

**Preston Board of Finance**  
**BoF Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, September 19, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Preston Town Hall: Conference Room**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Melissa Lennon, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm

**Members**

Melissa Lennon – Chair  
Jerry Grabarek – Vice Chair  
Stacey Becker – Clerk - excused  
Sandra Allyn-Gauthier  
Keith Wucik  
Ken Zachem - excused

**Alternates**

Lennie Spencer - absent  
Ian Stammel – seated for Stacey Becker

**Also Present**

Bob Congdon – 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman  
John Spang – Finance Director  
Sean Nugent – PRA Chair

2. Public Comment & Questions (per posted Town Ordinance)

- Andy Depta requested a copy of the budget table used to calculate the mil rate at the August 21, 2018 special meeting. He noted that Vice Chair J. Grabarek had asked Clerk S. Becker for the projected mil rate, but no member asked for a copy of the table. M. Lennon explained that all members had received an electronic copy prior to the meeting. M. Lennon gave A. Depta a copy of the table.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes

a. August 15, 2018 – Regular Meeting

**A motion was made by Jerry Grabarek and seconded by Keith Wucik to accept the regular meeting minutes of August 15, 2018 as presented.**

**I. Stammel abstained. All remaining members voted in favor. Motion carries.**

b. August 21, 2018 – Special Meeting

**A motion was made by Jerry Grabarek and seconded by Ian Stammel to accept the special meeting minutes of August 21, 2018 as presented.**

**K. Wucik abstained. All remaining members voted in favor. Motion carries.**

4. Correspondence

- August 16<sup>th</sup> e-mail from John Spang regarding: Account 4081 telephone PILOT, an explanation of BoE essential expenditures for telecommunications, and a list of the BoE budget reductions by line item.

- August 28<sup>th</sup> e-mail from Rep. Mike France regarding a seminar hosted by Congressman Joe Courtney concerning the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) on Wednesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>.
5. Board of Finance's FY18 Year-End Budget Transfers
- In reviewing the Board of Finance accounts for FY18, internal line item transfers were required to balance the BoF budget at year-end. A letter was sent by M. Lennon to the Board of Selectmen on behalf of the BoF requesting those transfers. The transfer requests were approved at the September 13<sup>th</sup> BoS meeting.
6. Town Revenue Status & Financial Reports – John Spang
- Due to the lack of a budget, there were no tax collections in August.
  - The current tax collection rate is brisk. \$2,117,000 has been collected as of 2:30 p.m. today: \$1.7 million of that is real estate, \$71,000 is personal property, and \$313,000 is motor vehicles.
  - The delay in tax collections by a month did not make a significant difference in the past and J. Spang would expect the same to be true this year.
  - I. Stammel noted the impressive increase in back tax collections this year for property.
7. Board of Education Financial Report – John Spang
- a. BoE FY18 Financial Report
- June activity is winding down.
  - BoE is looking to return \$135,397, which does not include the unexpected Excess Cost money. Savings mostly came from Special Education programming changes. Areas in which there were overages included salaries for special education and compensatory leave for paraeducators.
  - J. Spang suggested that the BoF think about putting “returned” FY18 funds into Capital Non Recurring to build it back up. It was decided that more information is needed to weigh the pros and cons as well as to understand the process. This topic will be added to a future BoF agenda.
  - I. Stammel asked for an explanation of the COLA line item. J. Spang will send the Board more information about it.
- b. BoE FY19 Financial Report – John Spang
- The BoE is watching the health insurance line. They knew in June there would be an increase needed and the BoE already has moved \$33,000 to help.
  - Projected magnet school enrollment went from 3 to 10 students. The BoE will have a final count on October 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Capital Projects are back on track with the new busses received, the bus garage lot is paved, and bids for the playground surfacing are coming in.
  - B. Congdon shared that the used busses currently are at Public Works, but will be moved to the fenced parking lot at the middle school to see if there is any interest in them. If not, the next step would be to look at potential interest going to auction or selling as scrap.
  - M. Lennon asked for an update on the bus driver status. Currently, the district is outsourcing one route driver and there is an unfilled “spare driver” position that

typically is seen as half time. J. Spang indicated that the cost is triple for an outsourced driver versus a driver in-house.

c. BoE Finance Committee Update – Melissa Lennon

- Nothing additional to report

d. BoE Contract Negotiations – Melissa Lennon

- Teacher contract negotiations are in progress

8. Board of Selectmen Financial Report – Bob Congdon

a. BoS FY18 Financial Report

- Looking at returning \$246,226.18, but just received a \$7,000 request from the library for FY 2018. B. Congdon has asked for invoices to verify the request is for FY18.
- Need to look at the Social Security line more carefully to see what caused the overage. Salaries were not high enough to cause that significant of an overage. B. Congdon will report back his findings.

b. BoS FY19 Financial Report

- Not much to report early in the year.
- One area to watch is the Elections budget. The salaried wages line already is over budget for the year. The Board of Selectmen already wrote a letter reminding the Registrars to stay within the budget they built for FY19.
- K. Wucik asked why there are so many workers at the elections. M. Lennon asked how many workers are necessary at the polls. B. Congdon said that more are needed for a primary - typically that has meant seven – and five usually for a referendum and election.
- The petition regarding a change in the polling location was denied at Town Meeting, but a study committee was created. The petition did raise accessibility issues. The ramp is grandfathered for accessibility, but does not meet current code.

