

Board of Finance  
Minutes Regular Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, April 21, 2015

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KENT TOWN CLERK  
2015 APR 22 A 9 45  
BY *D. Brady*  
TOWN CLERK

**Present:** Maureen Brady, Ed Epstein, Mark McWhinney, Nancy O'Dea-Wyrick, Mark Sebetic.

**Public and Invited Guests:** Bruce Adams, Florence Budge, Jim Canning, Paul Cortese, Debbie Devaux, Eric Epstein, Karren Garrity, Barbara Herbst, Rita Limbos, Charlotte Lindsey, Dick Lindsey, Donna Miller, Jonathan Moore, CiCi Nielsen, Rick Osborne, Mike Petrone, Sam Rathbun, Lynn Mellis Worthington.

Mark Sebetic called the meeting to order at 7 p.m., noting that the board chairman would be coming to the meeting late.

**Agenda:** Mrs. Brady made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Mr. McWhinney seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. McWhinney made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 7, 2015 special meeting. Mr. E. Epstein seconded the motion. Mrs. Brady noted on the first page, last paragraph that the grant for the generator is \$17,250 and the total cost is \$23,000. Mrs. Herbst noted on page 3 at the bottom it should read GFOA recommended and not state recommended and on the last page under Public and Invited Guests it should read "pensionable" not pension. The motion as corrected was approved unanimously.

**Correspondence:** There was no correspondence.

**Reports: Tax Collector:** Debbie Devaux said she has no report.

**Board of Education:** Chairman Paul Cortese said he has no report.

**Board of Selectmen:** First Selectman Bruce Adams updated the board on the status of several grant projects:

- The \$500,000 grant that was to be used to purchase the vacant lot on Route 7 is still available for use for a similar purchase. Mr. Adams said he has had discussion with Peter D'Aprile of Kent Apothecary who plans to purchase the former railroad station building. Mr. Adams said he has been talking about the Town purchasing the north end of the building for use as a visitor center. Mr. Adams added that he spoke today with the state, and the money is still available.
- The \$100,000 STEAP grant for the covered bridge roof project is hopefully going to happen this construction season. There was only one bidder for the project.
- A \$20,000 grant for an incentive housing zone feasibility study that would look at the feasibility of extending the road past Town Hall to Maple Street Extension and study housing that might fit will be administered by Planning and Zoning Commission. The

property owner has given permission to do the study. Mr. Adams emphasized this is a feasibility study only to determine if such a project would benefit the town.

The first selectman said he is waiting to learn the status of three STEAP grants:

- Community House renovations
- Kent Memorial Library renovations
- Kent Historical Society renovations.

**Treasurer:** Barbara Herbst said she has no report.

Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick arrived at the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**Business: EV Charging Station:** Mr. Adams shared information about a grant proposal to construct an EV Charging Station at Kent Town Hall. He said the grant is totally reimbursable, and the Town would pay the cost of the charging for the first three years. Two cars could be charged at one time. Karren Garrity, who worked on the grant, said Kent is a priority location for an EV Charging Station because it is a "walkable and welcoming Town." Ms. Garrity said the station should be pretty maintenance-free for 20 years. Mr. Adams said the cost and the grant would need to be included in the budget. The consensus of the Board of Finance is the project would be good to add.

**FY2016 Budget:** Mr. Cortese said the Board of Education met April 20, 2015 in response to the Board of Finance's request to propose \$100,000 in cuts. Mr. Cortese provided an outline of cuts that the proposed 2015-16 budget reflects from the current budget (attached). Mr. Cortese said he feels the school board put together a budget that is responsible and within reason. He said Kent is not experiencing a declining enrollment, adding Kent Center School has the same enrollment as seven years ago.

