

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 23, 2021**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. via GoToMeeting by Chairman Thomas Harrison. Members present: Chairman Thomas Harrison, Vice Chairman/Secretary Catherine Durdan, Ellen Retelle, Cathy Salchert, Katrina Marin, Margaret Bratton, and Ken Birk. A quorum was present.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Thomas Harrison.

**III. COMMUNICATION FROM THE AUDIENCE - None**

**IV. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS:**

**June 28, 2021 Meeting**

Page 3, last paragraph, insert “at the next meeting, and if cancelled” between “discussion” and “at a future meeting.”

On a motion made by Katrina Marin, seconded by Ellen Retelle, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance approves the minutes of the June 28, 2021 Meeting as amended. Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Bratton, Salchert, Retelle, Durdan, and Marin voted in favor.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

On a motion made by Ellen Retelle, seconded by Katrina Marin, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance run the meeting by Robert’s Rules of Order.

Ms. Retelle commented that a motion was made, it has been seconded so now we have to vote on the motion to discuss the topic on the floor, depending on the vote. She added that we have to vote on it because it is not listed on the agenda. She commented that if this item can be on the next agenda in September, then she will withdraw her motion. Chairman Harrison responded that the Board could do that and sought clarification on the agenda topic. Ms. Retelle noted that the item would be that the Board of Finance uses Robert’s Rules of Order as a parliamentary procedure to run their meetings. Mr. Robertson noted that unless a Board decides otherwise, you are operating under Robert’s Rules of Order. He asked how the Board feels they are not currently operating under Robert’s Rules of Order; from a staff perspective, without knowing what the issue is in terms of any deviation from Robert’s Rules, he does not know what resources are needed to address the unknown concerns. Chairman Harrison noted that it was always a general understanding that Robert’s Rules was out there but not formally adopted on any of the Boards that he has served on in Avon. Ms. Retelle responded that the Town Charter says we default to Robert’s Rules; we have a large agenda tonight and is willing to wait and share her ideas about Robert’s Rules and how it is or isn’t run during these meetings at the September meeting. Ms. Durdan asked Ms. Retelle to send information to the entire Board in advance so they have an idea of what will be discussed, with a copy to the Town Manager’s Office, of which Ms. Retelle agreed. Ms. Retelle noted that these concerns have already been shared with Chairman Harrison. Mr. Robertson noted that we could have the Town Attorney attend, perhaps the Town Clerk, and have a seminar on Robert’s Rules of Order. Ms. Retelle responded that having a seminar on Robert’s Rules is an excellent idea and expressed thanks. Ms. Retelle withdrew her motion.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**21/22-01 Supplemental Appropriation: Board of Education-Open Choice, \$166,054**

In response to an inquiry from Mrs. Bratton, Susan Russo, Business Manager, Avon Public Schools, responded that the State's report doesn't necessarily reflect the actual revenues collected; the District collected \$706,054 along with \$120,000 through the Early Beginnings Grant for a total in unanticipated revenue of \$166,054.

On a motion made by Ellen Retelle, seconded by Katrina Marin, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance hereby amends the FY 20/21 Budget by increasing:  
**REVENUES**

General Fund, Intergovernmental, Education Program Grants, Account #01-0330-43343 in the amount of \$166,054.00 and increasing

**APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund, Board of Education, BOE Expenses, Account #01-9401-55000 in the amount of \$166,054.00 for the purpose of funding school programs and special education needs.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Marin, Retelle, Salchert, Durdan, and Bratton voted in favor.

**21/22-02 Appropriation: Additional Flow at the Farmington Wastewater Treatment Plant, \$347,778.71**

Mr. Robertson reported that detail has been provided to the Board, including a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding. In response to inquiries from Ms. Retelle, Mr. Robertson responded that this is the end of the disagreement that Avon had with Farmington; we reached an agreement with Farmington that he can recommend; it has not been appropriated in the budget, hence the request for this appropriation as we could not anticipate the need to buy the additional flow when the Board adopted the FY 22 and referred it to referendum; the AWPCA and the Town Council have unanimously provided their approvals; and in terms of the nature of the agreement, it would not be on the agenda if he did not recommend it which he does.

Ms. Salchert noted that the payment release past claims based on the 1995 upgrade and calculated based on what they consider the flow to be currently and what Avon is looking for. In response to inquiries from Ms. Salchert, Mr. Robertson responded that we have not yet started the actual billing system, contingent on both towns entering into the agreement; with the 2016 plant expansion, Avon is responsible for 16.38% of the net project costs and will be budgeted in the budget going forward. Mr. Baril noted that we made our first payment last November, approximately \$460,000; there is printed schedule that takes into account the interest charges and twenty year payback starting in last November. Mr. Robertson clarified that we are buying an additional 125,000 gallons of flow per day to bring us up to a total possible limit of 725,000 gallons; we calculate the cost based on a formula included in the original agreement in 1970 and one of the variables in that agreement is the expansion and upgrade costs; rather than using the 2016 costs in the formula, we are using the cost from the last time that the plant was upgraded and expanded in 1995. He added that there has been a dispute about the operating and maintenance charges that have been charged to Farmington; it would be virtually impossible to unwind those claims, we could not reconcile it without incurring more costs likely than those back charges are worth so we agreed to a cross release of those claims looking back and moving forward with the town engineers working together to develop a process.

Mrs. Bratton commented that this has been going on awhile and it prevents a lawsuit; she trusts Town staff, the other boards approved, and the money is there. She agrees with the request being made tonight.

