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*****FINAL*****

**BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
April 9, 2020**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Finance was held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2020, via Teleconference.

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE Edward Bateson, Jim Brown-Chair, Lori Charlton, Christopher DeWitt-Vice Chair, Mary LeClerc-Secretary, Sheila Marmion, John Mitola, Jack Testani, James Walsh

ALSO PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE Conservation Director Brian Carey, Health Director Sands Cleary, Tax Collector David Kluczowski, Town Attorney James Baldwin, Interim CFO Caitlin Bosse, CAO Thomas Bremer, Budget Director Linda Gardiner, IT Director David Kelly, Mill Hill Building Committee Chair Tom Quinn, Bond Counsel John Stafstrom, Engineering Manager William Hurley, WPCF Superintendent Bill Norton, Mr. Stein, Mr. Chase, First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, FairTV

1. Call to Order – Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. To Hear, Reconsider and Act On the following Bond Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled “A Resolution Amending and Restating the Resolution Entitled, ‘A Resolution Appropriating \$22,000,600 for the Costs Associated with the Renovation and Expansion of Mill Hill Elementary School and Authorizing the Issuance of Bonds to Finance Such Appropriation’ to Increase the Amount of the Appropriation and this Bond Authorization by \$1,274,900 to a Total of \$23,275,500” consisting of four pages, a copy of which is attached hereto.*

Mr. Mitola motioned to approve the item. Ms. Marmion seconded the motion.

Attorney Stafstrom cited a problem with the amendment that tied it to the detailed building specifications which isn’t normally in a bond resolution. He said if the Building Committee wanted to change the specs it could void the Resolution. He suggested that if it is the Board’s intent, to amend Section 3 to make it clear the BOF is not authorizing a bigger school and then it won’t be tied to the building specifications.

Mr. Walsh said the Board learned at the last meeting that the Building Committee had added a room which the building specifications did not include. He said he was surprised that the Building Committee had that authority and that is why the Board wanted it tied to the Ed specs. Attorney Stafstrom said as the project progresses, changes will be made. He said the problem with tying it so specifically ties the Building Committee’s hands.

Mr. Quinn said classrooms vary between 800-1,000/sf and the cost depends on whether it is a remodel or new and runs about \$260-\$350/sf. He said the Building Committee determined the classroom wasn't affordable so the Committee removed it. Mr. Walsh said he doesn't want this to become a school that wasn't approved and he wants to limit the funding to what was approved and the number of rooms that were approved. Mr. Mitola doesn't want to tie the hands of the Building Committee, but asked the Building Committee report back to the BOF if any changes come up. Mr. Walsh said he is concerned the Building Committee is going beyond its authority and suggested putting the number of classrooms in the Resolution. Attorney Stafstrom said he doesn't recommend that. Mr. Walsh asked if this could be done legally to prevent further surprises because the Committee went over in certain areas. Attorney Stafstrom replied yes, but said he wants the BOF to understand if it is written into the Bond Resolution it is tying down to specifics such as locks, doors and windows and technically the Resolution is violated if a different lock is used or these things are changed. Mr. DeWitt said he doesn't see what the harm there is to tying this into the Ed specs and thinks adding the number of rooms is limiting us. Attorney Stafstrom said the money is authorized to be used for a school of 441 students. Mr. DeWitt said he is leaning toward what Bond Counsel is recommending.

Mr. Walsh motioned to amend Paragraph 3 and remove “pursuant to the building specifications approved on June 11, 2019 which contemplated” after Mill Hill Elementary School and add after Mill Hill Elementary School a comma and “to include the specific number of classrooms pursuant to the Ed spec approved on June, 11, 2019.” Ms. LeClerc seconded.

Mr. Quinn asked if this has to go back to the BOS. Mr. Stafstrom replied no. Mr. Quinn said he then had no objection.

The amendment carried 7-2-0. (Bateson, Brown, Charlton, DeWitt, LeClerc, Testani, Walsh in favor, and Marmion, Mitola against)

The bonding resolution, as amended, carried unanimously, 9-0.

4. To hear, consider and act upon the following Bond Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, “A Resolution Appropriating \$6,245,000 for the costs associated with the construction of the Easton Turnpike Pump Station and Force Main Replacement and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation” consisting of three pages, a copy of which is attached hereto.*

Mr. DeWitt motioned to approve the item. Ms. Charlton seconded the motion.

