

North Stonington Board of Finance
Meeting Minutes Wednesday October 5, 2016
New Town Hall
@7:30pm

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TOWN CLERKS OFFICE
NORTH STONINGTON CT

1. Call to Order at 7:35 pm.

2. Roll Call

A. Members Present: Charlie Steinhart IV, Emil Pavlovics and Bob Testa (seated for Tim Pelland).

B. Alternate (s) seated, if any: Motion made by Charlie Steinhart IV that was seconded by Bob Testa to seat Chris Hundt. Motion carried 3-0.

3. Pledge to the Flag.

4. Public Comments and/or Questions: Resident Ryan Burdick inquired as to the status of the pending 2016/2017 budget and was informed that there was a budget hearing scheduled for October 11, 2016. The proposed budget will be forwarded to the Board of Selectman at a later date. The Selectmen will schedule a referendum.

5. Communications:

Information was discussed regarding the communications received from First Selectman Shawn Murphy and North Stonington Volunteer Fire Company (NSVFC) President Gary Baron pertaining to the drone purchased by the NSVFC. President Gary Baron, Fire Chief Charles Steinhart V and numerous members of the NSVFC were present to explain the purchase. None of the members of the Board of Selectman were present to support and/or clarify Mr. Murphy's position. The drone was purchased for \$1,799.00 under the New Equipment line item within the NSVFC Budget. Chief Steinhart V and President Baron believed this was a proper expenditure from this line item and it is consistent with past practices for the purchase of such items. Chief Steinhart gave the example of previous purchases of fire nozzles that cost approximately \$1,300.00 to \$1,400.00 each. Other examples provided of similar type purchases consisted of printers, laptops and a Vent Master Chain Saw.

There was a motion by Emil Pavlovics that was seconded by Bob Testa for the Board of Finance to send a correspondence to First Selectman Shawn Murphy reaffirming the previous position of the Board of Finance on capital expenditures as noted on page 21 of the Audit Report for the year ending 06/30/2015. The information contained in this section of the audit allows for capital expenditures of electronic equipment up to \$2,000.00 and equipment and furniture up to \$2,000.00. Therefore the drone is a non-issue. Board of Finance Vice Chairman Charlie Steinhart IV is to email Mr. Murphy this correspondence. Motion carried 4-0.

President Gary Baron, Chief Steinhart V and other members of the NSVFC expressed serious concerns regarding the adversarial relationship and behavior displayed by First Selectman Shawn Murphy toward the NSVFC. They reminded the Board of Finance about the written email threat by Mr. Murphy of such a relationship if the NSVFC appeared at a previous Board of Finance meeting regarding the proposed 2016/2017 budget, which is why the NSVFC refused to appear as requested. President Baron and Chief Steinhart V informed the Board of Finance of a public safety and emergency response matter that has also been brought to the attention of Mr. Murphy regarding the rescue boat. Due to a situation with the engine needing replacement, the weight disbursement of the current boat has been affected. Proper rescue procedures require a minimum of four (4) rescue personnel in the boat, however; the added weight of the new engine would overload the boat. The NSVFC recommended replacing the boat. Mr. Murphy denied the request and recommended that the NSVFC deviate from proper protocol and leave two (2) of the rescue personnel on land and only respond with two (2) rescue personnel in the boat. President Baron and Chief Steinhart V feel this response is unacceptable and jeopardizes the safety and well being of rescue personnel as well as the public safety. Bob Testa informed President Baron and Chief Steinhart V that a proper proposal to address the situation would be expected as either an immediate appropriation request or as part of the upcoming budget proposal for the 2017/2018 budget.

President Gary Baron and Chief Steinhart V also raised a concern involving turn out gear replacement for members of the NSVFC. A request for such funding was properly submitted to Mr. Murphy. Both were told by Mr. Murphy that the request for such funding was presented to the Board of Finance by Mr. Murphy and the Board of Finance denied the request. All Board of Finance members present noted that no such request was ever presented to the Board of Finance by Mr. Murphy and instructed the NSVFC to resubmit the request and copy the Board of Finance leadership.

Meeting recessed from 9:00 pm to 9:04 pm while NSVFC contingent left meeting room.

6. Monthly report Reviews (Tax Collector, BOS, BOE):

The Board of Finance members supported the recommendation made by Charlie Steinhart IV that a letter be sent to First Selectman Shawn Murphy requesting that Profit and Loss statements from this point forward document in detail that the authorized levels of spending and expenditures are being adhered to. Charlie Steinhart IV will email such a letter to Mr. Murphy.

7. Discussion on FI2015-2016 Budget Closeout:

Charlie Steinhart IV raised questions as to the consequences for the Board of Selectmen overspending \$12,521.85 from accounts in the 2015/2016 budget and if that deficiency is not rectified. Emil Pavlovics pointed out that Connecticut General Statute (CGS) 7-349 addresses the responsibility of town officials to show balanced budgets and account for such shortfalls. Charlie Steinhart IV is to send a correspondence to First Selectman Shawn Murphy stating that the Board of Finance is willing to re-open the books for the 2015/2016 budget to allow for the needed transfers to balance the deficient line items.

8. BOF work on 2016/2017 Budget Presentation:

Charlie Steinhart IV is to verify the Undesignated Fund balance with Mustapha Ratib. The budget summary is to be updated by Mustapha Ratib prior to the presentation. The following is to be added to slide 7 on page 2 top left: "without the cooperative input of the Board of Selectmen."

There was a motion made by Bob Testa that was seconded by Chris Hundt to approve the Board of Finance 2016/2017 budget presentation as amended and for Chairman Timothy Main and/or his designee to make such presentation at the budget hearing. Motion carried 4-0.

9. Annual Report:

Charlie Steinhart IV advised that information has been received from the North Stonington Volunteer Fire Company (NSVFC), Department of Emergency Management, Department of Public Works and the Registrars of Voters. Charlie Steinhart IV will continue with the necessary follow up regarding the outstanding information requests.

10. Review of Previous Minutes:

Minutes from 08/17/2016 were tabled.

There was a motion by Bob Testa that was seconded by Emile Pavlovics to approve the minutes of 08/31/2016. Motion carried 4-0.

There was a motion by Chris Hundt that was seconded by Bob Testa to approve the minutes of 09/21/2016. Motion carried 4-0.

There was a motion by Chris Hundt that was seconded by Bob Testa to approve the minutes of 09/28/2016 as amended. Motion carried 4-0.

11. Public Comments and/or Questions: None.

12. Adjournment: There was a motion by Bob Testa that was seconded by Chris Hundt to adjourn. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned 9:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Robert Testa
North Stonington Board of Finance