In response to an inquiry from Ms. Salchert, Mr. Robertson responded that there is no lawsuit pending. He noted that if the Board doesn't approve this then you may as well appropriate funding in the same amount to go to court. In response to a question from Mrs. Marin, Mr. Robertson responded that both towns are entering this on good faith and we will work together to try and avoid another possible stale mate situation. Mr. Baril commented that when we worked together to draft the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) we had initially put in there that if the town engineers could not come to terms that we would mutually pay

for a third party engineer and consulting firm to do that and Farmington did not accept and it was stricken from the MOU and we felt the rest of the issues on the MOU being addressed outweighed that particular clause being cut out.

On a motion made by Ellen Retelle, seconded by Margaret Bratton, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance hereby appropriates a sum not to exceed \$347,778.71 from Sewer Fund, Other Financing Sources, Unassigned Fund Balance, Account #05-0390-43913, to Sewer Fund, Sewage Collection & Disposal, Town of Farmington, Account #05-3205-52195 for additional flow at the Farmington Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Bratton, Retelle, Salchert, Durdan, and Marin voted in favor.

**21/22-03      Transfer of Appropriation: Emergency Drainage Improvements, \$70,121**

Mr. Baril reported that back in 2011 the Town had an incredible rain storm which created a storm drainage issue in the area of Eddy Street and caused erosion that undermined an existing sanitary sewer interceptor pipe and broke it causing raw sewage to spill; we mobilized and were able to stop the flow within a few hours which was great; to remedy, we put in a new sewer pipe, backfilled over the top of it, and extended the drainage down a very steep slope. He reported that we fast forward to today where we just experienced two days of incredible rain events in Avon; and back in July we had another event that took out a 30" oak tree that was part of the original remedy, undermined it, fell, and caused the rest of the storm drainage system to collapse; we were alerted very quickly, took action, and through emergency repairs we backfilled with boulders and armored the embankment, brought the pipe much further down the slope and remedied the situation to a point where we believe it is impenetrable. He added that we found existing capital projects that we could pull money from to pay for this emergency bill.

On a motion made by Ellen Retelle, seconded by Margaret Bratton, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance hereby amends the FY 21/22 budget by transferring, \$10,000 from Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Town CIP-Facil/Drainage Imp., Drainage Improve-Cider Brook Road, Account #02-4830-53002; \$32,000 from Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Town CIP-Facilities, Reconstruct Tillotson Road, Account #02-4829-53056; \$20,000 from Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Town CIP-Facil/Road Overlay, Chidsey Drainage, Account #02-4831-53399; and \$8,121 from CNREF, CNREF:Town, Secret Lake Drainage Project, Account #03-4930-53367; to Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Town CIP-Facil/Drainage Imp., Drainage Improvements, Account #02-4830-53074; for emergency drainage work costing \$70,121.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Retelle, Salchert, Durdan, Bratton, and Marin voted in favor.

**21/22-04      Supplemental Appropriation: Land Protection Assistance Grant from Lower Farmington River & Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Committee, \$3,000**

On a motion made by Margaret Bratton, seconded by Ellen Retelle, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance hereby amends the FY 21/22 Budget by increasing:

**REVENUES**

General Fund, Intergovernmental, DEP / Farmington River Trail, Account #01-0330-43323 in the amount of \$3,000.00 and increasing:

**APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund, Parks, Services – Other, Account #01-5201-52189, in the amount of \$3,000.00, for the purpose of funding the clearing of a section of trail in Fisher Farms.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Bratton, Retelle, Durdan, Marin, and Salchert voted in favor.

**21/22-05      Supplemental Appropriation: State Historic Preservation Grant for Brian Jones Paleoindian Site, \$10,000**

Ms. Salchert noted that the Library has been doing a presentation about this site; it is fascinating.

On a motion made by Margaret Bratton, seconded by Ellen Retelle, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance hereby amends the FY 21/22 Budget by increasing:

**REVENUES**

General Fund, Intergovernmental, Misc. State Grant Receipts, Account #01-0330-43410 in the amount of \$10,000.00 and increasing:

**APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund, Town Manager, Service & Consultant, Account #01-1201-52184, in the amount of \$10,000.00, for the purpose of reviewing the archaeological site at Fisher Meadows to determine its candidacy for a state archaeological preserve designation.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Bratton, Salchert, Marin, Retelle, and Durdan voted in favor.

**21/22-06 Supplemental Appropriation: Inspection Services for Avon Village Center, \$5,293**

On a motion made by Margaret Bratton, seconded by Ellen Retelle, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance hereby amends the FY 21/22 Budget by increasing:

**REVENUES**

CNREF, Other Local Revenues, Refunds & Reimbursements, Account #03-0360-43612 in the amount of \$5,293.00 and increasing:

**APPROPRIATIONS**

CNREF, Avon Village Center, Service & Consultant, Account #03-4858-52184 in the amount of \$5,293.00, for the purpose of paying independent inspections services.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Salchert, Durdan, Retelle, Marin, and Bratton voted in favor.

**VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**A. Monthly Financial Report Summary**

Details were included in the packet report dated period ended 07/31/21 prepared and reported by Tom DiStasio.

**B. The Auditor's Communication with Those Charged with Governance**

The memo included in the packet dated July 6, 2021 from Vanessa E. Rossitto, CPA of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP to the Board of Finance has been received and reviewed.

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Retelle expressed appreciation for the background information that the Board receives for each of the motions as it makes it much easier to understand and efficiently vote on these items; please keep it coming and thank you for the hard work on the different items.

**IX. ADJOURN**

On a motion made by Ellen Retelle, seconded by Katrina Marin, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Messrs: Harrison, Birk, and Mmes: Bratton, Salchert, Marin, Retelle, and Durdan voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cathy Durdan, Vice Chair/Secretary

Attest: Jennifer Worsman, Clerk

All referenced material is available to the public in the Town Manager's Office.