

Town of Washington
Board of Finance
December 18, 2023
Minutes are subject to the Approval of the Board of Finance

Present: Members: Craig Schoon, Ted Bent, Matt Cain, Elizabeth Fenton, Sally Cornell

Alternates:

Selectmen: James Brinton, First Selectman, Jay Hubelbank

Treasurer: Ashley Judson

Guest: William Fairbairn, Judy Gorra, Andrew Carron

Press: Ann Jamieson

Chairman Craig Schoon called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of November 27, 2023 by Ted Bent, seconded by Craig Schoon, and unanimously approved.

Tax Collector Report: Next round of Collection will be in January 2024.

Treasurer Report: No comments.

Selectman:

- Since sending out fact sheet information on the revaluation there have been less calls. There will be a lot of communication between the Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance is relationship to the mil rate. The assessor will have a feel what the grand list will be by the end of April after any appeal meetings are done.

Financial Reports:

- Many items are one-time expenditure which will make it over the 50% mark of budget at this time
- Interest is going to go over budget.
- The large department keep a close eye on their budgets like highway to make sure they will not go over.
- Land use is keeping real close eye on legal fees.

Education Report: The superintendent of Region #12 has resigned and Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue is interim until another superintendent found. There is a lot of discussion on the repairs of the elementary schools but nothing has been finalized. The three First Selectman from the regional towns have drafted a letter to the chairman of the Board of Education to have a more active role in the budgeting process.

Old Business: It was agreed that a policy was not necessary on the interest in the Non-Recurring Account but will be transfer each year after the audit as an annual process like clearing out Non-Recurring projects that were finished.

New Business:

A motion to approved 2024 Calendar by Ted Bend, seconded by Craig Schoon, and unanimously approved. Note: Extra Meeting in May 2024

Guest: William Fairbairn, Chairman of the Housing Trust spoke about the Affordable Housing Plan.

- The plan states 30 Units of Affordable Housing to be built by 2027.
- We have 37 units of multi- family housing which included 12 units of senior housing.
- They develop 3 stand alone housing by the New Preston Fire House
- The Baldwin Hill donation of 4 acres will only be able to have 1 family home. The Trust applied for the HTCC grant money from the state. It is based on a point system, which the Trust failed to receive because The Town does not have municipal sewer and water. Working on another source of funding from Department of Housing.
 - Building cost are \$450,000 and the sale will be to someone at 80% medium income which will make the sale price around \$250,000. The Trust will have to raise money and possible funds from the town to cover the difference.
- Currently working with a generous donor that is to donation 30 acres
- The Trust will be coming back to the Housing Commission for funds for the engineering to see what the possibilities of what can be built on the 30 acres.
- The projection of Washington fulltime population will decline by 30% by 2040. Housing demands will continue. The projection is that most of the housing will be for part time and weekenders.
- We need downsizing housing for the elderly and housing for young people that can take on a lot of our volunteerism.
- The Housing Trust has been able to build what they have on donation. We are hoping the donation will continue.
- Legislation statue 8-30G – If a developer comes to town and makes 30% of the units affordable housing with 50% at 80% of medium income and 50% at 60% medium income he does not have to follow any zoning regulations only public health codes and traffic. Fairfield county has been fighting this.
- Statue 8-30G was used at the Vincent property when it was split. The units are restricted to the 60/80/100 medium income which the Trust manages
- The way to get around the statue is to have 10% of your housing stock affordable.
- The state has funds for Affordable Housing but the towns have to put money up to show their interest. The State also likes to fund housing project near public transportation, i.e. railways.
- In Washington majority of those working in town live out of town (75%)

Public Comment: No Comments

A motion to adjourn at 5:52 by Craig Schoon, seconded by Ted Bent and unanimously approved.

Board of Finance meeting January 22, 2024 at 5:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kennedy Gomez
Finance Director