

Received  
11-13-2018

**ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, November 8, 2018**

**7:00 p.m.  
Ashford Municipal Office Building  
Lower Level Meeting Room  
5 Town Hall Road  
Ashford, CT 06278**

**Present:**

Charles Funk (Chairman,), Judith Austin (Clerk), Garth Bean, Angela DeSanto (Alt.), Esther Jagodzinski (Alt.) and Gail Zaicek

**Guests:**

Cheryl Baker, Ashford Treasurer, John Lippert, Ashford Board of Education Chairman and Paul Varga

Also present were Michael J. VanDeventer, CPA, Partner, and Lauren A. Messina, CPA, Manager, from the firm of MahoneySabol CPAs and Advisors (mahoneysabol.com).

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Charles Funk called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**Seating of Alternates:**

Esther Jagodzinski was seated for Merrill Simpson and Angela Desanto for Jesse Burnham.

**Communications:**

The Chair announced the 2018 edition of *Understanding Connecticut's Freedom of Information Act* given to him by Linda Gagne who felt it was an important publication for the Board. It is not free, but those on the Board wanting a copy should let him know at the end of the meeting. The inclusion of examples of executive session case law was noted.

**Crumbling Foundations**

Mike Zambo has written a letter for town residents about potential and significant funding that is to be available to assist those with crumbling foundations. Up to \$175,000 will be available for affected homeowners. The letter will be attached to these Minutes.

The Chair read one part of the letter that stated applications will be accepted after November 15, 2018. Funds are for both foundations already replaced and those reported as failing.

**Praise for Town Employees**

The Chairman praised all town employees as all offices have been very helpful to him.

**Approved Minutes of Regular Board of Finance Meeting October 11, 2018:**

**GAIL ZAICEK MOVED AND ANGIE DESANTO SECONDED A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 11, 2018. MOTION PASSED WITH ONE ABSTENTION.**

**Hear from Public:** No comments

**New Business:** Temporary Recording Secretary Valerie Oliver was introduced.

**New Business continued:**

- a. **2017-2018 Fiscal Year Audit Presentation by Mahoney Sabol**

Mr. VanDeventer noted that each Board member had previously been provided with a draft copy of the 2017-2018 audited budget document. Copies were provided as needed. He also noted that his firm does municipal reviews for twenty towns in Connecticut.

Copies of the *MahoneySabol Presentation to the Board of Finance, 2018 Audit Results, Town of Ashford, Connecticut*, Presented by Michael J. VanDeventer and Lauren A. Messina, dated November 8, 2018 were provided to those present. This eleven page audit results report was reviewed page by page by Mr. Vandeventer. During this review several comments from the auditors were noted:

*Scope of Work* p.2 - The town spent approximately \$340,000 in federal awards and therefore did not meet the threshold of \$750,000 requiring a federal single audit. The last item on p.2 noted a new procedure for End of Year School Reports; this review is due by the first of December.

*Auditor's Reports* p.3 - The auditors report no material noncompliance with laws or regulations and no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses over financial reporting. On p. 4 the phrase unmodified "clean" was explained as formatted text and that if our report had had to be modified they would include a modified opinion. On p.4 a correction is needed in the last sentence to read: "We did not report a significant deficiency over in internal control over grant compliance."

*Financial Highlights* p.5 - A budgetary shortfall in education cost sharing of \$315,073 was offset by property tax collections of \$121,283. On p.6 under General Fund the Board was told that most towns fall within a 5-15% range for funds unassigned representing 2019 budgetary expenditure appropriations. On p.7 under State Teachers' Retirement System it states that approximately \$10.3 million as of June 30, 2017 would be Ashford's liability if the state of Connecticut did not currently carry this for the towns.

*Required Communication* p10 - Communication and coordination with the Board of Education is done in many towns. Since there is a trend with governments being targeted with cyber attacks, the auditor recommended continued work to follow through with implementing cybersecurity and information technology counter measures.

