

TOWN OF BOZRAH
TOWN HALL
1 RIVER ROAD
BOZRAH, CONNECTICUT 06334

The Bozrah Board of Finance will hold the regular Quarterly meeting on Monday, June 20, 2022 at 7:00 PM in the meeting room at the town hall.

AGENDA

- 1) Call to order/attendance
- 2) Public comment(s)
- 3) Approve minutes from Board of Finance meeting:
 - a. April 20, 2022- Public Hearing
 - b. April 25, 2022 — Special Meeting Workshop
 - c. May 23, 2022 — Special Meeting Budget
 - d. June 15, 2022 —Special Meeting mil rate
- 4) Report from the Treasurer 5) Report from the Tax Collector 6) Report from the Assessor
- 7) Board of Selectman
 - a. Update on current budget status for FY 2021-2022
 - b. Projected end of year turnback to general fund for FY 2021-2022
 - c. Hear and act on Fire Department Equipment Acquisition Proposal.
 - d. Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant (OSWA)
- 8) Board of Education
 - a. Update on current budget status for FY 2021-2022
 - b. Projected end of year turnback to general fund for FY 2021-2022
- 9) Review posting for Auditor
- 10) Such other business as the Board may vote to hear
- 11) Final Public Comment
- 12) Adjourn

Michael J. O'Connor, Chairman

TOWN OF BOZRAH
PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF FINANCE

FMS MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

April 20, 2022

Chairman Mike O'Connor called the Public Hearing to order in the FMS Multipurpose Room on April 20, 2022 at 7:10 p.m. The purpose of this hearing is to receive comments on the proposed Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Town of Bozrah General Government, Capital, and Education Budgets. Residents and taxpayers shall have the opportunity to provide written and verbal comments on the Boards' proposals.

Members Present: Chairman Mike O'Connor, Raymond Barber, Michel Leask, Phil Lavalley, Evan Gilman, Steve Seder

1. M. O'Connor introduced the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education to present their proposed budgets. He noted the townspeople would be able to comment and ask questions following the presentation of each budget.
2. First Selectman Glenn Pianka presented the Board of Selectmen's proposed budget. G. Pianka noted the total capital proposed is \$735,496, the total general government proposed is \$2,012,222, making the total general combined \$2,747,718.

G. Pianka noted:

- a. Item 51050 Assistant to the First Selectman has increased by about \$7,000 because of a transfer of funds from the salary of the Assessor Clerk Salary as it is a shared position.
- b. Item 53083 Phone/Mileage has been restored to \$1,200.
- c. All items under 102 Employee Benefits have increased.
- d. Item 52025 Re-valuation Account has \$38,000 budgeted.
- e. Under item 109 Legal Fees - Town Counsel the data center consultant line has been emptied.
- f. Item 112 Auditor is budgeted \$33,000, but may change as the Board of Finance hires the new auditor.
- g. Item 53013 IT Support has increased to \$23,412.
- h. Item 53016 Building Maintenance has increased due to the maintenance needed in the buildings throughout town.
- i. Item 52043 SECCOG Planner has increased due to planning and zoning issues as well as Item 520431W SECCOG Planner due to increased inland wetland issues.
- j. Item 53072 Uncas Health District has increased after many years at a stagnant budget.
- k. Item 53016MF Maples Farm Park General Maintenance and Material has decreased to \$2,000 due to a transfer from this line to the senior center line for building maintenance needed.
- l. Funds were transferred from Item 53081 Sand and Item 53080 Salt to Item 53055 Catch Basin Cleaning for replacements to catch basins in town.
- m. Item 52030 Trash Tipping Fees and Item 52032 Hauling Fees have increased by 5%.
- n. Item 54161 Summer Program has been restored.

- o. Item 52081 Overlay Town Roads has been increased to \$195,000
- p. Item 54065 DPW Equipment has increased due to the cost of equipment as a new mower was purchased.
- q. Item 55009 IT Capital increased significantly to \$19,100 for updated security systems at town buildings.

