1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Melissa Lennon, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

Members
Melissa Lennon – Chair
Jerry Grabarek – Vice Chair – arrived at 7:10 p.m.
Stacey Becker – Clerk
Sandra Allyn-Gauthier
Keith Wucik
Ken Zachem

Alternates
Lennie Spencer – seated until 7:10 p.m.
Ian Stammel

Also Present
Bob Congdon – 1st Selectman
John Spang – Finance Director
Roy Seitsinger – Superintendent of Schools
Sean Nugent – BoF Chair – PRA Chair
Andy Depta – public
Ed Gauthier
Greg Moran

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

Andy Depta spoke regarding the Board developing policies. He felt that was good action, but suggested perhaps numbering them in some manner with the year to better identify them was needed. He also shared his concerns that a personal email, even though it was designated for Town use only, was being used for Town business.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes

a. December 19, 2018 – Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Ken Zachem and seconded by Stacey Becker to accepted the regular minutes of December 19, 2018 as presented.

Melissa Lennon then point out that there were 5 areas of corrections:

- Page 1 - Alternatives should read Alternates
- Same page at the bottom – Keith Wucik and Stacey Becker abstained from the motion
- Page 2, item 7 – Jan. 6th will open bids for the sale of 6 buses – was omitted
Once the corrections were noted, Stacey Becker moved to approve the amended minutes as corrected. It was seconded by Ken Zachem. The motion carried, Lennie Spencer abstained.

4. Correspondence
   The Board received three correspondences:
   - 12/20/2018 – John Spang – Re: North Stonington Auditing Services RFP
   - 12/21/2018 – Jon Spang – Re: Codes 4015 & 4016, an item that still needs an answer to
   - Municibid advertisement

5. FY18 Audit Update
   - Melissa Lennon spoke to Sue Nylen, who has a few things left to be completed for the audit. John Spang shared that they were putting the final touches and final reports together.
   - The Audit Report has not been completed; however, Sandra Wellwood will be at the February 20th meeting to share her findings.

6. Board of Education’s State Department of Education Letter Update, Re: MBR
   - Dr. Seitsinger reported continuing progress, meeting with representatives and senators, and the speaking with the Commissioner of Education, (the person in that position is likely to change in the near future, but she remains fully active). The BoE is moving forward in the process.

7. Town Revenue Status & Financial Reports
   - John Spang report that 56% of the taxes have been collected. Not a good time to compare to last year at the same time because due to last year’s changes in federal taxes more people paid their taxes early in the second half of the year.
   - Strong indicators that the Town is doing well. There is an increase in building permits, investment income has been exceeded due to higher interest rates, landfill fees are very close to budget, and by all indications the state aid will come in as promised.
   - With the new state government, in about 6 weeks we’ll get a first look at what Preston can expect for State Aid. John explained it looks to be a strong year financially, and doesn’t expect any financial short falls.

      - There is an Elementary Teachers position that has not been filled at this time in response to the enrollment; however, enrollment numbers are being monitored closely in case the position is needed later in the year.
• Of the original $66,000 budgeted for Pre-kindergarten tuition, $35,120 or 53% has been paid. At this point it looks like the program will come in on budget.
• Buses have been ordered this month, which is earlier in the calendar year than last year because buses that were ordered last year didn’t come in until after the school year started.
• The Long-Range Replacement Plan has two goals: #1 – average age of the buses will be 5 years – #2 - no bus is more than 11 years old. Come this Sept. the first goal will be met and the second goal will be met the 2020-2021 school year.
• The 3 new buses that were purchased and came in $12,000 under budget, even with the new Federal tariffs on steel.
• BoS awarded a bid and sold 6 buses and the insurance company paid a settlement of $6500 for the bus that was damaged in the accident this fall. So, a total of $10,800 has gone to the town.

2. Board of Education Finance Committee Update – Roy Seitsinger
• Urgent Preston Veterans Memorial School Pump House Project – The pump house is approximately 17 years old which provides water to the school and daycare; presently it is in such poor condition that it needs to be monitored daily, including weekends and holidays.
• Repair time is not long; however, to acquire the parts for the repair is substantial because of the age of the system and some parts are no longer manufactured. Getting the parts needed for the repairs could take up to 6 weeks.
• The cost of the project is $28,760.00. Of that amount, approximately $3000 is labor and the rest is for parts. The Board of Education wants use funds from its operating budget to pay for the repairs.
• Southeast Connecticut Water Authority verified the work was necessary and recommended LaFramboise to do the work. The BoE wants to move forward on this project as quick as possible so that school days aren’t lost.
• Bob Congdon felt that the repair was truly a Capital Project and that the BoE should not take it out of their operating budget, rather it should come from Capital Non-recurring. It’s a repair that will last the next 15 years. It’s an unexpected expenditure.
• Melissa Lennon went around the table to hear from each Board member on the subject of funding the project with Capital Funds.

