

Town of Montville Finance Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes for
May 31, 2016
5:00 p.m. Room 203

Councilor Longton called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He also led the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Councilor Tanner, Councilor Pollard, Mayor McDaniel and Finance Director Hart. Also present was Councilor Jaskiewicz, Rogulski and Caron.

Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard to add approval of the May 9, 10, 11 and 24 meeting minutes to the agenda. Motion carried.

Remarks from the Public: Councilor Jaskiewicz asked if the budget script had been prepared and it was.

Animal Control Officer Chris Swanson stated that it would be costly to use the current ACO vehicle for the police. Police equipment would need to be installed and the current lettering would need to be removed. She said that it is difficult to find an all-wheel drive vehicle suitable to be used as an ACO vehicle.

Lt. Bunnell stated that he appreciates the committee's suggestion regarding using the ACO vehicle but he does not feel it is cost effective. He urged the committee to maintain the fleet. He explained the current detective cars are in need of costly repairs.

Andrew Meislitzer of 52 Pheasant Run stated that the committee should listen to the people who spoke at previous meetings and restore the funding for the BOE budget. He does not agree with a 0% increase.

Matt Laviviere of 50 Massachusetts Road asked where the balance remaining in the education budget went last year. He feels it should be set aside for the BOE to use.

Russ Beetham of 50 Riverview Road asked if extra funding was given to the library. He also asked what the fund balance was.

Resident State Trooper Juhola supported the funding for police cars in the capital improvement plan. He also stated that IT is vital to the police department and the Town.

Wills Pike of 71 Pheasant Run stated that the BOE should not be funding capital projects out of the operating budget. The operating budget should be used to educate students.

Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard to approve the May 9, 10, 11 and 24 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Remarks from Town Councilors regarding the 2016-17 Budget: Councilor Rogulski stated that he received 15 emails regarding the 0% increase to the BOE budget. Councilor Jaskiewicz stated that some residents want the Council to restore the budget back to the Superintendents proposal

and not the Mayor's. He explained that the budget was not final until the Town Council budget meeting. Councilor Tanner asked the Superintendent why funding for operational needs of the BOE were shifted to capital. He explained that there is an obligation to repair the school properties. He does not anticipate a surplus at the end of the current fiscal year. Councilor Longton stated that during the PW subcommittee meeting it was decided that the Fitch Hill Road drainage project could be delayed one year and the \$360,000 could be used to offset the budget. He stated that Youth Services will be moving to Fair Oaks in August and the Electric and Fuel Oil should be at zero for the current building. He also suggested cutting each department's budget by .25%.

Review 2016-17 proposed budget: Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard to use the \$360,000 for the Fitch Hill Drainage project to offset the budget. PW Director Don Bourdeau explained that he does not recommend putting this project off. The culverts and pipes are rotted and need to be replaced. Motion carried.

Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard, to remove the funding for the electricity and fuel oil at the Youth Service Building. After discussion, Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard, to amend the motion to allocate \$500 each for electricity and fuel oil for the Youth Services Building. Motion passed.

The committee discussed the current collection rate of 98.5%. Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard, to increase the collection rate to 98.7%. Motion passed.

Remarks from the Public: Robert Manfredi of 9 Heather Brook Road asked about how the water budget was funded and how much was allocated for the Fair Oaks Project.

Tom McNally of 1017 East Lake Road does not support the lack of funding for the BOE, the 98.7% collection rate and the use of fund balance. He also feels the committee should restore the funding for the SCBA for the Fire Department.

Matt Laviviere stated that he feels the Councilors should not make personal comments.

Russ Beetham feels that the Town should try to collect back taxes and he feels the Town does not have to keep the State recommended amount in the fund balance.

IT Director Bill O'Neill stated he needs a full time technician. He'd be willing to reduce his request from 40 hours to 32 hours.

Andrew Meislitzer reiterated his concerns about reducing the funding for the BOE. He feels residents are willing to pay more in taxes to fund the BOE at the Superintendents request.

Superintendent Brian Levesque stated that other towns are increasing their BOE budgets. He feels funding at 0% increase will be devastating and irresponsible.

Mike Butterworth of 128 Connecticut Avenue stated that the Council should know their audience when they say that the public doesn't understand the budget crisis with the State. He supports the hiring of a fourth dispatcher.

Donna Geary of 11 Depot Road supports funding for education. She is also very upset about the reduction in the IT budget.

BOE member Colleen Rix feels funding should be restored for the BOE. She stated that many students receive college scholarships for sports and music. If these programs are removed because of lack of funding, the students will suffer.

Gary Murphy of 6 Carolina Drive feels the funding for air packs should come out of the Fire Department operating budget. He stated that because each pack costs less than \$5,000 that they are not a capital item. He stated that the Council is in a no win situation. Some residents will be upset with a tax increase while others will be upset if items are cut from the budget.

Councilor Jaskiewicz stated that the Town Council cannot cut budget lines within in the BOE budget. They can reduce the bottom line and then it is up to the BOE to decide which items get cut.

Officer Robin Salvatore is against cutting the funding for police cars. She stated that they have a lot of miles on them. She supports the IT Department and the dispatchers.

Lt. Bunnell thanked the committee for their suggestions regarding using the ACO vehicle for the police. He feels the cars that are being used now are a safety issue. He supports the IT Department.

BOE member Robert Mitchell stated the Town Council set the bottom line amount given to the BOE and the BOE makes the necessary adjustments. He stated that special education is very costly.

Robert Manfredi asked about the funding for four new officers. The committee explained this was not the case.

Russ Beetham stated that the Council has a hard job. He recalls spending late nights in the past with the BOE reviewing the budget.

BOE member Sandy Berardy does not support the cut to the education budget.

Mayor McDaniel stated that the Town and the BOE are going to have to share in the burden the State is putting on municipalities. He explained there are a lot of unfunded mandates with more being placed upon towns every day.

Councilor Tanner moved, second by Councilor Pollard, to adjourn at 6:31. Motion carried.

Theresa Hart, Director of Finance