

**Preston Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, October 19, 2022  
Preston Plains Cafeteria**

**Call to Order** - John Moulson called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

**1. Roll Call**

**Members**

John Moulson - Chairman  
Robert Congdon - V. Chairman  
Kayla Thompson - Clerk  
Stacey Becker - excused  
Denise Beale  
Zachary Maurice - excused

**Alternates**

Andrew Sawyer - excused  
Vacancy

***Also Present***

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier - Selectwoman  
Jerry Grabarek - Selectman  
Cindy Varricchio - Finance Director  
Jill S. Keith - vacancy candidate  
Robert Castronova - vacancy candidate

**2. Public Comment** - None

**3. Correspondence**

- Sept. 20, 2022 - Email: Robert Castronova regarding his interest in the Board's vacancy and a brief resume.
- Sept. 20, 2022 - Email: Cindy Dupointe regarding information on behalf of Jill S Keith.
- Sept. 11, 2022 - Letter: Jill S Keith stating her interest in filling the Board of Finance vacancy as well as her resume.
- Sept. 9, 2022 - Letter: Cindy C. Dupointe, Preston Republican Town Committee, regarding Jill S. Keith endorsement from the Preston Republican Town Committee to fill the Board of Finance's Alternate Vacancy position.
- Sept. 22, 2022 - Email: Cindy Dupointe, Preston Republican Town Committee, regarding the vacancy position on the board of Finance.
- Oct. 11, 2022 - Email: Jill Keith, regarding her intentions to attend the interview session for the Board of Finance Alternate position.

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

##### **a. Board of Finance Regular Meeting September 21, 2022**

*Denise Beale motioned to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 21, 2022 as presented. Kayla Thompson seconded the motion. John Moulson, Denise Beale, and Kayla Thompson voted in favor while Bob Congdon abstained. The motion was carried 3-0-1.*

#### **5. Financial Reports**

##### **a. Board of Education Report**

Cindy Varricchio shared that the Board of Education with regards to their expenditures there are no issues or concerns; they are tracking well. When questioned about bus drivers in training; the Board was told that there are bus drivers in training which is quite good considering the challenges they face daily. When questioned whether the issue of obtaining substitutes continues to be a challenge; the Board was told that there are still challenges getting substitutes. This year we'll have more long-term substitutes to cover teachers who aren't in. We're monitoring closely the expense of subs and the savings that might occur when not paying a teacher.

Ms. Varricchio made the Board aware that the Board of Education is applying for a HVAC Grant that the State has made available to school districts. She stated that the deadline for this is December 1st. It has a very tight application schedule. She stated that Dr. Seitsinger will be approaching the Board of Finance at their November meeting due to the fact that this particular Grant is a matching grant for educational uses and will need the endorsement of the Board of Finance.

##### **1. Board of Education Liaison Report - Zach Maurice**

Zach Maurice was unable to attend.

##### **b. Town Revenue Report**

Cindy Varricchio reported that the auditors are scheduled to be in Preston on Nov. 2nd and 3rd to close out the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 audit. She shared that revenues have exceeded the budget in all areas. LoCIP proceeds are \$15,137 less than was previously reported. The Senior Housing PILOT was posted to an incorrect account and the correction has been made. The total unaudited revenue collection exceeded the budget by \$62,744 or 100.4%. The result is that none of the \$660,000 allocated fund balance has been used.

The stale checks that were reported to the Board in July was initially well over \$100,000. However, with diligent and hard work of the Treasurer's Department that is now under \$10,000.

As far as the current year's revenues The Tax Collector collected about ½ million dollars in September. We have received the CERMA member equity check of \$14,291. The Board was

reminded that in the past there were discussions on whether to turn around and use those funds to pay for cyber security. A decision that could be made later. A final note was Building Fees are almost at \$20,000 in the first 3 months of the fiscal year and the budget is \$60,000. So, that area is doing rather well.

Looking at the Tax Collector's Report there was a discussion about the negative numbers. The Board was told the negative numbers are tax refunds that are so old that there are no ordinances to return those funds to the taxpayer. They are small amounts that people have credit for. Because of that Jill Keith, the Tax Collector, would be coming to the Board in the near future to remedy that situation.