Mr. Sebetic asked if the sheet outlines proposed cuts. Mr. Cortese said these are cuts from last year's budget. Mr. Sebetic said this is not what the Finance Board asked, commenting that he doesn't think anybody thinks the Board of Education's budget is irresponsible. Mr. Cortese said the school board's consensus is that it is not prepared to put together a list of items it could cut. Mr. Sebetic said he is disappointed that's the board's attitude. Mr. Sebetic questioned if the school board would be prepared to say at the budget hearing where it would proposed cuts. Mr. Cortese said he is not prepared to say where the school board would find \$100,000 to cut, adding the school needs to remain competitive. He commented there are a number of children whose parents work at the private schools, and the board needs to maintain programs to retain these students. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick asked if the school board has looked at positions and/or reallocation of resources. Ms. Nielsen commented teacher certification requirements are very different today. She added if the Town were to say cut the school budget, the school board would have to look at cutting programs.

Mr. Adams presented a prioritized list of proposed cuts to the Board of Selectmen's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 (attached), totaling \$137,751. Mr. Adams noted the Board of

Selectmen has voted to remove the total cost of the paramedic program from its operating budget. He said the Kent Volunteer Fire Department since has provided a net revenue figure of \$21,888 for 2014 for ALS paramedic services. Mr. Adams added the selectmen consensus since receiving this information is to reduce the paramedic cost by \$21,888, but said he is unclear where in the budget the board would make this reduction. Mr. Adams confirmed the resident trooper program funding assumes 30% funding by the state, saying he has heard unofficially that the state funding level for this program will stay the same as current funding. Mr. McWhinney asked if there would be any savings by the consolidation of the Children's Center and Kent Community Nursery School. Mr. Adams said that discussion took place, and there possibly could be a reduction in the grant but not in the coming fiscal year. Mr. Cortese said those boards can't assume an instant savings and would be making every effort to reduce the grant next year after having a year to implement the merger. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick asked how many computer servers the Town Hall has. Mr. Adams said it is one server that is backed up daily. Ms. Devaux stated she is opposed to the proposed cut for a new server, which she said mainly serves the Tax Collector and Tax Assessor's offices and are the two offices that bring in the money to the Town.

There was some discussion about the Five-Year Capital Plan. Mr. McWhinney asked for confirmation that the Macedonia Bridge projected had been moved out a year as voted on at the last meeting. Regarding the sidewalk repair money, Mr. Lindsey suggested returning sidewalks to the operating budget. Mr. Adams agrees, saying this would give the Town money to use immediately to repair sidewalks. The first selectman said the Board of Selectmen has not discussed this, adding he feels the board would have a more definite plan for sidewalk repairs if there was money annually.

Mrs. Herbst said the projected revenues have not changed since the last meeting.

Mr. E. Epstein made a motion to approve the transfer of \$726,200 into the Capital Fund for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mrs. Brady seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mrs. Brady made a motion to approve the Assessor's computation of the Grand List at \$594,416,601 for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mr. Sebetic seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. E. Epstein made a motion to set the Tax Collection Rate assumption for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 at 99%. Mr. Sebetic seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The board discussed the philosophy of the Town budget hearing. Mr. Sebetic said he would like to have as big a turnout as possible to get feedback from taxpayers about what they want in the budget. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick commented she feels the board is tasked with taking a proposed spending plan to the Town that the board feels is reasonable, saying she is not happy with the proposed increase in the mil rate. Mr. E. Epstein said he feels a successful budget hearing and vote is four people, meaning the board would have done its job right. Mr. Epstein said he feels the board should do its work before the hearing so any increase is palatable.

The board discussed using the anticipated state reimbursement for the Kent Center School roof project to reduce the proposed budget. Mr. Sebetic questioned whether the board should spend the money before the Town has it and asked if 25% is the correct reimbursement rate. Mr. E. Epstein said he doesn't see any risk in putting the reimbursement money in the budget. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick said a lot of expenses are not reimbursable for a roof project. Mr. Moore said he would be meeting with Region One Business Manager Sam Herrick the following morning and could report back. Meanwhile, Mr. Cortese contacted Mr. Herrick and reported the reimbursement rate is 28.21% of 90% of the project costs. He said the estimated reimbursement would be \$125,792, based on the architect's estimated costs. Mr. Cortese added it is unclear how long it would take to receive the reimbursement.

