

TOWN OF BOZRAH
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF FINANCE
ZOOM - VIDEO CONFERENCE
April 27, 2020

Item 1: Chairman Mike O'Connor called the Special Meeting of the Bozrah Board of Finance(BOF) to order on the Video Conference Application Zoom on April 27, 2020 at 7:00p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Mike O'Connor, Raymond Barber, Michel Leask, Phil Lavallee, Ann Chambers and Evan Gilman.

Others Present: First Selectman Carl Zorn, Selectman Bill Ballinger, Selectman Glenn Pianka, Town Treasurer Diana Santo, Town Clerk Lynne Skinner, Tax Collector Nancy Renshaw, BOE Jeanne Goulart, Financial Manager Sue Lyon, BOE Ruth Levy, Specialized Director Eileen Hargreaves and 14 members of the public.

Item 2: Public Comment

Town Clerk Lynne Skinner, commented on her pay decrease in the proposed budget.

Glenn Pianka, Fitchville Road, commented that a mil rate of 25 is responsible.

Item 3: Review of Comments Sent for the Budgets Presented

M. O'Connor noted the board received the public comments on the proposed budgets via email.

P. Lavallee noted the boards should keep costs as low as possible.

A. Chambers noted the boards should find a way to cut some costs so that taxes can be reduced for the town. She noted her worries for small businesses during this time with the closures due to COVID.

R. Barber presented the board with the Bozrah population stats. He noted that 62 of the 1,442 working Bozrah citizens are unemployed at this time. He noted the BOF should return both budgets to the boards for revising. He noted there should be no pay increases for either board and the mil rate should be reduced to 25 or lower. R. Barber also noted according to the newspaper many towns are not paying for the buses while they are not running and the BOE should reconsider paying the bus company 82%. He noted there should be an undesignated surplus of 10% because the state may not honor all commitments to the town or BOE.

E. Gilman noted the boards should revise and resubmit the budgets, cutting and reducing wherever they can. He noted his own business' struggle to provide for their employees during this time with COVID. He suggested they keep 5-6% in the undesignated fund balance.

M. Leask noted the boards need to be sensitive to the situation with COVID and should keep the budgets as frugal as possible. She noted a mil rate of 25 is too low and that salaries should stay the same for both boards.

M. O'Connor noted the boards should only spend what is absolutely necessary, regardless of what the last year's budget looked like. He noted only items that are specific for this fiscal year should be included in the budgets.. He noted 10% should be in reserve. He also noted that the Board of Education should look into the special education costs, as they are a large part of the budget.

Eileen Hargreaves, Specialized Director, presented the board with a "Best Case Projection" and a "Worst Case Projection" for the next 5 years of special education costs.

Attachment 1 and Attachment 2

Jeanne Goulart, BOE Chair, noted the Board of Education had met the Thursday before and did some work to lower the budget. M.O'Connor noted the BOE needs to cut everything that they can and revisit their budget.

Item 4: Approval of Budgets Presented or Changes Needed

MOTION 1: P. Lavallee made a motion to send the budgets back to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education for review and adjustments based on the comments from the Board of Finance. M. Leask seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - **MOTION CARRIED**

M. O'Connor noted the boards will meet back in two weeks on May 11, 2020 with the revised budgets.

Item 5: Public Comments

Michel Leask, Scott Hill Road, commented on her appreciation for the work done on both boards.

Annie Chambers, Wawecus Hill Road, commented that the school could be regionalized.

Item 6: Adjourn

MOTION 2: A. Chambers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45p.m. R. Barber seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted for the Board,

Heather Barber
Recording Secretary