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TOWN OF ORANGE
TOWN HALL OFFICE

Board of Finance Regular Meeting

Monday, March 21, 2022

Meeting Room -Town Hall 7:00 p.m.

Approved

Attendance

Board of Finance Members Present: Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin Moffett, Joseph Nuzzo, Kevin McNabola, and Ajeet Jain

Staff: John Cifarelli, Finance Director; Audrey Geer, Assistant Finance Director; Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

Guests: Mr. Zeoli, First Selectman of Orange; Dr. Mohammad, Public Health Director of Orange; Lisa Pimenta, Director of OVNA; Anna Saldamarco, Business Manager, OVNA; Lynn Beckham, R.N. OVNA; Kristy Macci, Chair of the Orange Board of Health; Mr. Slugowski, Health Inspector, Town of Orange

1. Call to Order & Introduction

- Chairman Houlihan called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Public Dialogue

- There was no public dialogue at this time.

New Business

3. Report on the Orange Board of Health COVID-19 Clinic – Dr. Mohammad

- Dr. Mohammad noted that the Board of Finance approved \$25k from the American Rescue Plan Funds for COVID-19 mitigation activities. To date, Dr. Mohammad has expended approximately \$4,370,04 of these funds. They have held three vaccination clinics at High Plains Community Center on 2/16, 2/22, and 3/17. The next clinic is scheduled for 3/24.
- Dr. Mohammad reviewed with the Board members all of the paperwork that is required by the State of Connecticut to be given to the vaccine recipient as well as all of the paperwork that must be submitted to the government. Walk-ins were welcome at the clinics although they

were predominately pediatric clinics for ages 5 – 11. Nurse Beckham contributed to this conversation as she described the clinics, which provided balloons, juice boxes, and coloring crafts to the children. Dr. Mohammad also shared numerous statistical information regarding the demographics of the vaccination recipients as well as the homebound service offered for the elderly and those residents unable to come to the clinic.

- Ms. Saldamarco explained the complicated process of reimbursement. While the vaccination itself is free, the labor to administer the vaccination is reimbursable. The scale for reimbursement is between \$16 - \$40, depending on the billable insurance company and can take several months to fully process.
- Dr. Mohammad indicated that the intention is to hold one vaccination clinic per month for the next few months. At that point, they will reassess the vaccination rate and the number of COVID cases in the town to determine any future action.
- The Board members thanked everyone for their attendance and thanked Dr. Mohammad for his detailed presentation.

4. Approval of \$25k from the Capital Account for Tower Clock

- Mr. Cifarelli explained that the Board of Selectmen approved the installation of the Tower Clock for the bicentennial celebration. Both electricity and a cement base will be required and the location for the clock has already been determined.

Mr. Leahy made a motion to take \$25k from the Capital Account to fund the installation of a Tower Clock in honor of the bicentennial. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

- Mr. Cifarelli indicated that Mr. Leahy requested that Item# 8.B. “Vice Chairman’s Report,” be moved up on the Agenda before the approval of the minutes. A motion was required.

Mr. Leahy made a motion to move Item# 8.B. “Vice Chairman’s Report” to Item# 5 on the Agenda. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

5. Vice Chairman’s Report

- Using a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Leahy reviewed the ongoing three million per year Amity surpluses and their effect on overtaxing Orange residents. He reviewed statistical data, mentioned that the Amity student population is decreasing yet staffing at Amity is increasing. He also noted that the Orange Board of Finance supported up to a 0.41% maximum increase in the Amity 2022-2023 proposed budget.

Mr. Leahy made a motion for a five-minute recess before proceeding to the Board of Finance Budget Workshop. Mr. McNabola seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

6. Discussion and Approval of Minutes

- The Board members reviewed three sets of Board of Finance minutes and made revisions as necessary.

February 28, 2022 Regular Meeting

Mr. Moffett made a motion to approve the revised February 28, 2022 Board of Finance Regular Meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. McNabola. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

March 7, 2022 Special Meeting - OBOE

Mr. McNabola made a motion to approve the revised March 7, 2022 Board of Finance Special Meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Jain. All were in favor with Mr. Moffett abstaining. The motion PASSED.

March 7, 2022 Special BOF Meeting - Audit

Mr. Moffett made a motion to approve the revised March 7, 2022 Board of Finance Special Meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Nuzzo. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

8. Budget Discussion

- Mr. Cifarelli reported that the tax collection is at 99.8% and going very well. He estimated that at the end of the fiscal surplus there could be \$500k. Mr. Cifarelli shared proposed budget cuts that include the following:
 1. Computer Software - Elimination of Building Inspector Software \$45k
 2. Conservation Commission – Move Bridge Improvements to Capital \$12k
 3. Director of Technology – Software License/Munis – Move to Capital \$85k
 4. Police General Services - Two Police Vehicles – Use encumbered money \$108k
 5. Public Works Administration – Remove HVAC Mechanic \$65k
 6. Public Works Roadways – Streets and Bridges - Reduce \$25k
- Mr. Cifarelli noted that the OBOE proposed budget would also be reduced by \$42,500 for their half of the Munis software license. Mr. Leahy and Mr. McNabola both expressed the sentiment that with a Grand List increase over 5% there must be a noticeable decrease in the mill rate. Mr. Cifarelli reminded the Board members that Southern New England Gas Company is leaving Orange next year and this will have a major effect on taxes. Mr. Cifarelli will inquire as to the split between the land and personal property to get a better understanding of the effect of their move out of the Town of Orange. He also mentioned that the property revaluation may be postponed and not take place next year.
- The current mill rate is 33.25 and the Board can reduce the mill rate to 33.09. However, Mr. Leahy felt that the Board members should attempt to reduce the mill rate lower, if possible. It

was suggested that Mr. Cifarelli speak with Dr. Scarpetti to see if they can reduce their budget from the proposed 3.67% increase to 2.25%. Mr. Cifarelli agreed to discuss this with Dr. Scarpetti.

- The Board members reviewed the list of proposed Capital Projects as well as the Fund Balance. It was estimated that OVNA will have a deficit of \$850k over a two year period. Mr. Cifarelli reminded the Board members that the next Budget Workshop is scheduled for Monday, March 28th, with a possible follow-up meeting, if needed, on Thursday, April 1st.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Moffett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 p.m., seconded by Mr. McNabola. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Satonick
Recording Secretary