

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 3 PRIMROSE STREET, NEWTOWN, CT  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Jordana Bloom, Alison Plante, Phil Carroll, Ryan Knapp, Judit DeStefano, Paul Lundquist, Chris Eide, Dan Wiedemann, Cathy Reiss, Dan Honan

**ABSENT:** Chris Smith, Andy Clure

**ALSO PRESENT:** First Selectman Dan Rosenthal, Finance Director Bob Tait, 0 public, 0 press.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Lundquist called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:33 pm.

**VOTER COMMENT:** None

**MINUTES:** Mr. Honan moved to accept the minutes of the May 5, 2021 Legislative Council Regular Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Carroll. All in favor. Motion passes (10-0).

**COMMUNICATIONS:** The Council was invited to attend the Parks & Rec pickle-ball fundraiser being held this evening, which unfortunately, conflicted with tonight's scheduled meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT:** First Selectman Dan Rosenthal reported that today was the first day of the Governor's mask mandate update and we chose to follow the same policy within the municipal center. We are no longer requiring vaccinated individuals to wear a mask if they choose not to. There were no issues today - we will try to work with everyone and no judgment is the most important thing. During this week's BOS meeting, a property swap within town without a dollar amount was discussed. There was also a property donation of 4.5 acres given on Beechwood Drive with a total assessed value of \$35,000 which is over the Charter amount requiring it to go to the BOF and Legislative Council. The First Selectman also commented on the activity happening at Newsylum Brewery on the Fairfield Hills campus. They just finished their outdoor pavilion. On a temporary basis, we licensed them for a one year period for the outdoor space leading up to the Stamford building. They will put up some additional fencing to better define their footprint. While there is a good vibe, we certainly want to try to control the presence of alcohol on the campus. Newsylum is now open Wednesday through Sunday until 9:00 pm. The work continues on the RFP on Fairfield Hills. There was an executive session on the BOS agenda and there was reference made on social media referring to the EDC meeting about the RFP on Fairfield Hills. For the record, while he can't say what the executive session was about, he can say it was not about Fairfield Hills. Ms. Plante asked for an update on the pond dredging at Rams Pasture. The First Selectman replied that the Town began the work on cleaning it out. We applied for a grant to help dredge the pond which we did not get. We will wait for another opportunity to apply for another grant. There was an invasive species discovered within the pond. The cemetery, who owns it, is engaging someone soon to come in to clean it out. The cemetery is also taking care of repairing some of the stonework.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Discussion and Possible Action*

- Tax Abatement for Volunteer Fire, Ambulance and Underwater Rescue Personnel

Mr. Knapp reported that the Ordinance Committee was asked to consider this increase after the state passed Public Act 19-36 which gave municipalities the discretion to increase the tax

abatement to municipal volunteers who perform fire and rescue efforts. Newtown was approached by the Board of Fire Commissioners through the First Selectman. We have participated in this since 2001. Once we had budget clarity and input from our Finance Director, it moved through quickly with a lot of support. Mr. Lundquist added that this is something that can be covered without any direct impact on taxpayers. He reviewed the abatement increases. *See attachment A.* The likely impact is about \$107,000. Mr. Wiedemann asked for clarity on how we will cover this expense going forward. Mr. Lundquist replied that going forward it would be part of the budget. Mr. Knapp added that this will likely be covered by grand list growth.

Ms. DeStefano moved that effective for the fiscal year subsequent to July 1, 2021, we amend the Tax Abatement schedule for Volunteer Fire, Ambulance and Underwater Rescue Personnel, in accordance with the provisions of Public Act 19-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes and the Newtown Code of Ordinances and further move to waive the reading of the full resolution. Seconded by Ms. Bloom. All in favor. Motion passes (10-0).

- Per Town Charter 7-05 designate the accounting firm Mahoney Sabol to audit the books and accounts of the Town relating to the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021

Ms. DeStefano moved that per Town Charter 7-05, we designate the accounting firm Mahoney Sabol to audit the books and accounts of the Town relating to the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Seconded by Ms. Plante. All in favor. Motion passes (10-0).

Mr. Wiedemann asked if we will RFP this back out since the 5-year contract will be up. Mr. Tait commented that we have some complicated recording requirements coming up through 2024 and it may behoove us to keep the same auditors but that will be requested at a later date.

