

**NORFOLK BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2025 MEETING**



Members present were: M. Sconyers, J. Bickford, M. Kwast, G. Mudge, J. Torrant and alternate L. Battis.

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by M. Sconyers.

L. Battis was appointed to fill in for S. Anderson.

The March 11, 2025 minutes were approved on Motion of M. Sconyers second by J. Bickford and G. Mudge and unanimously approved.

Chairman Sconyers raised the possibility of exploring a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program as there are a number of organizations in town that cannot make charitable contributions, but can make payments in lieu of taxes. The PILOT program is for tax exempt organizations. Chairman Sconyers would like to pursue approaching the Selectmen to obtain an opinion from the Town's attorney to understand how a PILOT program would work as well as exploring setting up a Fire District, which is how other towns, including North Canaan, fund their Fire Department. The Board approved both pursuits.

Treasurer's Summary: Thus far, the Town has collected more taxes than expected.

The First Selectman relayed that the legal line is over budget due to legal fees for Manor House's application to the PZC. A decision was made in 1995 as to how the Manor House could be used, which was approved in 1996. The Manor House's and the Town's attorneys are guiding the PZC on what occurred historically in 1995. The second phase of the River Place Bridge had to be refinanced. The Town hired Shipman & Goodwin as bond counsel.

The First Selectman presented the Selectmen's proposed Budget for 2025-2026. Shown on the Income Summary sheet, the Grand List is up considerably at approximately \$366,458,625, representing an increase of 29.83% from last year. Motor Vehicles have increased by approximately \$2,000,000 to \$19,620,830. New legislation effective October 1, 2024 allows for using Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price rather than NADA values.

The General Town Budget is up \$453,657, due in part to \$150,000 going into Capital Reserve (last year there were no funds set aside for this item); and funds for a replacement Dump Body truck part.

Region 7's Budget has decreased by approximately \$170,952. Botelle's budget has decreased as well. The total Education Budget is: \$4,467,294. The General Government Budget is: \$4,732,811. State revenue is: \$362,392. The reduced total budget is: \$3,941,063, less a Board of Finance adjustment of \$150,000. The total Budget/taxes to raise are: \$8,258,357.12 resulting in a Mill Rate of 22.54%.

The First Selectman fielded questions from the Board. Some relief is in place to individuals affected by the gas spill. LoCip funds have increased, and have been used in the past for lighting outside the Town Hall, for the Memorial Green lighting, and road repairs after the July 2023 floods, among other projects. The First Selectman is reapplying for federal funds towards the new firehouse.

Though there was concern raised regarding Town funds set aside to support City Meadow's operating budget, the Selectman's Budget was approved 5 in favor, 1 dissent to send to a Budget Hearing.

The Tax Collector's requests for reimbursements were informally approved without a formal vote.

There was nothing under 2/3 vote.

There were some questions from the Public. It was confirmed the Town has the money set aside for the temporary bridge on Old Goshen Road. A question was raised inquiring about the specific new motor vehicle tax formula and the deadline for Board of Assessment appeals.

On Motion of J. Tarrant, second by L. Battis and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Ryan

Jennifer M. Ryan, Secretary