to the members. He went over the advantages and disadvantages of bonding over bank loans. He advised that the Town is in a good place for a good rating due to its strong fiscal disciplines. He then addressed questions of the Board.

Of concern was the effect of the anticipated debt service from repairs and/or replacement of schools in RSD#17. Bernabe felt that with good planning there will be a reduced effect to the Town and suggested that the Town consider getting a bond rating prior to the regional school going out to bond. He addressed questions from the Board and First Selectman Couture as to RSD#17.

B. Bernabe advised that planning is the key for getting a high bond rating. He will be available for any further questions and will provide assistance when needed. He then left the meeting.

The Board, First Selectman Couture and Finance Director Regolo had a general discussion on the layering of the bond debt.

Visitors

Resident Eileen Blewett asked the Board to consider that the school district has been taking out smaller loans and repaying them in recent years.

Resident Tim Gannon noted that it appears that the school district may have plans in the works for the schools.

Reports

a. First Selectman.

ARPA Funds. He updated the Board of the projects for the pickle ball courts, a pavilion and the park and recreation barn. All of these projects are going to public hearing on Monday, December 16, 2024. R. Regolo mentioned she attended a webinar with the Federal Government on the use of ARPA funds. Should any of the projects get voted down, the Town may look for other ways to fund the projects.

Fire House Needs Assessment. The assessment is anticipated very soon. There would be a significant capital project for this along with a public works building and town office building. As to the fire house, there may be Federal and State funding available as this would be needed for the Town's safety.

December 17th ARPA Funding Public Hearing. First Selectman Couture is working on a plan for the use of any remaining funds after the aforementioned projects are considered.

Volunteerism. Consideration must be made for the planning for future costs when jobs which are now being covered by volunteers and donations may not be covered. Parmelee Farm is an example.

Hiring of the Director of Public Works. First Selectman Couture is in the process of securing a director.

b. Finance Director – Her report was distributed prior to the meeting. There was no discussion.

c. Tax Collector – Her distributed prior to the meeting. There was no discussion.

RSD 17 and Master Plan Discussion-pool, field house and auditorium.

A. Stirna advised that the pool, field house and auditorium may not qualify for State funding if they do not meet the criteria for qualification.

Approval of Minutes

With the exception of the November 18, 2024 Special Meeting, the minutes of the regular and special meetings from June through November were tabled. The October 2024 Regular Meeting was cancelled.

M. Couture **MOVED** to accept and approve as presented the Minutes of the November 18, 2024 Special Meeting. W. Kosturko seconded the motion. Discussion: none. Voting in favor: A. Stirna, M. Couture, W. Kosturko and S. O'Brien. Opposed: none. Abstentions: none. The motion **carried**, 4-0-0.

Hoyt Filippetti Malaghan LLC approval of invoice for audit and Secretarial Invoices

S. O'Brien **MOVED** to accept and approve for payment, as presented, the November 20, 2024 invoice of HFM in the amount of \$26,150.00 for the audit. M. Couture seconded the motion. Discussion: none. Voting in favor: A. Stirna, M. Couture, W. Kosturko and S. O'Brien. Opposed: none. Abstentions: none. The motion **carried**, 4-0-0. A brief discussion followed on the duration of their contract with the Town.

M. Couture **MOVED** to accept and approve for payment, as presented, the invoices of Sherry Lee Hynes for her:

- Addendum to June 2024 Clerical Hours in the amount of \$56.55.
- July 2024 Clerical Hours in the amount of \$134.85 and
- September to November 2024 Clerical Hours in the amount of \$30.45.

W. Kosturko seconded the motion. Discussion: none. Voting in favor: A. Stirna, M. Couture, W. Kosturko and S. O'Brien. Opposed: none. Abstentions: none. The motion **carried**, 4-0-0.

Annual Reports.

M. Couture advised the reports up to the Report Ending June 30 2024 have been completed. He is waiting for some outstanding reports.

Additions to January 14, 2025 Regular Meeting. None at this time.

There being no further business. A. Stirna **adjourned** the meeting at 8:37 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Lee Hynes

Sherry Lee Hynes Secretary

E-mailed: Dawn Mooney, Town Clerk

Board of Finance

Board of Selectmen

Regina Regolo, Director of Finance

Elizabeth Disbrow, Administrative Assistant

Michele Nuhn, Tax Collector

Abigail Ahlbrecht, Town Treasurer