3. Comments on the First Selectmen's Budget

- a. Steve Seder commented on the pavilion planned for Maples Farm Park. G. Pianka noted the funds come from the Maples Farm Park Commission budget and the American Rescue Plan grant. S. Seder also commented on the Transfer Station fees. S. Seder commented on creating a canoe launch area connected to the pond.
- b. Carolyn Dziengiel, Bashon Hill Road, commented on the supply line items throughout the budget questioning how that is categorized. G. Pianka explained that all supplies purchased are absolutely necessary for town operations.
- c. A member of the public commented on the payroll services increase.

4. Superintendent Portia Bonner presented the Board of Education's proposed budget.

P. Bonner noted:

- a. Student Services Coordinator salary has increased.
- b. The amount of paraprofessionals has decreased and 4 current employed paraprofessionals have taken training to become Registered Behavioral Technicians (RBT)
- c. They have instituted the Preschool program for morning and afternoon.
- d. The total number of students in Bozrah is 281 with 170 in the elementary grades and 111 in the highschool grades.
- e. There will be a 2.15% increase in salaries for all certified staff and a 2% increase in salaries for non-certified staff.
- f. The Superintendent salary has increased by 2.15%. The Board is in the process of hiring a new permanent Superintendent.
- g. A request has been made for a full time building substitute teacher.
- h. NFA tuition is increasing by 2%.
- i. An increase for materials due to textbooks, physical education equipment and online textbooks.
- j. Increase for health insurance and benefits as more staff will be receiving them in the new fiscal year.

5. Comments on the Board of Education's Budget

- a. Bill Ballinger, Lake Road, commented that the rate of increase in the BOE budget in the past years is not sustainable.

- b. Mary Elizabeth Lang, Gifford Lane, commented the salary increases and staff increases allows the special education students in Fields Memorial School rather than be outplaced at a higher cost.
- c. Steve Seder commented on the paraprofessionals' transition to Registered Behavior Technicians.
- d. Ian Polun, Principal, commented on the library funding noting extra funds from the Scholastic Book Fairs are used for the library.
- e. Jeanne Goulart, Bishop Road, commented on the importance of keeping the special education students in town for services due to the cost of outsourcing.

M. O'Connor closed the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted for the Board,

Heather Provost
Recording Secretary

TOWN OF BOZRAH
SPECIAL MEETING WORKSHOP
BOARD OF FINANCE
BOZRAH TOWN HALL
April 25, 2022

Item 1: Chairman Mike O'Connor called the Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Bozrah Board of Finance(BOF) to order at the Bozrah Town Hall on April 25, 2022 at 7:00p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Mike O'Connor, Raymond Barber, Michel Leask, Phil Lavallee, Evan Gilman, Steve Seder

Others Present:First Selectman Glenn Pianka, Selectman Bill Ballinger, Treasurer Diana Santo, Superintendent Portia Bonner and 5 members of the public.

Item 2: Public Comment

No public comment.

Item 3: FY 2022-2023 Budget Workshop

M.O'Connor presented the Board with the Bozrah Budget options incorporating the budgets as presented at the Public Hearing held April 20, 2022 and with the budgets reduced and increased.. M. O'Connor noted the importance of considering the impact the current year's budget will have in future years. M. O'Connor noted with the budgets as presented at the Public Hearing there would not be an increase to the mil rate of 27. M. O'Connor also noted the budget's impact in the past years from reducing items due to COVID and then reinstating them.

M. Leask noted her support in the Class Connections Program from the Board of Education. M. Leask also noted the comments made at the Public Hearing regarding the Board of Education budget increase not being sustainable.

E. Gilman questioned the cost savings of training some Paraprofessionals to be Registered Behavior Technicians and the Class Connections Program for the special education students. P. Bonner noted this is a cost savings because the special education would have to be outplaced and transported.

R. Barber noted the budgets should be sent back to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education for reductions and then to be turned back into the Board of Finance with no more than a 2% increase. R. Barber noted the increase in cost of living and the board's obligation to taxpayers.

