

**ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 15, 2012
7:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Cathryn Silver-Smith (Chairperson), Paul Canavan, Jane Cercena, Charles Funk, Merrill Simpson, Eugenie Bagley (Alt.), Ralph Fletcher (First Selectman, Ex-officio), Francine Hodovan, (Recording Secretary).

Guests:

Board of Selectmen: William Falletti

Ashford Tax Collector: Linda Gagne

Babcock Library Board of Trustees: Gerald Nagy, Chair; Suzanne Smith, Vice-Chair

Department of Public Works: Joe Kalinowski, Director

1. **Call to Order:** Ms. Silver-Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Seating of Alternates:** Eugenie Bagley was seated for Susan Eastwood.
3. **Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 15, 2012:**
MS. CERCENA MOVED AND MR. CANAVAN SECONDED A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 15, 2012 WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH EVERYONE VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY.

Correct the spelling of J. Celotti's name in Item 7, at bottom of section.

Ms. Eastwood arrived at 7:05 p.m. Ms. Bagley stepped down and Ms. Eastwood was seated.

4. **Hear From Public:** None.

5. **Communications:**

Ms. Silver-Smith stated that she received a letter by mail from the Killingworth BOF Chair regarding the forming of a regional BOF to oversee regional BOEs. Selectman Fletcher indicated that there has been talk of forming regional BOFs from time to time. Ms. Silver-Smith will provide the BOF with hardcopies of the letter.

6. **Old Business:** None.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **Proposed 2012-2013 Babcock Library Budget:**

Gerry Nagy presented the Library's requested increase of 3% (\$4,750), which includes 1.5% in salary increases (1,650), Director's liability and workers' compensation (\$1,100), and health care and insurance (roughly estimated at \$2,000). In addition to funds provided by the Town, the Library receives monies raised by The Friends of the Babcock Library that are not to be used for everyday expenses. The Friends stipulate how that money is to be used, along with gifts received "in memoriam." and other donations. Technology is a main concern for The Friends as well as current reading materials. They have also purchased carpeting, furniture, and other items for the Library in the past. It was noted that the Library has doubled fees on printing, photocopying and faxing to offset expenses.

Using a suggestion and gift from Mr. Bruce Wilbur, and with assistance from Selectman Fletcher, the library recently created "all About Ashford" brochures describing the Town's civic boards and organizations and installed a display rack for the brochures. This is an excellent information resource for townspeople, tourists, and others. Mr. Nagy and Ms. Smith provided board members with some of the brochures.

- b. **Proposed 2012-2013 Department of Public Works Budget:**

Joe Kalinowski presented the DPW requested increase of 1.5%. This includes work clothing for employees which was omitted from last year's proposed budget in order to come in with a flat budget for 2011-2012, OSHA education for employees, and a \$1,000 increase to cover

anticipated vehicle maintenance cost. He noted that the cost of parts has doubled in the last five years. He also noted that electricity increased from \$7K to \$9K because of the lighting upgrade bill which they are paying off. He is watching the diesel fuel costs and trying to scale back on that as well.

c. Proposed 2012-2013 Ashford Volunteer Fire Department Budget:

Ms. Silver-Smith invited the AVFD to present their budget request but no one attended. This item was tabled until the next Board meeting.

d. Selectman's Update:

Selectman Fletcher attended a meeting in Willamantic on March 14 where Governor Malloy spoke about Governor's Bill 24. There were about 200 people present. Governor Malloy spoke about regional cooperation between towns to reduce costs. Selectman Fletcher noted that it was unclear which figures are being used to determine cost per student. He will provide board members with the school profile information he has.

Selectman Fletcher provided an update concerning a wind project in Ashford. A developer is considering putting 10 wind turbines off Route 84 by the Ashford Motel. Negotiations are underway with the state DEP and DEEP, developer, and property owner. There was discussion of swapping land owned by the company on Maury Pond for the property to house the turbines. It is felt that this could be a good thing for the Town in light of the high cost of energy and the revenues the project could produce, along with the State's "Go Green" initiatives.

Selectman Fletcher also distributed copies of updated anticipated 2012-2013 revenues and expenditures, noting that they are the same as the last ones provided *except* for some revenues that are missing for education, buses, special education needs, which will be provided by the BOE.

e. BOS 2012-2013 Budget Recommendations:

The BOS has not had a meeting since the last BOF meeting convened, so there were no recommendations to be made at this time. The BOS will present their recommendations at the March 22 BOF meeting.

f. 2012-2013 Budget Planning:

This discussion will be tabled until the March 22 BOF meeting. It was noted that the Region 19 Public Hearing on their budget is scheduled for March 20. Ms. Silver-Smith and Selectman Fletcher urged Board members to attend.

8. Agenda Items for Next Regular BOF Meeting:

- Budget review: BOE
- Budget review: Ashford Volunteer Fire Department.
- BOS recommendations for insurance and fuel costs and any other items for 2012-2013 budget.

9. Remarks for the Good of the Board:

C. Silver-Smith urged all members of the BOF to attend the Region 19 Public Hearing.

10. Adjournment:

MS. CERCENA MOVED AND MR. FUNK SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 15, 2012 BOF REGULAR MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED WITH EVERYONE VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY.

The Regular Meeting of the Ashford Board of Finance was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathryn Silver-Smith, for BOF Clerk