Stacey Becker – the question is what the time line will be to proceed in that direction
Because an appropriation would need Town approval
Ken Zachem – Take it from the Capital Bond issue, we have the money, we still have to go to a Town meeting, this is an item that fits the criteria
Sandra Allyn-Gauthier – it’s technically a Capital expense so it probably should come out of that
Jerry Grabarek – take it out of Capital
Keith Wucik – if the BoE is going to pay for it out of their budget why are we even discussing this
Lennie Spencer – agree taking out of the Capital Fund
Ian Stammel – Capital Fund

- After a lengthy discussion it was decided to Table the issue until after the invoice for the repairs is submitted to the BoE. At that time, the BoF will recommend that the BoS call a Town Meeting in order to vote to approve reimbursing the BoE for the cost of the pump house with funds from the BoE Capital Bond.

- General Budget is going well and has expended 40% of their budget. We’ve hadn’t had any snow.
- The recommendation is to let the new Registrar of Voters have a chance to sort things out, there’s plenty of time before the referendums.
- It will give Karen Stockton time to understand the remaining budget she has to work with, and has information to help her make a FY20 budget.

10. Preston Redevelopment Agency: Progress - Sean Nugent
Sean Nugent had stepped out of the room and the Board moved to item 11.

11. Unfinished Business
1. Auditor RFP – Melissa Lennon shared her findings when comparing North Stonington’s RFP to Preston’s. She felt that there were a number of places that needed to be cleaned up and shared those with the Board in order to get their input.

Ken Zachem motioned to suspend working on the RFP and move back to Item #10 to hear the Preston Redevelopment Agency’s progress update and Stacey Becker seconded. The motion carried.

10. Preston Redevelopment Agency: Progress - Sean Nugent
- PRA is waiting for the State to complete their part. With the changes in Hartford, it’s hard to know when things will occur and if they will meet their 180-day deadline.
- As far remediation is concerned it’s 30% complete at this point.
- The PRA needs to fulfill requirements for three different agencies; some of the requirements overlap, but others don’t; still working to complete it all by the end of this year.

Melissa Lennon asked for a motion to resume working on the RFP, Sandra Allyn-Gauthier motioned and Ken Zachem seconded. The motion carried.

a. Auditor RFP – The group resumed discussion of the document. Melissa let the Board know that this document is still a work in progress and with the help of John Spang and Bob Congdon it is hoped that it will be ready to share for approval at the February meeting.
b. BoF Orientation for New Members Packet - Stacey Becker
   • Stacey Becker shared with the group the information on page 50 of the Meeting Packet. It shows a list of everything that is now in the BoF’s Drop Box in a folder named BoF New Member. The folder contains documents and links and easily can be added to or changed as time goes by.

c. BoF Policies – Melissa Lennon
   • Debt Management Policy –

   Ken Zachem motioned to accept the Debt Management Policy as presented and Stacey Becker seconded the motion

   During the discussion multiple errors were found.


   The Policy will be tabled until next month so that it can be reviewed and corrected.

   • The Reserve Policy was tabled until next month so there is ample time to review it.

d. FY18 Annual Report – Stacey Becker

   • Emails have gone out to all Town Hall Departments, Boards, Commissions, and Committees in Town with a set of guidelines to follow for submitting their reports. As information comes in, Stacey will place it in the Drop Box and notify members that it’s there.

   Melissa Lennon waived onto the agenda a motion to discuss the FY20 Budget. It was seconded by Ken Zachem. The motion carried.

e. FY20 Budget

   • On the topic of communication, there is some analytics on the Town’s web site, but no counter to know how many visit individual parts of the web site. The company has been contacted and an answer hasn’t been received.
   • Nancy Musa has requested a BoF budget that is due Feb. 19th, the next BoF meeting is Feb. 20th.
   • Bob Congdon shared what he learned at CCM – the fiscal state of the State is pretty grim with a 2-billion-dollar deficit. All towns should be on a unified chart of accounts. Towns push out their budgets schedules because the State won’t make its budget until after income taxes are due in April. The earliest the State
would have their budget is May. Delaying The Town budget schedule could help the Town make their budgets knowing what the State will be contributing.

- Bob shared two more points 1. elimination of the car tax will probably not be happening this year and 2. putting Teacher's Retirement on the towns will not happen this year; but both of these are likely to occur eventually.

Jerry Grabarek motioned to ask the Board of Selectmen to call a Town Meeting to move the Budget Schedule and Sandra Allyn- Gauthier seconded it. The motion carried.

12. New Business
   a. Election of Officers – Bob Congdon was asked to preside over this portion of the meeting.
      - Nominations were asked for Chairman – Ken Zachem nominated Melissa Lennon, Jerry Grabarek seconded, nominations closed. The vote was unanimous for Melissa Lennon for Chairman.
      - Nominations were asked for Vice Chairman - Ken Zachem nominated Jerry Grabarek, Sandra Allyn-Gauthier seconded, nominations closed. The vote was unanimous for Jerry Grabarek for Vice Chairman.
      - Nominations were asked for Clerk – Melissa Lennon nominated Stacey Becker, Sandra Allyn-Gauthier seconded, nominations closed. The vote was unanimous for Stacey Becker for Clerk.

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

   - Andy Depta commented that the guidelines the BoF presented and developed for the Annual Budget are excellent and can be used as a guideline for those same Departments, Boards, Commissions, and Committees to build their FY20 budgets. He also shared that when purchasing school buses, there be a clause that has “buy American” as part of the Town’s practices.

14. Adjourn

   At 9:08 Ken Zachem motioned that the meeting be adjourned and Sandra Allyn-Gauthier seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Lang
Recording Secretary
Kimberly Lang