The auditors strongly recommend that the Board of Finance seriously consider a "review and update [of] financial policies and procedures." Other towns with excellent policies and procedures could provide guidance.

The presentation concluded with the Chair's thanks and note that the official auditor's report will be available for formal acceptance at our next meeting. The presenters left at 8:12 p.m.

**New Business** continued

b. Selectman's update: None

c. *Review Funding in CNR to Cover DPW Increased Pickup Truck Cost*

The chair presented a motion from Selectman Zambo asking that \$1544 be provided to allow payment for a truck. Apparently the \$30,000 budgeted for the truck in December of 2017 is no longer quite enough. The original \$16,500 trade in value of the old truck is now \$1544 less because the trade in value had changed by the time the truck was actually purchased. Currently the truck is in our use but not paid for.

Esther Jagodzinski questioned the circumstances of the increased cost and stated that the Selectman or his representative should have come to answer Board questions. After further discussion the Board did decide that those asking the BOF for funds should come to the meeting where that request is to be discussed in order to support their request and to answer questions. The Chair expressed that a relatively simple matter should have been resolved easily if appropriate representations were present; questioning is important.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY ESTHER JAGODZINSKI AND SECONDED BY ANGIE DESANTO TO TRANSFER \$1544 FROM THE CNR FUND INTO THE 2018/2019 CAPITAL**

**IMPROVEMENT BUDGET FOR THE DPW PICKUP TRUCK PURCHASE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

d. *2019 BOF Meeting Calendar*

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY ESTHER JAGODZINSKI AND SECONDED BY JUDI AUSTIN THAT WE ACCEPT THE 2019 ASHORD BOF REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE AS PREPARED BY THE CHAIRMAN. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

e. *FY 2019-2020 Budget Calendar*

The Calendar created by the Chairman relates to the Region 19 budget work so their dates are included. Cheryl Baker and Chris Abikoff helped with the calendar's preparation. Both this calendar and the BOF meeting schedule will be attached to these minutes.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY ANGIE DESANTO AND SECONDED BY JUDI AUSTIN TO ACCEPT THE ASHFORD TOWN BUDGET CALENDAR FISCAL YEAR JULY, 2019 THROUGH JUNE, 2020. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

f. *General Fund July 1 to October 31 Expenditure and Revenue Reports*

The Treasurer reported nothing critical here; a general review of expenditures by the smaller groups is going well. Any questions should be brought to the Chair's attention. Concern for election supplies was mentioned.

[Note: Angie DeSanto left the meeting at 8:50 p.m.]

**Agenda Items for the Next Meeting**

Review and discuss the Expenditure and Revenue Report  
Accept the Auditor's Report

**Remarks for the Good of the Board**

The Chair stated that both asking questions and challenging statements is important for the Board.

**Adjournment**

**A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE OF NOVEMBER 8, 2018 WAS MADE BY GAIL ZAICEK AND SECONDED BY JUDI AUSTIN AT 8:55 P.M. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Valerie B. Oliver, temporary Recording Secretary  
11/9/18