Mr. Carey reported the bids came back and these are the true costs with a 10% contingency. He said it is critical to increase flows in the area and noted the structure is 45 years old and under capacity. Mr. DeWitt asked if it will be funded by WPCA money. Mr. Carey replied the project will be funded through bonding. Ms. Marmion asked if SHU began building the hockey rink yet and referenced an email sent to faculty from the SHU President stating the university is not beginning new capital projects because of the corona virus. Mr. Carey explained this project is mainly for the dorms currently being built and that the Town has already approved the application tying it into the sewer system. Mr. Walsh noted that SHU committed \$1 million to the Town for this project. Mr. Carey reported legal counsel is drafting an agreement with SHU.

There was further discussion on capacity and flows in relation to dorms and future building. Ms. LeClerc said when this project was first introduced to the Board it was a pump station renovation, but then in October Mr. Carey said the Town was going to contact SHU for an additional funding percentage so she would like to hear from the Town on how negotiations went. Mr. Carey said the project that was presented to the Board from the beginning was a pump station reconstruction and the force main.

Attorney Stafstrom explained this project is being paid from WPCA by user fees. Mr. Bateson requested the terms change to the Board of Selectmen not just the First Selectwoman. Attorney Baldwin and Attorney Stafstrom agreed. Mr. Bateson requested Capital Planning to be forward to the Board which Mr. Carey said he will submit.

The motion carried unanimously, 9-0.

5. To hear, consider and act upon the following Bond Resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen entitled, "Supplemental Resolution" consisting of one page, a copy of which is attached hereto*, stipulating that the debt service on the Easton Turnpike Pump Station and Force Main Replacement Bonds as it becomes due shall be paid by the WPCA from its own funds and the obligation of the WPCA shall be set forth in a memorandum of understanding with the Town satisfactory to the First Selectwoman.

Mr. Mitola motioned to approve the item. Ms. Marmion seconded the motion.

Mr. Bateson motioned to amend the last paragraph under RESOLUTION and remove First Selectwoman and add Board of Selectmen. Mr. DeWitt seconded the amendment which carried unanimously, 9-0.

The Bond Resolution, as amended, carried unanimously, 9-0.

6. Discussion on Governor's Executive Order No. 7S

Mr. Brown said the RTM leadership asked the Board to review this item. Ms. Bosse explained the Board can recommend the Permit Program, Low Interest Rate Program or both. Her recommendation is the Deferment Program. She explained the calculations for the two assumptions in lengthy detail.

Mr. Kluczowski said he concurs with the administration's recommendation for Option 2, the Low Interest Rate Program. He said the taxpayers and the State prefer the Deferment Method. Mr. Bremer said to look at it broadly, it will cost the Town \$27,000, and it will be interest free and penalty free to the taxpayers. He said it's worth it to our taxpayers and cited a number of other towns that will be doing the same as well. The First Selectwoman is strongly in favor.

Mr. Mitola said he appreciated the analysis, but he said the Board did not receive backup documentation. Mr. Bremer said he sent to Mr. Brown. Mr. Mitola stated for the record he prefers Deferment. Mr. Kluczowski said he speaks to taxpayers every day, receiving five calls an hour stating they are out of work, can't pay and are asking if it will be deferred. He said they will be shocked if the Town charges a percentage. He said he is also in constant communication with the State and explained Option B is not its recommendation, but it was put in if a town had cash flow problems.

Mr. Kluczowski envisions it to be under \$10 million. Mr. Bateson said he doesn't want a cash flow crunch. Mr. Bremer said he is confident the Town has enough cash on hand for 60 days and it gives taxpayers an additional 60 days. There was further discussion on calculations, assumptions and eligibility. Ms. Charlton and Mr. Walsh expressed concerns that after 60 days taxes may not be paid back and people's circumstances may not have changed or have worsened. Ms. Charlton said she would like to see the program offered to people in need and not offered broadly. Attorney Baldwin reminded the BOF that the RTM is mandated to choose one of these options.

Mr. Brown called for a sense of the body. The Board was in favor of the Deferment Program as recommend, 9-0.

There was some discussion whether it was the expanded Deferment Program or the program as outlined in Executive Order 7S.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. Mr. Testani seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Tesei
Recording Secretary