

**Preston Board of Finance
Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 16, 2022
Cafeteria - Preston Plains Middle School**

Call to Order - Bob Congdon called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

1. Roll Call

Members

Alternates

John Moulson - Chairman

Robert Congdon - Vice Chairman

Stacey Becker

Andy Depta

Denise Beale - absent

Zachary Maurice

Andrew Sawyer

Kayla Thompson - Clerk - seated

Also Present

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier - Selectwoman

Jerry Grabarek - Selectman

Ken Zachem - Selectman

Cindy Varricchio - Finance Director

Bill Merrill - Interim Finance Manager

2. Public Comment - There was none.

3. Correspondence

- Jan. 26, 2022 - CCM - email: monthly newsletter
- Jan.28, 2022 - Rick Porth, notice from CCM - email: informational flyer on upcoming meeting on March 12 & 19th
- Feb. 11, 2022 - Christopher Gilson - email: Municipal Voice
- Jan. 19, 2022 - CCM Training - email: upcoming Webinars offered
- January 21, 2022 - CCM Training - email: Webinar: Accelerating Broadband Access
- January 27, 2022 - CCM Training - email: Webinar: Understanding ARPA Final Rule
- Feb. 8, 2022, 2022 - CCM Training - email: Webinar: Empowering Vulnerable Residents to Shape Municipal Affordable Housing Strategies

4. Approval of Minutes

a. BoF Regular Meeting of January 19, 2022

Bob Congdon motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2022. Stacey Becker seconded the motion. The motion was approved with John Moulson, Bob Congdon, Andy Depta, Zach Maurice, and Kayla Thompson voting in favor of the motion, and Stacey Becker abstained from the vote.

5. Town Revenue and Status Report -

Bill Merrill stated that Tax Collections were doing well and that there are only 12% yet to collect. Collections are \$480,000 ahead of last year's and that collection for prior year's taxes and liens are ahead of what was expected. The second payment for the Educational Cost Sharing Grant and Town Road Aid have been received and posted. The town is still waiting for the Mashantucket first payment which will hopefully be received by the end of the month. The rental payments for the cell tower have been received but have yet to be posted. General the revenues are continuing to trend better than what was expected.

6. Board of Education Report

Cindy Varricchio reported that the Board of Education's spending continues to track favorably. Although the monthly spendings are being watched closely as the year progresses.

a. BoE Liaison Report

Zach Maurice stated the Board of Education is meeting every other week at this point to compose and complete their budget to be presented to the Board of Finance the first week of April.

7. Board of Selectmen Financial Report

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier reported that typical at this point of the year 60% of the budget is spent with 40% remaining. However, the town is doing a little better than that with 47% of the budget remaining. A few items to note are that the Landfill fees were double posted, the Town Aid Road grant is offset, and the SCAAR tipping fees need to be posted. The town is tracking well at this point barring any major snowstorms or other issues.

8. Old Business

a. Plan of Action

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier stated that the auditors were in town on February 8, 9, and 10th. Staff is working to provide all outstanding information by the end of the month, and it is felt with confidence that the audit should be completed by March 31, 2022. It was also reported that the auditors are satisfied with all corrective actions that have been put into place and they are satisfied with the progress thus far.

b. FY 2020-2021 Annual Report - update

After a brief discussion, it was decided to accept the draft that is presently posted for FY2020 on the town's website as the Annual Report. Stacey Becker stated she will take the word draft off.