Mr. Sebetic made a motion to transfer \$225,000 from the unassigned general fund for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mr. E. Epstein seconded the motion. Mrs. Brady, Mr. E. Epstein, Mr. McWhinney and Mr. Sebetic voted yes and Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick voted no. The motion was approved 4-1.

Mr. Sebetic made a motion to cut \$112,751 from the Board of Selectmen's proposed operating budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mr. McWhinney seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Sebetic made a motion to ask the Board of Education to cut \$25,000 from its proposed 2015-2016 budget. Mr. McWhinney seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick made a motion to reinstate \$10,000 for the Town Hall server in the Board of Selectmen's proposed 2015-2016 operating budget. Mr. E. Epstein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. E. Epstein made a motion that \$8,050 in proposed cuts to grants in the Board of Selectmen's proposed 2015-2016 operating budget be restored to their original requests. Mr. McWhinney seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. McWhinney made a motion to approve the Tax Collector's assumption of net based collections on the Grand List of \$10,463,207 for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mrs. Brady seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. McWhinney made a motion to accept \$12,571,727 as projected revenue for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mr. Epstein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mrs. Brady made a motion to project the Mil Rate at 17.86 for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Mr. E. Epstein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. McWhinney made a motion to take the proposed Town of Kent Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 as voted and projected and put forward to a Town Hearing Friday, May 1, 2015 at 7 p.m. Mr. E. Epstein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Public and Invited Guests:** There were no additional comments from the public.

Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Lesly Ferris  
Board Clerk

*Minutes are not considered final until approved. Refer to the minutes from ensuing meeting for any changes and/or corrections.*

## Proposed possible budget reductions in the BOS Operating budget for FY 2015-16

These reductions are proposed by the BOS in response to a BOF request to come up with \$200,000 of possible reductions. The request also included a prioritized list and potential impact if these reductions are made. The BOS has numbered the list from most severe (1) to least severe (9) in impact.

#'s 8 & 9 can be made. #'s 3 & 4 are connected.

1. Replacement of server- \$10,000 This could have a big impact if the present server fails. It is old, in the technology world, and needs replacement.
2. Paramedic- \$39,479 This is the number discussed and voted upon by the BOS. It represents the total cost of the paramedic program anticipated for FY 15-16. Since the BOS vote, the KVFD has provided revenue numbers on paramedic billing. As a result, I propose a line reduction of \$21, 888. It is still unclear as to how to handle this.
3. Highway employee- \$81,564 This amount is the result of reducing the request for a new FT employee to PT @ 120 days.
4. Snow removal salary- \$4,049 This amount is removable if # 4 above is done. It presently funds an additional plow driver as needed in the winter.
5. Transfer station- \$5,000 From various lines
6. Grants- \$8,050 This halves all requested grant increases.
7. Civil Prep- \$2,000 This reduction halves this budget.
8. Web site- \$3,500 This was originally a total cut but the Town Clerk has renegotiated one of her contracts(COTT) and offered to fund the new web site with the savings. Thank you Darlene.
9. Departmental reductions- The P&R Commission (\$1,000) and the Tax Collector (\$710) each reduced their budgets voluntarily. Thank you Lesly and Debbie.

Total of BOS proposed reductions = \$137,751

Board of Education '15-16 Budget

Line 19	Tuition Reimbursement	(\$3,000.00)
Line 26	Legal and Investigative	(\$2,500.00)
Line 43	Telephone/Fax/Cable	(\$1,000.00)
Line 58	Propane	(\$150.00)
Line 59	Heating Oil	(\$23,955.00)
Line 60	Fuel for Buses	(\$7,400.00)
Line 61	Textbooks	(\$1,890.00)
Line 71	Cafeteria Subsidy	(\$750.00)
Line 2	Principal	<u>(\$730.00)</u>
	Organic Reductions	(\$41,375.00)
Reg 1	Regional Expenditures	(\$25,896.00)
Reg 1	13-'14 Remaining Surplus	<u>(\$5,000.00)</u>
	Sub-Total	(\$72,271.00)
Line 1	Anticipated Severance	<u><u>(\$27,000.00)</u></u>
	Total	(\$99,271.00)

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*J. Bracey R*  
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