

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF FINANCE – REGULAR MEETING**  
**December 14, 2021**  
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**In Person:**

Board of Finance Attendance: John Ford, Sharon Huxley, Lars Demander, Catherine Erickson, and Kathleen Barone

Absent: John Grabowski

Also in attendance: First Selectman Paula Cofrancesco and Finance Director Tom Ellis

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Finance Member John Ford called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Board noted two typos to the November 9, 2021, meeting minutes. Member Huxley moved to approve the amended minutes of the November 9<sup>th</sup> minutes, and Member Erickson seconded. **Voting for: Ford, Huxley, Demander, Erickson, and Barone. Unanimous Approval.**

**2. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT.**

Member Huxley updated the Board on the Amity Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Huxley informed the Board that Amity’s draft financials are with the auditors and are expected back in late December. Additionally, the Amity Finance Committee has started next year’s budget planning and First Selectman Cofrancesco confirmed they plan to attend the February 2022 Regular Board of Finance meeting to present their budget.

**3. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION – FIRST SELECTMAN’S REPORT**

First Selectman Cofrancesco updated the Board of the following items:

- a. Charter Committee Update: First Selectman Cofrancesco informed the Board that the Board of Selectmen has approved 5 (five) individuals as regular members for the Charter Committee, and they will be meeting with Town Counsel, Vin Marino, to begin work in the coming weeks. First Selectman Cofrancesco identified the members of the Charter Commission as: Salvatore Amadeo, Robert H. Brinton, Jr., Carol Goldberg, Donald Shea, and Betsy Thornquist.
- b. Airport Hanger Update: First Selectman Cofrancesco informed the Board that, of the approximately 130 Airport refund letters mailed, 11 refunds were issued in November and 2 (two) letters have been received as of December 14, 2021. At this time, approximately 54 letters remain outstanding, and the deadline remains December 29, 2021, to be eligible for a refund. Additionally, First Selectman Cofrancesco plans to begin the process of identifying bricks for return after January 1, 2022.

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- c. OneDigital Health and Benefits, Inc. Update: First Selectman Cofrancesco informed the Board that she and Finance Director, Tom Ellis, met with brokers from OneDigital Health and Benefits, Inc., and at this time, they are recommending the Town transition to the State Partnership Plan. It is their recommendation that this plan will save money and provide more coverage. The actual cost figures and rates will not be available until February of 2022, and at that time, a Special Meeting including the Board of Education, Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, and OneDigital should be scheduled for people to ask questions and get more information. First Selectman Cofrancesco suggested February 17, 2022, or February 23, 2022, as possible dates for that meeting. Additionally, Finance Director, Tom Ellis, added that he has received positive feedback from other towns currently enrolled in the State Partnership Plan.
- d. Economic Development Committee Update: First Selectman Cofrancesco updated the Board that she has received some responses for the Economic Development Committee and believes they will have 5 (five) members. Former Chair, Tom Cavaliere has agreed to act as current Chair and is looking for background documentation relating to the Committee. First Selectman Cofrancesco and Mr. Cavalier plan to meet with the 4 (four) prospective members after the holidays. Member Huxley expressed an interest in being added as an alternate member for the Committee. The Board then discussed the mission of the Committee and possible areas of influence.
- e. Staffing Update: First Selectman Cofrancesco informed the Board about a number of staffing changes. Tree Warden Ray Pantalone submitted his letter of resignation effective January 1, 2022, and Sean Warren, Mechanic with the Public Works Department, has also resigned to accept a position outside of the Town. Additionally, First Selectman Cofrancesco shared with the Board that Finance Director, Tom Ellis has handed in his letter of resignation effective December 31, 2021, to accept a position for the town of Norwalk. Mr. Ellis' last day will be December 29<sup>th</sup>. First Selectman Cofrancesco expressed that she has reached out to multiple organizations and sources to help find a replacement for Mr. Ellis. It had been communicated to her that the current salary and benefits associated with the position could pose a hiring obstacle. The Board discussed the option of revising the vacation time component of this position. First Selectman Cofrancesco also addressed issues around open positions and expanding work responsibilities for Town Staff. The Board requested full and updated job descriptions for current and anticipated positions including expanded responsibilities for the upcoming budget review.

**4. DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION- FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Finance Director Tom Ellis updated the Board on the following items:

- a. ARPA Update: Finance Director, Tom Ellis provided the Board with a detailed breakdown and tracking sheet for the ARPA funds including past expenses and monies committed, the current balance, and a list of possible future projects. The second tranche for ARPA funds will be arriving in June of 2022. The Board discussed the possibility and feasibility of expanding the opportunity for generating projects ideas to individuals outside of the Town Hall environment and to the

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community at large. First Selectman Cofrancesco does anticipate a number of upcoming Town Meetings where discussion of ARPA projects can be added to the agenda. Member Huxley suggested the possibility of creating a committee for overseeing a comprehensive project list for possible ARPA funds. The Board stressed the desire to include funding for competitive and thoughtful IT upgrades which would allow for easy virtual access to Town Meetings, etc., in next year's ARPA budget. Additionally, the Board addressed the importance for department heads to generate real and actual budgets for the upcoming budget review.

- b. Monthly Financials: Finance Director, Tom Ellis provided the Board with a detailed summary of the Town expenditures as of November 30, 2021. Mr. Ellis brought the Board's attention to the Public Works section and explained the specifics relating to several line items under that heading. Mr. Ellis also addressed a question from last meeting regarding a payment for road resurfacing and confirmed that it did include all 4 (four) roads. Mr. Ellis also reminded the Board that the percentage spent on the summary page reflects both linear spending and items that are paid upfront.
- c. FY 2023 Budget Calendar: Finance Director Tom Ellis provided the Board with a hardcopy of the FY 23 Budget schedule. First Selectman Cofrancesco and Mr. Ellis met with Town Clerk, Will Brinton to finalize the schedule for public notification. Mr. Ellis noted he will remind department heads to include and prioritize capital items on their anticipated budgets. The Board reviewed the meeting schedule and made a note that the Regular meeting in February will include a presentation from the Amity Finance Committee.

**5. ADDRESS CONTROL ISSUES**

- a. Audit Recommendations and Process Updates: Finance Director Ellis updated the Board that the focus continues to be working on wrapping up the June 30, 2021, fiscal year activities and has put in for an extension to January 31, 2022. Mr. Ellis and staff have been working to resolve the remaining action items and will continue to update the Board on the progress.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

- There being no further business, Member Huxley moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:31 p.m. and was seconded by Member Erickson. **Voting for: Ford, Huxley, Demander, Erickson, and Barone. Unanimous Approval.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Laura Callery  
Town Minutes Clerk