Preston Board of Finance  
BoF Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 20, 2019 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 P.M.

Members
Melissa Lennon – Chair  
Jerry Grabarek – Vice Chair  
Stacey Becker – Clerk  
Ken Zachem  
Lennie Spencer seated for Sandra Allyn-Gauthier  
Ian Stammel seated for Keith Wucik

Absent
Sandra Allyn-Gauthier - excused  
Keith Wucik - excused

Also Present
Bob Congdon – 1st Selectmen  
John Spang – Finance Director  
Roy Seitsinger – Superintendent of Schools  
Andy Depta – public  
Ed Gauthier – Board of Education

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

No one chose to speak.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes

   a. February 26, 2019 – Special Meeting

      Stacey Becker motioned to accept the February 26th Minutes as presented. Jerry
      Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion carried with 3 abstentions: Ken Zachem,
      Lennie Spencer, and Ian Stammel.

   b. March 6, 2019 – Special Meeting

      Lennie Spencer motioned to accept the March 6th Minutes as presented. Jerry
      Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion carried with 2 abstentions: Ken Zachem,
      and Ian Stammel.

4. Correspondence


5. FY 18 Audit Report

   a. Acceptance of Report
Stacey Becker motioned to accept the FY18 Auditor’s Report. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Follow Up on Considerations for Improvement –

Melissa Lennon reviewed the following points that were brought up during the FY18 Audit Report given by Sandra Welwood.

i. Formal Monthly & Annual Close-Out Process on Bullet Check List – Sandra Welwood will provide a sample checklist that’s specific to Preston.

ii. Capital Assets Detail List (BoE & Town) – Ian Stammel shared that Ledyard is working on this now and that the State has an RFP for a vendor; so, it may be an item that should be budgeted.

iii. Interfund Activity Reconciliation between Funds – Currently Preston uses QuickBooks for tracking.

iv. Bank Accounts Reconcile Monthly with Documentation (sign & date) – This action is key to ensure that all accounts are properly maintained.

v. Segregation of Duties (books reviewed by someone outside the department – date & sign) – This action ensures proper checks and balances on the different Town accounts.

vi. Grant Accounting – Town is to do p.5 in the Single State Audit

vii. PRA – Present Financials to BoF – It’s important that this is done.

viii. Unified Chart of Accounts (UCOA) – Preston is not in compliance with this State statute at this time. Switching to Munis, which is costly software, could make the process easier. Bob Congdon shared that Colchester just signed on with Munis for $200,000 for two years. John Spang shared that several small towns are looking into the possibility sharing the cost to purchase Munis.

6. Town Revenue Status & Financial Reports –

No written report was available. John Spang shared there’s good indication that the Town will end above budget in revenues. It will be important to keep an eye on home sales which is a good indicator of how healthy the economy is. Presently, Preston home sales are down by 25%.


John Spang explained that the unfilled teaching position will remain unfilled for the school year, a savings of $62,199. John also shared that savings from two out-of-district placements, which returned in district will be less than originally reported due to the hiring of two paraeducators who are working successfully with the students. The revised savings will be about a $107,000. John also shared that there still are difficulties covering all the busing needs due to a shortage of drivers in the area. The situation is being addressed by having area companies assist with transportation needs. $70,000 has been spent this year on outsourced
b. Capital Projects Update

John reported that the bids were opened yesterday for both the PPMS Lockers and the Playground Resurfacing projects. It is hoped that they are awarded at the next BoE meeting. PPMS Science Labs are moving forward with plans to have that completed this summer.

c. BoE Finance Committee Update

Melissa Lennon shared that the BoE will be meeting Monday to finalize their budget.

8. Board of Selectmen Financial Report


Bob Congdon shared that 53% of the budget has been spent and that the Town is still in good shape. It’s looking like $100,000 -120,000 will be returned to the Town.

   b. Capital Projects Updated

Bob Congdon reported that the bid for the roadside mower was awarded and came in slightly under budget, a savings for the town. It should arrive in mid to late summer. He also shared that the RFP for the Fire Tanker Truck went out and bids are due in 1½ months.

   c. Fire Department Staffing

No movement until funds are deposited with the Town Treasurer.

The Ledyard Police Department is making a presentation to both the Board of Selectmen and the Public Safety Committee tomorrow at 7pm. All are invited.


No report was received or shared.

10. Preston Redevelopment Agency

Bob Congdon shared that a good portion of their budget has been spent. He also reported that the Coastal Permit has been approved, which means they can move forward with remediation and hopefully can be done as planned.

11. Unfinished Business

Jerry Grabarek motioned to move item 11c. FY20 Budget forward in the agenda, KenZachem seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

   c. FY20 Budget

      i. Budget Calendar
Melissa Lennon shared a proposed schedule of Special Meetings to review and approve BoE and BoS Budget Proposals. After a discussion and checking of calendars for possible conflicts the following was decided: Wednesday, April 3, 2019 Special Meeting to review General Government Budget Proposal and the Local Revenue Estimates; Special Meeting Thursday, April 11, 2019 to review Education Budget Proposal and to set the date for Public Hearing; Regular Meeting of BoF Wednesday, April 24, 2019.

Stacey Becker motioned to move item 12 a. Schedule Planner Update (Planning & Zoning Commission) forward in the agenda, Ken Zachem seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Schedule Planner Update (Planning & Zoning Commission)

Melissa Lennon shared the Board of Finance's summary table from the Schedule Planner and asked Bob Congdon for clarification on the subject. He shared that for most items listed in the Schedule Planner, the BoF needs to wait until the BoS or the Conservation and Agricultural Commission makes a request before any action can be taken. Melissa said she would revise the document accordingly and forward it back to Kathy Warzecha on behalf of the Board.

a. Auditor RFP -Select Special Meeting Date to Review Bids

John Spang spoke about the importance of an RFP Assessment scoresheet and need for a record of how the decision was made. The Board discussed the Assessment scoresheet and made adjustments. Melissa Lennon shared that she and John would open the bids at 2 P.M. March 21st and do the initial vetting. Once that is done, she would send the members the bids so that they can reviewed them before the Special Meeting on April 3rd at which time the Board will discuss the Audit RFP. Members were asked to bring potential interview questions for auditing firms to the Special Meeting on April 3rd.

b. FY18 Annual Report – status update

Stacey Becker reported that 23 reports have been received from the various Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Offices in Town; and that 5 reports have not been received. It is hoped that those will come in before the Annual Report is completed. She has edited all the reports as they have come in and uploaded them to Drop Box. Ian has standardized the formatting and compiled the information so that it's one cohesive document. Both Stacey and Ian are pleased with the response from those reporting and the progress made thus far. The goal is to have the final report ready for the regular meeting on April 24th.

c. PVMS Pump House

No invoice has yet been received and no update.

12. New Business

No other new business was brought before the Board
13. Public Comment & Questions (per posted Town Ordinance)

Andy Depta shared that items placed on the Schedule Planner should be something that can be completed in a timely manner. He also spoke of the need for due diligence when reviewing the BoS and the BoE budgets and that they'll need to be looked at carefully. An increase of $400,000 is a 1 mill increase and perhaps it needs more than one night to make the best decisions for the Town. He did not want to see the Board of Finance leave the budget up to the residents to decide. He wanted to see the Board spend time with the budgets.

14. Adjourn

Stacey Becker motioned to adjourn at 8:40, Ian Stammel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]

Recording Secretary
Kimberly Lang