#### *Discussion Only*

- Consideration of Excess General Fund Balance Adjustments

Mr. Lundquist began the discussion explaining that we are looking at \$1.37 million in excess over our 12% policy cap which is now available to be used for capital and non-recurring items. Those adjustments will be offsetting some of the budget reductions that have already been made by the BOF and Council. There are some additional items such as revaluation cost, pre-payment of internal vehicle leases, etc. while there will be some left for undesignated amounts around \$300,000 – future appropriations will handle this. Mr. Tait reviewed the spreadsheet. *See attachment B.* Ms. Reiss asked whether we'd want to leave more in the capital and non-recurring fund so there is less future bonding. Mr. Tait responded that he is confident that there are other items that will be flowing into capital and non-recurring, possibly undesignated. First Selectman Rosenthal added there will be money coming in from the Federal Government through the American Rescue Plan. There is potential to identify some other projects that qualify to use that money for. Mr. Tait said we will get clarification on those funds soon. Mr. Knapp asked if we would be able to utilize these funds to get ahead on lowering our debt service. Mr. Tait replied that the best way to reduce debt is to utilize this fund instead of bonding. We can reduce the principal interest payments this way, but we have to be careful because of the highs and lows – we cannot advance pay fund and interest payments because they are serial bonds. The First Selectman shared that the Reed Boiler which just got approved at \$1.5 million had the bid come in at approximately \$900,000 with an estimated rebate. This brought the amount down to approximately \$700,000 which is good news. Mr. Lundquist ended that there are some appropriations making their way through, and in the next meeting or two, this will be all wrapped up.

**VOTER COMMENT:** None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, Mr. Honan moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 pm. Seconded by Mr. Knapp. All in favor.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rina Quijano, Clerk*

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
AT THE NEXT MEETING.**

**RESOLVED**, that in accordance with the provisions of Public Act 19-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes and the Newtown Code of Ordinances, the schedule of abates available to municipal volunteers is hereby amended effective for the fiscal years subsequent to July 1, 2021, as follows:

| <b>Years of Service in Good Standing<br/>(preceding date of list certification)</b> | <b>Maximum Available Tax Abatement</b> |
|---|--|
| 2   | \$250                                  |
| 3   | \$500                                  |
| 4   | \$750                                  |
| 5   | \$1,200                                |
| 6   | \$1,600                                |
| 7 or more   | \$2,000                                |

**Town of Newtown - Use of Fund Balance Proposed - 2020-21**

**USE OF FUND BALANCE CALCULATION (based on fund balance policy 12% CAP)**

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| General Fund, Unassigned fund balance at June 30, 2020  | 16,366,000                      |
| Adopted Budget 2020-21                                  | 121,626,535                     |
| 12% of total budget                                     | 14,595,000                      |
| Amount over 12% fund balance policy                     | 1,771,000                       |
| Fund balance used in 2020-21 to date                    | (400,000)                       |
| Fund balance available for Capital & Non-Recuring items | (USE OF FUND BALANCE) 1,371,000 |

**PROPOSED CAPITAL & NON-RECURRING ITEMS FROM USE OF FUND BALANCE:**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>FROM 2021-22 BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:</b>   |           |
| BOF:  |           |
| Fire - capital  | 35,000    |
| Emergency Management - capital  | 9,300     |
| Transfer Station - capital  | 130,000   |
| Note: \$65,000 was budgeted for internal lease 1 of 2.  |           |
| Proposed to finance total amount (no lease 2 next year)   |           |
| Public Building Maintenance - capital   | 10,000    |
| Parks & Recreation - capital  | 28,000    |
| Board of Education - IT capital & building & sites projects   | 350,000   |
| LC :  |           |
| Transfer Out - Capital & Non-Recurring - capital  | 220,000   |
| Board of Education - IT capital   | 150,000   |
| <b>PROPOSED INTERNAL LEASE PAY-OFFS (from capital &amp; non-recurring line item):</b>   |           |
| PW - All season truck body replacement internal lease 2, 3 & 4  | 90,000    |
| (lease # 1 in 2021-22)  |           |
| P & R - Pick up truck with plow internal lease 4 & 5  | 20,000    |
| (Lease # 3 in 2021-22)  |           |
| Paying of future planned internal lease amounts will help reduce pressure on future capital & non-recurring line item budgets |           |
| <b>CAPITAL &amp; NON-RECURRING UNDESIGNATED AMOUNT</b>  | 303,700   |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>  | 1,371,000 |

| TOWN OF NEWTOWN   |                               |                                    |   |   |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 2021 - 2022 BUDGET - BOARD OF FINANCE RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS |                               |                                    |   |   |
| MEETING DATE: 03/04/2021                                      | 2021-2022 BUDGET<br>BOS / BOE | BOARD OF<br>FINANCE<br>ADJUSTMENTS | 2021-2022 BUDGET<br>BOARD OF FINANCE<br>RECOMMENDED | COMMENTS  |
| FUNCTION / DEPARTMENT / ACCOUNT                               | PROPOSED                      |                                    |   |   |
| <u>PUBLIC SAFETY</u>  |                               |                                    |   |   |
| <u>FIRE</u>   |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Capital   | 137,237                       | (34,497)                           | 102,740   | Capital adjustment is planned to be funded in the capital & non-recurring fund. Proposed funding will be the use of general fund, fund balance exceeding the fund balance policy of 12% (of total general fund expenditures). |
| <u>EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT</u>                                   |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Capital   | 9,300                         | (9,300)                            | -   |   |
| <u>PUBLIC WORKS</u>   |                               |                                    |   |   |
| <u>TRANSFER STATION</u>                                       |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Capital   | 65,000                        | (65,000)                           | -   |   |
| <u>PUBLIC BUILDING MAINTENANCE</u>                            |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Capital   | 10,000                        | (10,000)                           | -   |   |
| <u>RECREATION &amp; LEISURE</u>                               |                               |                                    |   |   |
| <u>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</u>                                 |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Capital   | 49,500                        | (28,000)                           | 21,500  |   |
| <u>CONTINGENCY</u>  |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Contingency   | 140,000                       | (25,000)                           | 115,000   | Contingency line item reduced to \$115,000  |
| <u>DEBT SERVICE</u>   |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Bond Interest   | 2,456,941                     | (12,274)                           | 2,444,667   | Adjusted to actual interest amount per amortization schedule. Bonds were sold on 03/03/2021.  |
| <u>BOARD OF EDUCATION</u>                                     |                               |                                    |   |   |
| Education   | 80,682,470                    | (489,491)                          | 80,192,979  | \$140,000 line item reduction.<br>\$29,491 reduction to IT capital equipment (see first comment)<br>\$320,000 reduction to building & site projects (see first comment)   |
| <b>TOTAL BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS</b>              | <b>124,608,397</b>            | <b>(673,562)</b>                   | <b>123,934,835</b>                                  |   |

