Town of Washington

Board of Finance

September 21, 2020

Present: Members: Michael Jackson, Ted Bent, Craig Schoon, Sally Cornell, Matt Cain, Barbara Brown,

 Alternates: Phyllis Allen, Liz Fenton

 Selectmen: Jim Brinton.

 Treasurer: Linda McGarr

 Guest: Megan Bennett, Nicole Grant

Chairman Michael Jackson called the zoom meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes by Ted Bent, seconded by Craig Schoon and unanimously approved.

**Education**: Meghan Bennett, Superintendent of Region #12 reported:

* Washington had 34 newstudents with 31 at Washington Primary and 3 at Shepaug

 They receive 4 new applications over the weekend.

* There is an additional kindergarten, first grade classroom, and third grade has 23 students and they are divided when possible.
* Staff members were repurposed so they did not have to hired any new staff.
* Trying to be resourceful because COVID has been very expensive
* Thank you to the Town of Washington for the purchase of tents at Shepaug
* Roxbury had 29 new students and Bridgewater had 5 new students Total through region is 68
* Agri-Science is an additional 27 new student.
* Washington Primary had new air conditioning system that was wired for last fiscal year which helps with the COVID requirements.
* Shepaug had a new HVAC System. This was not a response to COVID but part of their response plan. The region was able to pay for the system without taking out a Ban.
* We were head of the curve on technology and devises. All students have devises. WIFI has been a little trouble but the state has given hot spots to use.
* The schools are fully open and a family has the choice to learn distant. All classroom has web cameras. All students at home have access to the teachers. Teachers use mask and distance and if needed shields.
* All students are 6 feet apart. Classrooms have no more than 16 and depending on the size it may be 8. For larger classes they have used the cafeteria and the auditorium. In the middle school the student stays in the rooms and the teachers rotate.
* We are lucky for where we are. It is a wonderful community that has told our children what to expect and they have done it in a most positive, responsible, and respectful way.

Per Nicole Grant, Region #12 Financial Director reported:

* They are in the process of accessing grants from the State of Connecticut. One grant They have applied for is shared with the private schools. One private school has declined based on the challenges with the requirements of the federal funds. These grants will help with the PPE that is needed. But will not get us what we need for the entire year.
* The second round of grants is about $230,000. These will be used to offset transportation and staffing cost. She is watching staff concerns as things shift with student and staff needs.
* Large concern is with unemployment on staff that have left and have filed for unemployment The Region will be charge since it is self-insured with respect to unemployment. Currently paying 4 times the usually amount. Unanticipated and unbudgeted.
* Departments are being careful with their budgets and are tighten their belts.
* Region #12 budget is down in 2020-2021 from 2019-2020 due to increase in income received.

**Tax Collector Report:** Collection has been doing well. Per Jim Brinton, First Selectman conversation with the tax collector collection went better than the previous year.

**Treasurer Report**:

* Nothing new to report
* Funds transfer were made into National Iron Bank due to better rates and their ICS coverage

**Selectman**: First Selectman reported;

On Personnel:

* Michelle Gora has resigned her position on the Board of Selectmen to become the New Economic Development Director.
* The new Board of Selectman is Dean Seargent. He was sworn in last Thursday.
* Dan Kenny is the new Assessor replacing the retiring Delisse Locher

Other Matters:

* In the 2019-2020 fiscal year the economic development went over their budget due to project expense to help business due to COVID -19. There will have to be an ex-budget request to the Board of Finance. This request will be done once the audit is done.

**Financial Reports**:

* An updated June financial report shows an overage of $875,543. This is a preaudit number. The numbers will change slightly with the audit. This estimate brings our fund balance close to 7 million. Some of the fund balance is restricted to Legal Litigation and Health Benefits but majority is unrestricted.
* In current budget we may have some overages in salary line items due to the requirement of us having to pay the unemployment on prior employees who are on unemployment. Municipalities are self-insured for unemployment.

**Old Business:** No Comments

**New Business:** No Comments

A motion to adjourn at 5:46 by Michael Jackson, seconded by Ted Bent and unanimously approved.

**Next Meeting: October 19, 2020 at 5:00 by zoom**

 Respectfully submitted,

 Linda Kennedy Gomez Financial Administrator