

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 24, 2024**

1. Call to Order

Michael Parker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Members Present

In attendance were Michael Parker, Bruce Devlin, Joe Tolisano, Bill Salka, and Paul Hart. Also, in attendance were Superintendent Dr. Sam Galloway, CFO Brian Wissinger, and First Selectman Tim Keeney.

3. Board of Education Update

Stephanie Levin presented the Board of Education financials through August 31, 2024. There were no questions. Dr. Galloway and Charles Warrington from Colliers updated the Board on the changes to the Somers Elementary School HVAC Project. A lengthy discussion followed.

4. Board of Selectmen Update

Fire Chief David Lenart introduced himself to the Board and gave an update on current EMS statistics. A lengthy discussion followed. Tim Keeney requested a copy of a letter sent to CFO Brian Wissinger, First Selectman Tim Keeney, and Superintendent Dr. Sam Galloway dated September 10, 2024, be added to the minutes. It is attached. A lengthy discussion about the letter followed.

5. CFO/Finance Department Update

Brian Wissinger presented the Town financials through August 31, 2024. There were no questions.

6. Appropriation Request – Separation Payout

Bruce Devlin made a motion to approve the appropriation request of \$43,141.02 to cover expenses for retired staff members, seconded by Bill Salka.

Joe Tolisano asked about the current year appropriation for the fund and stated we set this fund up to avoid this. Wissinger replied that the annual appropriation needs to be increased to establish this fund.

There was no further discussion and a unanimous decision followed.

7. Transfer Request

a. FY2025 Salaries

Joe Tolisano made a motion to approve the transfer request to cover the approved FY2025 salaries, seconded by Paul Hart. There was no further discussion and a unanimous decision followed.

b. FY2024 End of Year Transfers

Joe Tolisano made a motion to approve the FY2024 end of year transfers to balance the end of year accounts, seconded by Bruce Devlin. There was no further discussion and a unanimous decision followed.

8. Other Business

There was no additional business to discuss.

9. Approval of Minutes

a. 8/6/24 Special BOF Minutes

Bruce Devlin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Bill Salka. There was no further discussion and a unanimous decision followed.

10. Adjournment

Joe Tolisano made a motion to adjourn at 8:36 pm, seconded by Bruce Devlin. There was no further discussion and a unanimous decision followed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Wissinger

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FlU4XoiAQ0>

Memorandum From: Board of Finance

To: Treasure, Brian Wissinger
 First Selectmen, Tim Kenney
 Superintendent, Dr. Sam Galloway

Subject: Areas of Fiscal Concern

Date: September 10, 2024

Recent events and decisions from the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and Board of Education (BOE) require the Board of Finance (BOF) to document expectations for fiscal controls in the future. The areas of concern are the misappropriation of services to Stafford, communications and last-minute decisions required by the BOF from the Finance Department and the HVAC bonding project at the BOE.

First, the BOF has documented concerns from a fiscal perspective on the continued misappropriation of ALS/EMS services to Stafford. These concerns surround the lack of an adequate mutual aid agreement to compensate Somers for this service. The taxpayers of Somers have supported Stafford close to a million dollars of their tax revenue over years without adequate compensation. There is a legal basis and ethical requirement to ensure Somers' taxpayers funds remain in Somers and the town of Stafford must provide ALS level medical care for its residents without relying on the good will of Somers. The documentation provided by Attorney Erica Nolan is more than adequate to direct the fire department to remain in the town of Somers and cease to service Stafford on an ongoing basis. The BOF is prepared to take drastic action during the next budget cycle to ensure ALS/EMS services are not misappropriated to Stafford.

The second area of concern is timely communications from the Finance Department. In the past board members have been placed in the position requiring decisions at the same meeting an initiative is brought before the BOF. This limits the board's ability to discuss initiatives or proposals. This happened again with the recent road bonding project. In the future the BOF will require a minimum of 2 meetings to discuss a proposal. One meeting to review and understand the project, the second to discuss and vote on the initiative. When the Board of Selectmen receives a proposal, this should trigger the notification to the BOF on a major project or proposal. The exceptions would be emergencies called by the First Selectmen, or the BOE Chair. In the future the BOF will not vote on projects or proposals at the first review meeting.

Third area of concern is the HVAC project at the BOE. The Treasurer at a minimum should notify the BOF of any major shortfalls on bonding projects, which jeopardize the goals of the resolution voted on by the citizens of Somers. An HVAC project on a 60 year old building is complex and may have unexpected costs and hurdles to meet expectations. I would encourage the Treasurer to have members of the BOE and Building Committee address issues of this nature and the Treasurer brief the BOF to ensure compliance with the bond and taxpayers' resolution, should problems arise.

The BOF is here to work with the BOS and BOE to solve the town's major capital projects.

Michael Parker, Chairmen

Kathy Devlin, Vice Chair

William Salka, Secretary

Joseph Tolisano

Bruce Devlin

Paul Hart