# Ashford Town Budget Calendar

Fiscal Year July, 2019 through June, 2020

- Thursday, February 7: BOF Reviews:  
-Anticipated Town Revenues  
-Town Debt Service Payments
- Monday, February 11: Region 19 Budget distributed to member Towns
- Thursday, February 21: General Government Budget presented to BOF by BOS  
Capital Improvement Plan presented to BOF by Capital Improvement Committee
- Thursday, March 7: Ashford School Budget presented to BOF and BOS by BOE
- Thursday, March 14: BOF Reviews:  
-Budget requests requiring additional clarifications  
-Region 19 Budget proposed by School Superintendent  
-BOS Recommendations
- Thursday, March 21: Ashford Town Budget:  
- BOF adopts proposed Budget  
- BOF sets date and approves notice for Public Hearing
- Tuesday, March 26 Region 19 - PUBLIC HEARING
- Monday, April 1: Town Budget Books available to Public
- Tuesday, April 2: Region 19 Budget - Adopted by Region 19 BOE
- Tuesday, April 9: Ashford Town Budget - PUBLIC HEARING  
BOF Special Meeting immediately following Public Hearing  
Final Budget adjustments
- Wednesday, April 10: BOS sets dates and approves notice for Town Meeting and Referendum
- Monday, April 15: Town Budget books available to Public
- Tuesday, April 23: Ashford Town Budget - ANNUAL MEETING
- Monday, May 6: Region 19 Budget - Annual Meeting
- Tuesday, May 7: Ashford Town Budget - REFERENDUM  
Region 19 Budget - REFERENDUM

# Town of Ashford

## Board of Finance

### **2019 Meeting Schedule**

All meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in Lower Level Meeting Room 104 of the Town Office Building unless noted otherwise.

Thursday, January 10, 2019  
Thursday, January 24, 2019  
Thursday, February 7, 2019  
Thursday, February 21, 2019  
Thursday, February 28, 2019  
Thursday, March 7, 2019  
Thursday, March 14, 2019  
Thursday, March 21, 2019  
Thursday, March 28, 2019  
Thursday, April 11, 2019  
Thursday, April 25, 2019  
Thursday, May 2, 2019  
Thursday, May 9, 2019  
Thursday, May 23, 2019  
Thursday, June 13, 2019  
Thursday, June 27, 2019  
Thursday, July 11, 2019  
Thursday, July 25, 2019  
Thursday, August 8, 2019  
Thursday, August 22, 2019  
Thursday, September 12, 2019  
Thursday, September 26, 2019  
Thursday, October 10, 2019  
Thursday, October 24, 2019  
Thursday, November 14, 2019  
Thursday, December, 12, 2019

# TOWN OF ASHFORD

## Office of the Selectmen

Michael J. Zambo  
First Selectman

29 October 2018

Dear Ashford Resident:

The Ashford Selectmen's Office would like to make sure that all residents affected by crumbling foundations in Ashford have the latest information on sources that may provide some financial relief.

IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig has announced that revenue procedures are in place that allow homeowners who identified their losses to local tax assessors before January 1, 2018 may be eligible to claim a casualty loss on their federal taxes for amounts paid to repair damage to concrete foundations resulting from the presence of the mineral pyrrhotite. Commissioner Rettig urges people to consult their tax preparer because of the specific rules that apply to these claims.

Connecticut Foundation Solutions Indemnity Company, Inc. has been formed to provide claim assistance to affected homeowners. CFSIC is a tax exempt, non-profit company that is not a branch of Connecticut state government.

Claim applications for assistance with crumbling foundations, as well as applications to seek reimbursement for foundations already replaced are available online at <https://crumblingfoundations.org>. These applications are there now to make the public aware of the process and the procedures. You will not be able to apply until some point after November 15<sup>th</sup> (or a later date), and this information will be on CFSIC's website. The claim applications will be divided into two types: replacing a foundation and reimbursement for people who have already replaced their foundation. Claims can be made by owners of single, two, three and four-family dwellings, residential condos and PUD's subject to the claims management guidelines on CFSIC's website. It's important to go on CFSIC's website to learn what the criteria are, but we want to repeat that homeowners will not be able to apply until after November 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Ashford Board of Selectmen are aware that not enough money has been appropriated at this time to bring financial relief to all of Connecticut's homeowners affected by this natural disaster, so we encourage you to review the crumbling foundations website and submit your claim.

We will continue to communicate with our State and Federal representatives encouraging them to continue to secure funding for all those that have been tragically affected by this disaster.

Sincerely yours,

Michael J. Zambo  
First Selectman

5 Town Hall Road, Ashford, Connecticut 06278  
Phone: 860-487-4400 Fax: 860-487-4430