The Report itself is what the auditors will be looking for, she is preparing it for the Board on a monthly basis to show where money is coming from prior or present year's tax collection. It was clarified that the amount for prior year's taxes is shown without interest and penalties, that can not be determined until the person actually pays the taxes.

### **c. Town Expenditure Report**

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier shared that the Town's expenses are similar to the Board of Education with only 3 months into the new fiscal year that everything is tracking favorably. There has been 22% of the budget spent with 78% remaining and there have been no major issues at this point in time.

Once the reimbursements from the Board of Education and the Fire Department have been received, the Gas & Diesel line will be at 70% remaining, so that's okay for now. We're dealing with Tipping Fees differently and for now there are no issues there. At this point in time things seem to be on target.

Cindy Varricchio pointed out that Summer Camp Payroll and Plan of Conservation and Development payroll have not been remedied yet, but they will be taken care of. Parks and Rec will make reimbursements for those fees; and POCD will be adjusted for.

## **6. Old Business**

### **a. Budget Calendar**

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier reviewed the Proposed Budget Calendar to be followed in the upcoming budget process. It was explained that the proposed calendar complies with Town Ordinances; allows flexibility if something were to come up; and allows enough time for both the Tax Collector and the Assessor to do their part of the process. The result will be that tax bills are going out on time, July 1st.

There was a brief discussion by Board members concerning the proposed calendar.

***Kayla Thompson motioned to approve the proposed 2023-2024 Budget Planning Calendar. Bob Congdon seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.***

**b. Planning and Zoning Commission Request for Review of Board of Finance Goals in the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)**

Chairman John Moulson spoke with Kathy Warzecha to get her guidance on this. John passed out the copies that had Kathy's explanation and suggestions on it. John Moulson felt that the Board of Finance just needed to give encouragement in certain areas. The goals listed, have been supported over the years as they have come before the Board.

Kayla Thompson stated that looking at Goal #2 that it's very obtainable and straightforward and should be left alone. Presently the Town is looking at the Town Hall, Library, town parks, and so that's very obtainable and appropriate.

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier explained the importance of goals and that the document is mandated by the State. She encouraged the Board to look at the goals and actions of the previous Board and decide if they are still something the Town can use or do they need new goals. She also explained how the document is used when applying for grants from both the federal and state governments.

After further discussion on the agricultural it was decided to leave the Goal #3 and #2 and their actions as they are because they are still as pertinent today as they were 10 years ago.

***Kayla Thompson motioned to keep the Goal #3 and #2 and their actions as the Board of Finance's Goals for the POCD Schedule Planner. Bob Congdon seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.***

**7. New Business**

Cindy Varricchio shared a working document that they have been using to track everything that they have been doing for the audit. She stated that the auditors will be in Preston on November 2nd and 3rd. The document is broken into sections by Departments. The chart shows - a description of the work, who's responsible, target completion date, any comments, and if it's completed. There are items that are targeted for Sept. that aren't complete, yet there are items targeted for Nov. that are complete. Items not checked off are in process. We have every expectation to be ready when the auditors arrive. Most of our reconciliations are completed or in review.

Policies are not completed, it continues to be a work in progress. The only area of concern is the completion of the OPEB Report that is required by the auditors. It is for those Board of Education employees who are not part of the Teacher's Retirement. The vendor we've used has passed away. Ms. Varricchio is currently looking for a replacement, but to no avail as yet. She is checking with a referral list of possible vendors that were given to her by the auditors, but still has yet to secure one.

She also mentioned that Parks & Rec still uses Quickbooks and that they will need to move to Infinite Vision for their accounting needs.

Kayla Thompson shared that her bank shorted the Town \$0.90 and she got a bill for \$2.90 and after speaking to Jill Keith we don't have an ordinance on the books to deal with small discrepancies. So, Ms. Keith would be attending a Board meeting in the near future to discuss that and how best to deal with that. It would be prudent to look at the cost of going after small amounts versus writing off the loss. The Tax Collector shared that Preston is one of the few in the area that doesn't have an ordinance for this.

**8. Public Comment - None**

**9. Adjournment**

***Bob Congdon motioned to adjourn at 8:15 P.M. Kayla Thompson seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.***

Respectfully Submitted,

*Kimberly Lang*

Recording Secretary