**A motion was made by Keith Wucik and seconded by Jerry Grabarek for the Board of Finance to write a letter to the Registrars of Voters requesting the Registrars of Voters to stay within their budget.**

**All in favor. Motion passes.**

c. Approve Line Item Transfers for FY18

- B. Congdon presented a list of line item transfers for FY18.

**A motion was made by Jerry Grabarek and seconded by Sandra Allyn-Gauthier to approve the Line Item Transfers for FY18 as presented by First Selectman, Bob Congdon, with the list of transfers attached to these minutes.**

**All in favor. Motion passes.**

9. Preston Redevelopment Agency: Progress & Grant Update

- Progress: Sean Nugent updated the Board on the progress of the cleanup on the property and explained the “mounds” that are visible. Digging is about 2/3 complete. Will have a 3:1 slope when it is finished. Should take the rest of the year to complete the road removal and covering.
- Grants: Sean presented all the grants for which the Town has applied (received and denied). Have received \$21,635,000 in grants with \$2,495,000 in matching grants, which totals \$24,130,000. To date, PRA has spent \$17,786,370 in about 9 ½ years with \$6,343,630 remaining.
- Loan: It remains hopeful that the \$2 million contingency loan will not be needed.
- Based on the current progress at the site, the PRA grant updates will be moved to a timetable of every 6 months.

## 10. Unfinished Business

### a. BoF Annual Report of FY2017

- All members received an electronic version of the draft. Corrections were suggested.
  - Pipeline deadline is today. BoF will put a note in the Pipeline informing residents that the Annual Report will be available on the town website and in Town Hall.
- A motion was made by Keith Wucik and seconded by Jerry Grabarek to approve the FY 2017 Annual Report as amended. All in favor. Motion carries.**

### b. BoF By-Laws

- Special meeting just for this topic: Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

### c. BoF Electronic Device for BoF Clerk

- Purchase update – Stacey ordered a HP EliteBook 840 G1 Refurbished Laptop (8GB memory and 500 GB hard drive) for \$297.77 as well as a one-year subscription for Office 365 for \$53.16 from Office Max. Tom from IT verified that the town has an anti-virus protection license that will cover the BoF device.

### d. BoF Policies

- Debt Management Policy (long-term planning process)
  - M. Lennon is working on a draft of this policy and has asked B. Congdon for input regarding the specific details involved in the process of bonding. Sample documents have been rather involved.
- Reserve Policy (put our practice in writing: we put 9 ½% in reserve)
  - M. Lennon shared a draft policy and asked members to review and discuss at the next meeting. The draft will be discussed at the special meeting on October 4, 2018.

### e. BoF Recorder

- Nancy Musa put an advertisement in the Norwich Patch.

- M. Lennon reached out to Career Services as well as a political science professor at Three Rivers in hopes to reach any interested candidates.
- Please spread the word that the Board has an open recorder position.
- I. Stammel suggested looking into the possibility of a shared service with Ledyard.

f. CCM Ethics Workshop – September 5, 2018

- M. Lennon distributed folders with the PowerPoint presentation used at the workshop to those who were unable to attend.
- Key take away point: Do what is in the best interest of the Town.
- Jerry explained the “but, for” rule that was presented.
- Conflict of Interest was discussed as well as steps to mitigate a perceived conflict of interest.

11. New Business

a. CCM Annual Convention – Tuesday, October 30, 2018

- The Annual Convention is being held locally this year, at Foxwoods. There are some notable workshops being offered that may be relative and of interest to BoF members. M. Lennon asked anyone interested in attending to contact her by the end of next week.

b. Scarecrow Festival – September 22<sup>nd</sup>

- M. Lennon offered to make a scarecrow on behalf of the Board of Finance using the Monopoly character, Uncle Pennybags. The scarecrow would be holding a bag representing the Town’s finances. There were no objections.

12. Future Action Items

a. Auditor RFP – Jan./Feb. time frame

13. Public Comment & Questions (per posted Town Ordinance)

1. A. Depta asked where the “returned” funds from the FY18 budget go. He shared his concern that nearly ½ a mil was returned from the General Government budget. He suggested to the Board that a department-based budget would create a better budgeting strategy moving forward.

14. Adjourn

**A motion was made by K. Wucik and seconded by I. Stammel to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. All in favor. Motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Lennon  
Board of Finance Chair