

**NORFOLK BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2021 MEETING**

Members present were: M. Sconyers, G. Allyn, N. Ritson and J. Tarrant.

Alternate members present were: S. Anderson and L. Battis.

S. Anderson was appointed to fill in for D. Torrey.

L. Battis was appointed to fill in for G. Mudge.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m. by M. Sconyers.

Minutes of the June 8, 2021 meeting were approved on a motion by J. Tarrant, second by S. Anderson and unanimously approved.

Under correspondence, the request by the Board of Education to use \$4,000 from the non-lapsing fund for showcase cabinets in the Hall of Flags was approved on a motion of N. Ritson, second by S. Anderson and unanimously approved.

Regarding the 2020-2021 End of Year Report, leaving aside money from the American Recovery Act, excluding that - \$48,000 was unspent and will go into the Positive Fund Balance. The Board had no questions for the year that ended June 30th.

2021-2022 Review: The First Selectman reported as far as the budget, the Town makes a double payment to Region 7 in August. Also the excavator is now paid off. The Town is pretty much on track. A couple of road projects needed to be delayed including North Colebrook Road due to lots of rain. The sidewalks on Route 44 were started yesterday and are moving along at a good clip. Outside help was brought in for this project, which is helping tremendously to speed it along, quite a bit is getting done per day. The paving contractor, Progressive Paving, is getting a lot done. It will cost a little more than originally planned but the work was absolutely needed. There have been issues with a couple of trucks. The First Selectman strives to ensure most of the maintenance is handled in the summer so everything is ready to go in September and October before the arrival of snow.

The First Selectman sent out a letter to all departments to watch their budgets particularly regarding wages. The Assessor left in June; an assessor is filling in from Goshen. She is only able to work in Norfolk one day per week but gets a lot done in eight (8) hours. The First Selectman is unsure in what direction to fill this vacancy going forward: possibly a Clerk with an Assessor overseeing the work done by the Clerk. It is important to stay on top to make sure all reports get filed with the State of Connecticut.

The American Recovery Act has 66 expenditure categories, such as public health, and services to impacted communities. Norfolk is classified as a non-entitlement unit just like most of the other Northwest towns. Paperwork is due to be filed by October 31, 2021 and once per year thereafter on what the plans are and what has been spent. Chairman Sconyers inquired how to solicit opinions from townspeople on how to spend these funds. M. Sconyers asked about forming a study group, stating it deserves careful thought. The First Selectman reported that is basically what the other towns are doing, forming committees, though other towns are getting a lot more money, some Towns are reviewing with attorneys to figure out how to spend it. The First Selectman agrees to forming a committee, but that it should not be too big, a representative from the EDC, BOF, Selectmen. M. Sconyers asked about a representative from Norfolk Foundation. Mr. Riiska indicated he is getting bombarded with emails and phone calls from groups that are non-profits, or agencies representing non-profits looking for "a cut" and that the Town has to be very careful. The First Selectman is open to suggestions, if anyone on the BOF has ideas on who should be on the committee they can send them in.

M. Sconyers took a quick canvas and asked S. Anderson if she is willing to participate, she has no problem serving as an alternate. M. Sconyers moved if a committee is formed that S. Anderson be involved, second by J. Tarrant, with S. Anderson abstaining, the motion was unanimously approved.

The First Selectman wants everyone to look at those 66 categories, some options are providing funding to hospitality, sewer, water and broadband. The First Selectman wants to hear from townspeople and welcomes input and opinions.

The first report is due 10/31/21, the funds will not be spent before that. Because of the size of the community, nothing else is due for another year. There are two (2) installments for the funds. Each year the Town will get \$241,199 for the next 2 years. The Town will have to state how it will spend the funds by 2024, and then has to spend the money by 2026.

M. Sconyers prefers that the American Recovery Act funds be placed in a separate account so there is no confusion and to ensure it is not part of the Positive Fund Balance.

The Treasurer Chelsea Byrne and Chairman Sconyers have been having meetings about the many other accounts. There are five (5) different cemetery accounts. The Treasurer, Chairman and First Selectman will meet in another 3-4 days.

The First Selectman reported that a lot of projects are ongoing; a big portion he is going out seeking funding. The Mountain Road bridge project did get approval; next step is to go out to bid. The River Place bridge engineer work should be completely done next month, then will go out to bid. The First Selectman is seeking reimbursement (at 80%) for another Mountain Road bridge at the opposite end. The First Selectman met with architects last Friday at the current Firehouse. He also met with an engineer for Maple Avenue and discussed options there. The next step is to figure out the cost and look for funding.

There was nothing under 2/3 vote.

There was no Public Comment.

On Motion of J. Tarrant, second by N. Ritson and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Ryan, Secretary