# Board of Finance

**March 16, 2015**

Present: Members: Michael Jackson, Sarah Cornell, John Boyer, Barbara Brown, and Lisabeth Adam

Alternative: Keith Templeton, Peter Arturi

Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Richard Carey

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

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

**Minutes:** Minutes of the February 23, 2015 meeting were approved with no changes

**Tax Collector report:** No questions

**Treasurer Report:** No Questions

**Selectman:** Per Mark Lyon, year to date budget figures are looking right on track. We will be looking at overage on winter maintenance. We will be finishing up on the budget. No one has come in and asked for a lot of money. There are a number of things in the legislature in Hartford. One, is the resident trooper which could go up by $60,000. The resident trooper issue had come up 3 –4 years ago and was defeated. It is being oppose by CCM cost and the police union. Not sure how it will turn out. The board of selectman has asked him to look at alternatives. There are a couple more fees that will be added into our expense. The governor hold municipality harmless and the projected revenue statutory grants from the state will be down over $9,000. Other pending items is the registrar of voters. Not sure if would affect the budget but it will do away of the two party system. This comes from the Secretary of State. Also, there is a senate bill that there would be a uniform statewide mill rate on car taxes. It would increase the mill rate on cars to 29% and the tax would go to Hartford and then be redistributed to the towns. No feel on the budget at this time.

Guest: Tony Bedini and Dan Sheer from the subcommittee of the economic planning committee have come to the Board of Finance meeting to present a proposal for an economic development firm. They presented to the Board of Selectmen earlier in the month to request funds for the 2015-2016 budget for the economic development firm. Michael asked if the Selectman had made a decision on the economic development request. Mark said not at this time, but it involves a healthy chunk of change and that is why the committee was presenting to the Board of Finance.

As presented by Dan Sheer

* A hand out was presented
* It is clear that towns are struggling economically, which is not a new experience.
* Two fundamental issues
  + There is a lack of coordination among all of the organization that drive the wellbeing of the communities
  + There appears to be opportunities for grants that are not being fully taken advantage of. They are both Federal and State. There is a substantial amount of money if you know your way through the road maps to secure them
* This is a shared problem in the northwestern part of state
* There is a program in the northwest corner which included 8 towns. That have put together and secured a grant to hire an outside organization that will come and lead them through a 2 year development program design to 1. fix the economic development program and 2. Show the towns how to do the program so they can do it going forward. The Washington committee asked if they could join but where told no, it was too late. So they have been negotiating with the organization to allow us with our own funding to participate with the learning that is going on with the 8 towns. The program is being executed by a company called Gorman and York.
* Gorman and York operates in two arenas.
  + Real estate development. They are committing to help finding tenant for retail space.
  + Provide coordination and planning in the economic develop arena This is what we want to tackle ourselves.
* Fundamental Wants
  + Want to develop and learn proper coordination. How to network between schools, business etc. To create the traffic for a continues stream of revenue
  + Finding their way through the landscape of grants
  + Create a committee made up of the commission here and the community at large. 10-15 people.
* They want to hire Gorman & York to school us for two years at 55,000.00 per year This is a month to month contract with 30 day cancellation if it does not work
* The committee would report quarterly on the progress. If not getting to where they want to be they can stop.
* Once the two years is up they would have the skills to continue.
* They have asked people in the community for financial support and the response is that they will not support operations but would support for opportunity. The want to see progress and commitment before they will support.
* Michael would like see community support so they will have the benefit of their experience which are not on many of the town committees now. Michael asked what Gorman & York’s success rate is. Michael asked should we bring in other towns or will that cause issues on who gets what when.
* Gorman & York have had success in upper New York and in other towns.
* Michael suggested that the reporting should be made open to the community not just to committees in the town hall.
* They have had stakeholder meetings with many in the town be involved.

This will be a new line item in the 2015-2016 budgets if approved by the selectman.

**Financial Report:** Question on the general fund finance was on the equity account legal housing authority. It would have been an audit adjustment which we will check with Ricco of what it is for.

Question was on the heating oil monthly variance being large. Sometimes the timing of the purchase will affect the monthly budget. The general fund reporting has change to give the board more information

**Board of Education:** Tony reported that the Board of Education budget is up tenths of a point. Washington portion is up slightly. They are going ahead with the Agriscience program and will be applying to the state. A referendum will be coming down the pike for the Agriscience and science lab improvement. Michael asked when we would have final numbers on the agriscience? Tony said possibly June. Michael said we received The board of education final audit and they were going to have a meeting on some economic questions.

**Old Business:** None

New Business: Mark thought the 2015-2016 budget should be ready to present the first week of April.

The meeting was motioned to adjourn at 5:27

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kennedy Gomez

Financial Administrator