

**TOWN OF POMFRET
BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2018 AT 6:30 PM
POMFRET COMMUNITY SCHOOL LIBRARY**

In Attendance: Board members Margie Huoppi, Debi Thompson, Dayna Flath, Carolyn Gerrity, Michael Baum. Also present – Walter O’Connell and Al Celentano with O’Connell, Pace, & Co. P.C., First Selectman Maureen Nicholson, BOE Chair Kate Cerrone, Superintendent of Schools Steve Cullinan, and approximately 8 additional Board members and interested parties.

- I. Open Regular Meeting** – M. Huoppi opened meeting at 6:35 PM.
 - a. **Approve Minutes Meetings of January 8, 2018** – C. Gerrity moved to approve minutes of January 8th. D. Thompson seconded. All in favor.
 - b. **Items to be added to Agenda** – M. Huoppi stated that she would like to add Acceptance of J. Martinez resignation, Consideration of a Farm Equipment Abatement as requested by the Agricultural Commission, and Possible Action on the revised Fiscal Year End Financial Policy. There were no objections and items were added.
 - c. **Citizen’s Participation** – One woman asked if the Governor’s projected holdback goes through will there be a direct impact to taxpayers. There should not be this year.
- II. New Business**
 - a. **O’Connell, Pace, & Company - Audit Presentation for FY 2016/2017** – Walter O’Connell presented the audit report for FY 2016/2017. He provided a brief commentary on the state of the State and a review of the action suggestions made by his firm to the town in the past. Most items are in progress or have been completed. He stated that the town is well-run, in good financial shape, and there were no findings during this audit. He then summarized the audit report as was presented to the Board.
- III. Current Business**
 - a. **Board of Selectmen Report** - M. Nicholson stated that she had little new to report at this time. She is currently working on the upcoming budget and striving to accommodate any increases while still maintaining the budget at level funding.
 - b. **Board of Education Report** – K. Cerrone stated that the main Board of Education concern at this point has been the proposed Governor’s holdback. She provided a brief explanation of the differences between Excess Cost funding and Education Cost Sharing. S. Cullinan reviewed where they are currently seeing shortfalls in this year’s budget. He provided a copy of a letter sent to staff asking for a hold on any purchases that are not completely necessary. The Administration has been looking at ways to reduce spending for the remainder of this year. He reviewed the

categories of biggest impact to their budget, primarily all mandatory costs, leaving them little space to look for reductions.

- c. **TAP Grant – Discussion/Possible Action** – An informational meeting was held last week that provided the details of this project. Many Board of Finance members attended. D. Thompson stated that she was more comfortable with this funding after attending the meeting. The DOT was clear that nothing would move forward without the federal funding in-hand and the State portion of the funding is still within their budget. C. Gerrity stated that the reimbursement rate was quoted at 60 days maximum. There was some further discussion regarding how any over-runs would be handled. Should this happen the project would just be scaled back to accommodate available funding. C. Gerrity moved to approve the acceptance of the TAP Grant funding in an amount of up to 3.4 million dollars. D. Flath seconded. All in favor.
- d. **Board of Finance – General Discussion** – C. Gerrity reviewed the revenues and expenses to date. M. Baum was in attendance at the last BOE meeting and reported that the discussion had been about the Special Education over-runs. The first draft of the budget was at an increase of \$136,000.
- e. **Acceptance of Resignation** – M. Huoppi read Jorge Martinez letter of resignation into the record. D. Thompson moved to accept. C. Gerrity seconded with regret. All in favor.

IV. **Other Business**

- a. **Strategic Planning Committee Report** – C. Gerrity stated that Pat Boyd attended the last meeting and was able to report on both the State and the Fire District. The potential cuts that were to be presented by the Selectmen and Board of Education have been held off until after the budget season. The meetings will be moved to 5:30 PM in the PCS Conference room – just prior to the Board of Finance meetings on the second Monday of the month.
- b. **Governor’s Budget Rescission – Discussion/Possible Action** – Discussed under the Board of Ed report. No action will be taken at least until the budgets are in hand.
- c. **Agriculture Commission – Proposed Equipment Abatement** – M. Nicholson stated that the Commission proposed this at the last Board of Selectmen meeting. They moved to bring it forward to Finance for consideration. The State currently allows for an abatement of equipment of up to \$100,000. They allow for the towns to approve an abatement of up to \$200,000. She read a memo from the Assessor stating that this proposal would have minimal impact to the Town. Brooklyn and Woodstock offer this and the Agricultural Commission would like to be in line with neighboring towns. There was some discussion and the Board agreed that they would like to see some numbers in writing and hear from a member of the Agricultural Commission regarding this proposal. M. Huoppi will send a letter requesting this to the Ag. Chair. Should the

Board of Finance approve this it would need to go back to the Selectmen for approval of an Ordinance and then approved at a Town Meeting.

- d. **Possible Approval/Fiscal Year-End Financial Policy** – This policy had been presented to the Board of Finance previously, however some minor revisions have been made at the suggestion of the auditors. Brief discussion. M. Baum moved to approve as presented. C. Gerrity seconded. All in favor.
- e. **Fund Balance Policy – Discussion/Possible Action** – A draft Fund Balance policy was distributed for review. Brief discussion. The Board will consider this further for future discussion and recommendations.

- V. **Correspondence** – M. Baum asked about filling the Board vacancy. M. Huoppi reviewed where the seat was advertised and stated that she has had three individuals show interest. She will allow for another week to receive any further responses and will then forward information from all applicants to the Board. A Special Meeting will be scheduled for March 1st at 5:30 PM at PCS to review applications and speak with available applicants. The Board will forward any questions they have to M. Huoppi and unavailable applicants will be able to respond in writing.
M. Nicholson suggested that the Board look at the Town of Colchester's webpage. They had posted a budget survey with many good questions. Pomfret may want to consider doing something similar.

- VI. **Citizen's Participation** – A woman asked if the additional building fee money wouldn't cover the proposed holdbacks. This would be only a one-time fix and would not help for future years.

- VII. Baum moved to adjourn. D. Thompson seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Ryan, clerk

Date approved_____