

**Minutes**  
**Town Council Finance Committee Meeting**  
**March 13, 2017**  
**Town Hall Annex**

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

**Present:** Matthew O'Brien, Andy Brodersen, Hannah Pietrantonio, Julie Blanchard

**Also present:** John Elsesser, Town Manager; Beth Bauer, Finance Director

**2. Acceptance of Minutes, February 13, 2017:**

Andy Brodersen moved and Hannah Pietrantonio seconded to accept the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on February 13, 2017. The following corrections were requested:

- Page one, last paragraph, 6th line: add "from the Grand List" after million.
- Page two, item E, 4th line: remove the second instance of the word "we."
- Page two, item F, 2nd line: change \$300,000 to \$103,000.

The motion to accept the minutes as corrected carried on unanimous vote.

**3. Reports:**

**A. Committee Chair - Matthew O'Brien:** No report.

**B. Committee Members :** No report.

**C. Finance Director - Beth Bauer:** Beth indicated she has some additional information on expenditure items that might require Council appropriation transfers. When she put the monthly report together she had not yet done a full analysis. She distributed a document outlining the items (*attached to minutes*).

Revenues: As of the end of February we are at 98.32% of anticipated revenue which is slightly less than last year. We will have to wait and see whether this is a trend or if it will go back up in March. The process for the tax sale got started later this year than last year so that might be part of the reason. We are not significantly behind.

Expenditures: Beth summarized the accounts that look like they are going to require inter-departmental appropriations. All of the advertising accounts in Land Use are over-expended. John Elsesser noted we have to advertise in newspapers and they raised their rates 30%. Beth said the electricity and water bills are for the Visitors Center. Something happened this year and we got hit with large bills. We are not sure what happened. We try to put systems in place where Public Works will go and check the building in case the heat is left on, etc. This time we think there was a water leak. The repairs/maintenance item is for Town Hall and we have talked about that all year. The electric bill for account 2301 may or may not be an issue. This is in the Annex for Emergency Management. We don't have the final figure because of a complication this year with billing being done only once a year in March. We are hoping what we have been billed will be reduced significantly. Matthew O'Brien asked if we have tried to get them to change their billing procedure. Beth replied we have told them we can't be billed once a year. So they took their estimated bill and divided it up over 12 months. It appears we have been overpaying and we expect to see a large adjustment when the actual bill is done in March. This department doesn't have a lot of items that we can transfer other funds from so that is why it is on the list. Snow overtime is an estimate at this point. We don't know how to think about this next storm - we think it will be a longer one in terms of clean-up, plus there are more storms on the horizon. Gasoline - we think we are going to be short about \$10,000.

Matthew asked what the gasoline item represents. John replied it is for the whole town fleet. Beth continued that snow and salt is \$37,000 over which is not an unmanageable number. The money we did not spend this year because of police vacancies is in the neighborhood of \$60,000. Matthew asked if there is a specific list we use to offset the overages. John replied that Beth has identified enough to cover it. Beth noted there are some other savings, including health insurance. She suggested the Council wait to take action on these in April until we see how the rest of the budget looks. We may be able to continue to cover it with inter-departmental transfers. Our practice has been to wait until May or June to make transfers. John said the bottom line is we can say with confidence, including overages from the upcoming storm and the shortfall we have to make up, that we will be ok.

Beth mentioned that we had an issue with hacking of the geo-locators in the Public Works trucks. She said it goes to show that new systems come along and are wonderful, but they can bring vulnerabilities along with them. Fortunately this was caught early. John said they were using Internet off the connection - and we received a \$2300 bill that should have only been in the hundreds. Matthew asked if the people who did this can be identified. John replied we are working on it. Matthew asked how we can prevent this in the future. Beth replied we can look them down.

Beth Bauer is retiring and this is her last Finance Committee meeting. Matthew O'Brien thanked her for all of her help and work over the years. This sentiment was echoed by the rest of the committee.

**D. Board of Education financial reports:** Matthew O'Brien said we will be talking with the Board later tonight. He does have a few questions. Their report says excess costs are lower than expected. Are we anticipating lower excess costs than originally anticipated? John Elsesser replied yes but you have to compare it to what they actually budgeted. He thinks they are saying it's going to be restricted but they have budgeted less than that so they will get more. Matthew replied that will be a positive but it will probably have little or no impact.

**E. Supplemental appropriation status:** No changes since last month's report.

**4. Capital projects reallocations:**

Matthew O'Brien noted he was pleased with this information. Beth Bauer replied these are accounts/projects that have been in the works for a long time and either have been inactive for a number of years, or in the case of OpenGov initiative for the Board of Education, a decision may be made not to proceed. Matthew confirmed it is in the Board of Education minutes that they are not going to do the OpenGov project. Beth said there is \$120,000 left in the fund for projects that were closed out previously. It can be transferred into CNREF. John Elsesser noted while the money was in that fund it has been earning interest. Matthew asked if this should be a Council motion in the future. John replied it is his anticipation that this will be part of the budget process. It could be done by the Finance Director, the Town Council or the auditor could close it out. If we want to take action later we certainly can. The interest earnings are how we covered the acoustic tile for the Senior Center. Matthew asked how the tiles are working. John replied that they like them. John said one of the strategies we might pursue could be to take some things out of the operating budget, some things out of capital budget and pay for them with this, such as the Police Department carpet tiles and tables, Senior Center chairs, etc. Those are one-time expenditures. Matthew said those are good uses of the funds in his opinion.

**5. Tax sale notifications:**

Beth Bauer said this information was given to the committee for their information. The letters were sent out by the attorney. Because there is a jeopardy collection that is part of what he will be collecting, the notice has to go to the Council. Julie Blanchard asked if the tax collector changed attorneys. John replied no, it is still Adam Cohen - he specializes in this type of work.

**6. State budget implications:**

Matthew O'Brien asked if there is any further information. John said we really don't have any updates on where the State budget is going at this point.

**7. Consideration of supplemental appropriation for de-icing product:**

John Elsesser said he has authorized DPW Director Mark Kiefer to buy another 200 tons of salt. We will run out after tomorrow's storm. Andy Brodersen asked if it is less expensive to buy it all at once. John replied no - we have a fixed price until June 30th. We could transfer some money to cover this. His preference would be to get the salt shed as full as possible because otherwise we have to do inter-budget transfers between years. We can decide as we go forward but he would not like to start the year with an empty shed. Matthew O'Brien said he is happy with that decision. John said he thinks we can see how it goes and make those transfers after April 15th. We want to make sure we don't run out. We won't be using a lot of product in the middle of this storm. Roads will be impassable given the weather forecast.

**8. Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM on a motion by Hannah Pietrantonio, seconded by Andy Brodersen and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone  
Town Council Clerk

Accounts which may need Council Appropriation Transfer approval

Account#	Description	Estimate
110-1402-52100	Advertising	1200
110-1406-52170	Advertising	800
110-1404-55020	Electric	900
110-1404-55040	Water	130
110-1801-52160	Building Repairs	3000
110-2301-55020	Electric	1000
110-3102-51030	Snow OT	20000
110-3105-53040	Gasoline	<u>10000</u>
		37030
110-3102-53160	Snow Salt	50000 * on 3/13 agenda