say \$350,000

\*\*\*Yellow highlights = reductions in capital

## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

## 2021 - 2022 BUDGET - LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ADJUSTMENTS

MEETING DATE: 04/07/2021

| 2021-2022 BUDGET<br>BOARD OF FINANCE | LEGISLATIVE<br>COUNCIL<br>ADJUSTMENTS | 2021-2022 BUDGET<br>LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL<br>PROPOSED | COMMENTS |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------|
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------|

FUNCTION / DEPARTMENT / ACCOUNT

## OTHER FINANCING USES

TRANSFER OUT - CAPITAL &amp; NON-RECURRING

220,000

(220,000)

-

Planned capital items will still be financed by the Capital & Non-recurring fund. However the proposed source will be excess fund balance per the fund balance policy regarding the 12% CAP.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

EDUCATION

80,197,979

(495,281)

79,697,698

\$345,281 will be financed by NoVo and ESSER grants.  
\$150,000 in IT capital will be financed by the Capital & non-recurring fund with a proposed use excess fund balance per the fund balance policy regarding the 12% CAP.

## REVENUES ESTIMATES

## INVESTMENT INCOME

INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS

300,000

200,000

500,000

## CALCULATION OF MILL RATE

Change the tax collection rate from 99.2% to 99.3%

99.2%

99.3%

Change based on prior five years experience.

\*\*\* Yellow highlights = reductions in capital

**DEPARTMENT: RESERVE FOR CAPITAL NONRECURRING****ACCOUNT DETAIL**

**Reserve Cap & Non Recurring:** The requested \$220,000 comprises the following (in bold print):

**Public Works:****(1) Ten Wheel Dump Truck (replace)**

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| 2022-2023 planned | \$125,000 |
| 2023-2024 planned | \$125,000 |

**(2) Six Wheel Dump Truck**

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 2020-2021 appropriated | \$100,000 |
| 2021-2022 request      | \$120,000 |

**(2) All Season Truck Body Replacement (truck #3 & 15)**

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| 2021-2022 request (payment #1 of a 4 year internal lease) | \$30,000 |
|---|----------|

**Parks & Recreation:****Pick up Truck with plow (gas engine) (additional)**

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| 2020-2021 appropriated (payment #2 of a 5 year internal lease) | \$10,000 |
| 2021-2022 request (payment #3 of a 5 year internal lease)      | \$10,000 |

PAY-OFF FUTURE  
INTERNAL LEASE AMOUNTS  
(3 x \$30,000 = \$90,000)

**Court recoating (annual)**

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| 2021-2022 request | \$10,000 |
|-------------------|----------|

PAY-OFF FUTURE INTERNAL LEASE  
AMOUNTS (2 X \$10,000 = \$20,000)

**Fire:****Air Packs/Turnout Gear (annual)**

|                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| 2018-2019 appropriated | \$25,000 |
| 2019-2020 appropriated | \$50,000 |
| 2020-2021 appropriated | \$50,000 |
| 2021-2022 request      | \$50,000 |
| 2022-2023 planned      | \$50,000 |
| 2023-2024 planned      | \$50,000 |

| TOWN OF NEWTOWN   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|--|--|------------------|--|
| LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SPECIAL APPROPRIATION CAP CALCULATION |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
| FISCAL YEAR 2020-21                                       |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   | Most recently completed (signed) Grand List  |                             |  |  |  | \$ 3,268,796,611 |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   | 1 mill                                       |                             |  |  |  | \$ 3,268,797     |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   | Special appropriations occurring in 2020-21: |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   | 10/7/2020                                    | Bridge program              |  |  |  | \$ 400,000       |  |
|   |  | ETH project                 |  |  |  | \$ 268,000       |  |
|   |  | BOE COVID reimbursement     |  |  |  | \$ 400,000       |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  | \$ 1,068,000     |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   | In process                                   | High school turf & track    |  |  |  | \$ 765,000       |  |
|   |  |                             |  |  |  |                  |  |
|   |  | Amount available in 2020-21 |  |  |  | \$ 1,435,797     |  |