# Board of Finance

**February 23, 2015**

Present: Members: Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon, Sarah Cornell, John Boyer, Barbara Brown, And Lisabeth Adam

Alternative: Keith Templeton, Ted Bent

Selectmen: Richard Carey, Jay Hubelbank

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

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

**Minutes:** Minutes of the January 26, 2015 meeting were approved with the change of the change of Michael Johnson to Michael Jackson.

**Tax Collector report:** Question on tax report by Ted Bent requesting clarification on the sub section or “suspended” section. There is a difference between above and below the suspended line. Above being the grand year list and the tax that was supposed to be collected and below is the tax that has not been collected. It was asked when they are written off. Per Michael Jackson it is up to the tax collector to make that decision. It was mention that the tax collector possibly could come in and does her annual report.

**Treasurer Report:** A question was asked by Barbara if it was reviewed about the money at Union Savings. Michael responded about an annual letter from Union Savings basically stating that nine and a half million dollars is secured by AAA rated governmental securities and held in the Trust department. The trust department is separate from the bank so if the bank goes bankrupt the town is safe. The town did that when that much money was left at the bank.

**Selectman:** Mark Lyon on vacation No Selectman report

**Financial Report:** Question on Utilities for the fire department for the month was staggering. Michael said he would check with Mark. Linda stating she would look and e-mail Michael the next day. Possible a timing thing. It was mention to keep our fingers cross on winter maintenance. No other questions.

Board of Education: Tony Bedini Reported. They have not had board meeting due to snow but were having one that night.

* The will be approving a state grant for transitioning to the new Common Core Standards. The amount is unknown
* They will be accepting the audit report at the meeting
* They will be a authorizing an expenditure of $292,418 from the elementary capital non –recurring fund to repair the approved list of items for the elementary school which has been approved by Selectman’s and facility committee. That money has accumulated from $100,000 that was approved each year.
* Approve the application to the state for the Agriscience STEM Academy
* Two Bill to be approve through the Legislation
  + The proposed Bill # 5683 to the General assembly for 95% reimbursement rate for the Agriscience
  + The proposed Bill #5676 to the General Assembly for a grant for the Agriscience
* Kindergarten registration numbers are in; Washington Primary 15, Booth Free School 8, Burnham School 6, Total of 29 which does not make up for the kids that have graduated
* Prowda’s new projected enrollment to 2024 has been released and available that we have 747 projected is 452. Interesting report
* Fitch has given Region # 12 an AA+ bond rating.
* Not aware of any plan for STEM or repair of science labs or any other plans. There is talk about a new referendum to fix the science labs. The Science labs are in a deplorable state. It is expensive to repair. There is talk, just talk to have a referendum for 2 to 3 million dollars or less to do all the science labs. Michael asked if they will present all the cost to refurbish the entire science lab and the rest of high school to the towns. Tony said no. Tony said in the past they tried with an audit of the high school that was 25 Million over 7 years that did not go over so well they tried 8.1 million referendums and that did not go over. The 25 million costs are still there but are trying to present a plan that will work. Michael asked is the board of education could come up with the aggregated number as opposed to what it will cost for each year. Libby asked if they will try to tie the science labs into the Agriscience. Tony said no because they will be on other side of the school. Tony said they visited other Agriscience which are large facilities. There is talk that they are going to add a few classes at a time but not sure how that will work.

**Old Business:**

1. Acceptance of the 2013-2014 audits that was presented last meeting. Unanimously accepted.
2. Discussion on board vacancy for alternate position; Candidates are Michelle Gorra and Peter Arturi. The history of the Board of Finance is to keep a balance between republicans and democrats the balance will keep the board of finance from becoming politicalized. Both candidates are democrats. Peter Arturri was the democratic recommendation. Concern that Michelle Gorra being on the Board of Education may be a conflict. She would have to excuse her from some votes such as the budget vote. There would have to be clarity on her two roles. Peter Arturi has a great record and exceptional individual per Michael Jackson. Ted stated that it was brought up that Michelle would bring a strong voice for the school system but was concern of the conflict and Peter is such a strong candidate he would have to go with Peter. Barbara’s concern that Michelle being a very vocal member of the Board of Education and then when you bring her on to the board of finance often times us are cross sayers. Michael asked that if people who want to vote for Peter raised their hand and it was unanimous. If a time comes that Michelle is not on the Board of Education she would be a prime candidate for the Board of Finance.

New Business:

* Discussion was brought up about the state requiring the towns to pay 100% of the resident trooper’s salary and benefits. The total budget this year is 300,000 with 124,000 for the resident trooper. Per Jay Hubelbank, the selectman is looking into the issue. Other towns share but you may not always get the same trooper on duty. Per Ted this would not be favorable for our town with all the new issues of break-in and such.
* Liddy Adams discussed that coming down the pike from the state that the Secretary of State wants to eliminate the registrar system for voter registration. They want the town clerk to hire an assistant that will be the only registrar. Then they want to regionalize the registrar system so it will share a registrar with other towns. The registrar system could become very expensive since registrars in Hartford make $90,000 a year. The Secretary of States reasoning for the change was because of all the errors in the state at the last election and the Secretary of State is under fire to change the system. It will no longer be an elected position. There will not be one for each party.
* Craig Schoon on the Pension, Craig, Barbara and Ted met with the USB in reference to the pension. Union Savings Bank is doing well. USB return has been 9.7% for the last three year. The ration is still 60 – 40 and they are very responsible.

The meeting was motioned to adjourn at 5:37

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kennedy Gomez

Financial Administrator