

**ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
APRIL 10, 2012  
KNOWLTON HALL**

**Members Present:** Cathryn Silver-Smith (Chairperson), Susan Eastwood (Clerk), Paul Canavan, Merrill Simpson, Chuck Funk, Jane Cercena, Eugenie Bagley (alt.), Glen Nemeroff (alt.), Ralph Fletcher (First Selectman, Ex-Officio), Francine Hodovan (Recording Secretary).

**Guests:**

Board of Education: Don Wesson (Chair), Kim Rourke (Vice Chair), John Lippert, Kay Warren

Ashford Finance Department: Cheryl Baker-Bowen (Treasurer).

Ashford Tax Collector: Linda Gagne.

Ashford Taxpayers: Bud Bagley, Ray Baker, Kathy Baker, Joan Bowley, Gay Leedie, Marilyn Rossi, Sandy Fletcher, Pat Harlow, Jeff Silver-Smith.

Willimantic Chronicle: Louisa Owen-Sonstroem.

1. **Call to Order:** Ms. Silver-Smith called the Special Meeting of the BOF to order at 8:37 p.m.
2. **Seating of Alternates:** None.
3. **Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 29, 2012:** Deferred until the next Regular Meeting of the BOF.
4. **Hear from Public:** None.
5. **Communications:** An e-mail was received by Ms. Silver-Smith with the corrected numbers for the Region 19 Budget.
6. **Old Business:** None.
7. **New Business:**
  - a. **Further Action on 2012-2013 Budget:**

The adjusted Region 19 budget figure is \$3,718,083, which is an increase of 1.7%.

Board members discussed concerns about the Ashford BOE's plan to increase staffing in their Finance area and the impact if the BOF were to cut their proposed budget. Ms. Silver-Smith stated that a \$55K cut to the BOE budget would result in an estimated \$2.17 savings per month on a home valued at \$135K. Ms. Cercena stated that she felt that this amount of savings would be relatively insignificant. Mr. Canavan noted that it may impose a hardship for fixed income individuals. Ms. Eastwood stated that the grammar school has made a lot of sacrifices over the years and it would not be fair to continue to ask the school to find ways to make more cuts at this point as it would be a detriment to the Town, children's education, property values, etc. Mr. Funk stated that he supports the BOE and that their budget seems reasonable to him. He noted that there is a frustration in that the BOF can only approve a bottom line BOE budget amount, not where the money goes or for what purpose.

Ms. Silver-Smith stated that an \$810,000 cut in overall expenditures would be required in order to give taxpayers a \$0 tax increase for FY 2012-2013.

**MR. SIMPSON MOVED THAT THE BOF CUT THE ASHFORD SCHOOL BUDGET WITHIN THEIR FINANCE DEPARTMENT BY \$55,000, WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY CAN APPLY THE \$55K CUT IN ANY OTHER AREA. THERE WAS NO SECOND TO THE MOTION, THEREFORE IT FAILED.**

**MS. EASTWOOD MOVED AND MR. FUNK SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FY 2012-2013 AND REQUEST THAT THE BOS CALL A TOWN MEETING TO SEND THIS BUDGET TO REFERENDUM:**

<b>General Government:</b>	<b>\$2,939,858</b>
<b>Ashford BOE:</b>	<b>7,088,249</b>
<b>Region 19 (E.O.S.)</b>	<b>3,718,083</b>
<b>Capital Improvements</b>	<b><u>483,000</u></b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$14,229,190</b>

**THE MOTION PASSED WITH EVERYONE VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY EXCEPT FOR MR. CANAVAN WHO ABSTAINED AND MR. SIMPSON WHO OPPOSED. THE MOTION PASSED.**

**7. Agenda Items for next Regular Meeting of the BOF:** None at this time.

**8. Remarks for the Good of the Board:**

Ms. Cercena stated that she was awed by the great job that Town and Ashford BOE did in preparing and presenting their budgets. Mr. Simpson stated that he knows from experience that putting the budget together is hard work and he thanked everyone for their cooperation in a tough situation. Ms. Silver-Smith stated that she hopes that people can support the budget, stating further that, if it comes back to the BOF, drastic cuts may be needed in order to make a significant difference.

**9. Adjournment:**

**MR. CANAVAN MOVED AND MS. EASTWOOD SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE. THE MOTION PASSED WITH EVERYONE VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY.**

The Special Meeting of the Ashford Board of Finance of April 10, 2012 was formally adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathryn Silver-Smith (Chair) for BOF Clerk