Stacey Becker asked the Board how they would like to proceed with the FY2021 Annual Report. She shared that in the past reports were collected from each of the departments in town and then compiled into one document along with the statistics required by law. The Board needs to decide whether a full report will be done or a report with only the stats required by law. Cindy Varricchio shared that she has put together many annual reports and would be happy to lend a hand and her expertise. It was suggested that if the Board wanted a full report that requesting reports from each department by mid-March would still give enough time to compile

the pertinent information and publish it in a timely manner. The Board still needs to decide who will spearhead this project.

c. FY 2021-2022 Budget - Progress Report and Prognostication

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier was asked how the Board of Selectmen was progressing with the town's budget. She responded that they have started holding workshops to go over the various department budgets. Departments with more than a 5% increase need to provide a narrative for the increase. She did share with the board that she has been told to expect an 8% increase for the health care plan; and that they are also looking at salary increases and at the same time taking into consideration COLA and current inflation rates.

d. Capital Asset Inventory - progress report

It was reported that Rosemary Rohm has completed the large fixed asset inventory which was needed for the auditors. She's not sure how to go about the small asset inventory because the last one was done in 2012. The small asset inventory is not needed for the auditor or for state reporting. This is for items valuing \$1,000 to \$5,000. It was decided that she should go back 3 years and then bring the inventory up to date. Sandra Allyn-Gauthier will share the Boards thoughts with Rosemary and see if she can come up with a timeline for completion.

9. New Business

a. BoS draft capital expenses plan - outline

The Board of Selectmen sent a draft in November but will update that and resend it to the BoF.

b. BoE draft capital expense plan - outline

The Board of Education reviewed and approved their plan at a Feb. 14, 2022 meeting, and should BoF should have it by their next meeting.

c. Dates for Budget Reviews - BoS and BoE (Special Meetings)

It was decided that the BoF will hold Budget Workshops in April to prepare for the Public Hearing in May. The following was decided:

- Wednesday, April 13, 2022 - Budget Workshop for the Board of Selectmen
 - Thursday, April 14, 2022 - Budget Workshop for the Board of Education
- All Budget Workshops will be held at 7:30 P.M. the place is to be determined.

d. Dates for Town Hearing and Referendum

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier provided the Board of Finance with the Budget Timeline and the Ordinance Dates and Target dates. After a brief discussion dates were decided and it was noted that the preferred meeting place is the Preston Veterans Memorial School.

Bob Congdon motioned to hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, May 19, 2022, at 7:30 P.M., a place to yet be determined. Stacey Becker seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Stacey Becker motioned to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to hold a Town Meeting on Thursday, June 2, 2022, at 7:30 P.M. the place is yet to be determined. Bob Congdon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

e. Audit contract extension

Chairman John Moulson will contact the auditors concerning the contract extension.

f. BoF clerk software

Stacey Becker reviewed what software she has used as clerk of the Board and explained the need to increase the BoF software line item to \$375 unless the town has a better plan than what is being used presently. It was decided that Stacey Becker would email Sandra Allyn-Gauthier with the needs of the BoF as far as software is concerned and that Ms. Allyn-Gauthier will look into possible other avenues that may prove to be more efficient.

g. Reval funding

The Board was asked how they would like to see the 10 Reval budgeted - whether to set aside an amount each year or to take out of the Non-recurring Funds when they are billed for the service. After discussion, it was agreed that the Board of Selectmen would add to their budget \$25,000 to be placed in the Non-Recurring Fund and will do so each year for the next 4 years to cover the expected \$125,000 cost of the 10 Reval. It was decided that the same should be done for the Plan of Conservation and Development \$5,000 cost.

h. Plan of Conservation and Development \$5,000 appropriation

This has been discussed and a decision rendered.

i. Letter from the Superintendent of schools, Re: Formation of building committee

The Board of Finance were given a brief history of the previous Building Committee and stated that it was comprised of a member from each of the Board of Education, Selectmen, and Finance, along with 4 community members. It last met in 2016. After clarification and discussion the Board of Finance was asked if they would like one of their members to sit on such a committee if it is reestablished. It was decided that they would however they felt that the focus at the moment should be the budget.

11. Public Comment -

There was none.

12. Adjournment -

Bob Congdon motioned to adjourn at 8:52 P.M. Kayla Thompson seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Lang

Recording Secretary