

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, April 27, 2009**

7:00 p.m.

**(immediately following the Public Hearing on the Budget)
Somers Elementary School Auditorium**

PUBLIC HEARING

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Jim Persano called the public hearing to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Budget Presentation:

Overview:

Jim Persano stated that the proposed 2009-2010 budget was very difficult to put together due mainly to the fact that the usual funding in grants from the State was no longer available which left the Town of Somers with a \$400,000 to \$600,000 deficit in funding. This required both General Government and Board of Education to come up with amounts either lower or no higher than the budgets of the current fiscal year. Jim Persano presented his comments to an audience of about 100 people and with the aid of an overview that showed the proposed budget figures that was operated by Financial Director, Greg Simmons.

General Government:

First Selectmen David Pinney reviewed the proposed 2009-2010 General Government with the audience. The Town Government proposed budget shows a decrease in expenditures caused mainly by town employees not receiving a salary increase during the next fiscal year and by placing a hold on proposed CIP projects. The Board of Selectmen is also conducting a time study of current Town positions to see if there are areas of improvement or possibly consolidating positions. David Pinney said that Somers is in good financial shape compared to other area towns.

Selectman Joe Tolisano applauded the town employees for agreeing to a salary freeze for the next fiscal year.

Capital Projects:

Jim Persano said there will be no new CIP projects approved for the next fiscal year. CIP will only fund the cost of ongoing leases for town vehicles and trucks.

Board of Education:

Superintendent of Schools Maynard Suffredini reviewed the Board of Education proposed 2009-2010 budget with the audience. In order to meet the required zero based increase, personnel layoffs will be necessary. Five teachers will be laid off, one office position will be eliminated and also one custodial position. Spending for supplies will be monitored and new CIP projects will not be approved.

III. Public Comment:

Fourteen people spoke from the audience. Most were supportive of the .20 mil increase to fund the proposed 2009-2010 budget. Many were concerned that if the economy doesn't improve soon, will this mean additional teacher layoffs in the future. One person thought that her family should be issued a voucher from the town to pay less taxes because they sent their children to private schools and did not use the public school system.

One person asked if the teacher's union agreed not to have a salary increase in the next fiscal year and was told by the Superintendent of Schools that at present, it appears that the teachers will receive about a 4% increase in salary for the next fiscal year.

Several people suggested ways to cut costs of running the town – one was for employees to do their own custodial work.

Several people congratulated the BOS, BOE, and BOF for putting together the next fiscal year's proposed budget.

All but one of the speakers from the audience would like to have the school system remain the same without increasing class sizes and definitely offering all the programs and courses that are presently available. These people supported the .20 mil property tax increase and would also support an even higher increase in order to keep the school system the way it is now.

IV. Adjournment

The public hearing adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Jim Persano called the meeting to order at 8:45 p.m. Members present were: Jim Persano, Marilyn Pronovost, George Warner, Tom Mazzoli and Michael Parker. Also present were: Greg Simmons, Chief Financial Officer and David Pinney, First Selectman.

II. Budget Discussion and Proposal

George Warner made a motion to approve the submittal of the 2009-2010 budget as presented tonight to referendum for citizen approval on May 19, 2009. This would include a .20 mil property tax increase changing the mil rate from 21.91 to 22.11 which represents a .91% increase in the rate. The total proposed budget is for \$27,979,120, a decrease of \$559,208 or .96% from the current fiscal year. As a condition of approval, the Board of Selectmen has agreed to come up with some non-binding questions for the referendum as to how the voters feel about the proposed budget. This motion was seconded by Tom Mazzoli and unanimously approved by the Board.

III. Selectmen Update

First Selectman David Pinney agreed that the Board of Selectmen would come up with some wording for non-binding questions on the referendum regarding the voter's feeling about the proposed 2009-2010 town budget.

IV. Board of Education Update: None was presented.

V. Minutes Approval: 3/23/09 and 4/6/09

George Warner made a motion to approve both the 3/23/09 and the 4/6/09 Board of Finance minutes, as written. This motion was seconded by Tom Mazzoli and unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. Correspondence: None was presented.

VII. Bills, Transfers and Appropriations:

Tom Mazzoli made a motion seconded by Michael Parker to approve the following transfers:

				4/27/2009 #39	
Fire Department	Pager Maintenance	Vehicle Maint.	\$	300.00	
	Ladders	Vehicle Maint.	\$	600.00	
	Radio Maintenance	Blood Borne	\$	350.00	
	Laundry	Water	\$	200.00	
	Hose	Water	\$	98.00	
	Printing & Supplies	Salaries P/T	\$	500.00	To pay outstanding bills for the department.
				4/27/2009 #40	
WPCA	CT DEP	Water Construction	\$	4,320.00	Sunset Dr. well water contamination alternatives. Reimbursable by DEP.
				4/27/2009 #41	
Zoning	Copier Land Use	Advertising	\$	350.00	Public hearings have been heavier than expected.
	Dues & Seminars	Advertising	\$	200.00	

The motion carried.

VIII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by mutual consent at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Careno, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.