P. Lavallee questioned the Renovation Bonds principle. G. Pianka noted it was budgeted correctly. P. Lavallee commented on the statements within the Board of Education's budget packet, noting they should be written clearer so as to not mislead the public.

S. Seder noted the Board should request adjusted budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education.

MOTION 1: P. Lavallee made a motion to send back the budgets to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education for review and adjustments then to be submitted to the Board of Finance. S. Seder seconded the motion.

MOTION FAILED

MOTION 2: P. Lavallee made a motion to send back the budgets to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education for review and reductions then to be submitted to the Board of Finance. S. Seder seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - MOTION CARRIED

Item 4: Public Comment

No public comment.

Item 5: Adjourn

MOTION 3: R. Barber made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. P. Lavallee seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted for the Board,

Heather Provost
Recording Secretary

**TOWN OF BOZRAH
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF FINANCE
BOZRAH TOWN HALL
May 23, 2022**

Item 1: Chairman Mike O'Connor called the Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Bozrah Board of Finance(BOF) to order at the Bozrah Town Hall on May 23, 2022 at 7:00p.m.

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

Members Absent: Steve Seder

Others Present: First Selectman Glenn Pianka, Selectman Bill Ballinger, Treasurer Diana Santo, Tax Collector Nancy Rensahw, Board of Education Chair Jonathan Gilman, Superintendent Portia Bonner and 7 members of the public.

Item 2: Public Comment

No public comment.

Item 3: Approve the minutes from Board of Finance December 13, 2021 Quarterly Meeting (Tables the Approval of Minutes Due to Motion Needed for Item II - Reference March 21, 2022 Item 3) Approve the minutes from March 21, 2022 Quarterly Meeting and the minutes from the April 25, 2022 Budget Workshop

MOTION 1: R. Barber made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 13, 2021 Quarterly Meeting. P. Lavallee seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - MOTION CARRIED

M. Leask noted a correction to the March 21, 2022 minutes to read, " Bozrah was the school with the largest decline in per student spending."

MOTION 2: M. Leask made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 21, 2022 meeting as amended. E. Gilman seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - MOTION CARRIED

The Board tabled the approval of the April 25, 2022 minutes to the next meeting.

Item 4: Revised Budget Presentation from Board of Education and Board of Selectmen

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Board of Selectmen

G. Pianka presented the Board with the proposed Town of Bozrah General Government and Capital Budget. The Capital budget equaling \$775,496 and the General Government budget equaling \$2,012,222.

Pianka noted no changes were made from the proposed budget at the last Board of Finance meeting. G. Pianka noted there are large items within the budget that are required such as revaluation fees, 3% salary increase, town hall repairs, SCCOG planning services and fuel costs.

G. Pianka also presented the Board with the estimated turnbacks for the current fiscal year 2021/2022. G. Pianka noted an estimated turnback of \$73,850.

R. Barber commented the Board needs to consider the taxpayer and not accept any more than a 2% increase in budgets from last fiscal year.

P. Lavallee questioned the large estimated turnbacks for this fiscal year. P. Lavallee questioned if those items could be decreased in the proposed budget so there is less turn back next year.

E. Gilman noted the financial challenges on the townspeople also affect the town. E. Gilman noted the Board needs to consider added operating costs. E. Gilman commented the presented budget was responsible and well thought out.

M. Leask commented the presented budget was responsible and noted town operating cost increases are over 2%.

Board of Education

Superintendent Portia Bonner and Board of Education Chair Jonathan Gilman presented the Board with the Board of Education proposed budget equaling \$6,813,051. J. Gilman noted increases within the budget for the Superintendent salary. J. Gilman noted the current salary is too low and the increase it to draw in good candidates for the job. J. Gilman also noted a raise to the paraprofessional salaries to meet minimum wage. P. Bonner noted non-certified staff salary increases depend on the "step" they are within.

M. Leask questioned the large increase within the secretary line.

R. Barber questioned the breakdown of administration costs within the budget. P. Bonner noted there is one full time administrator and two part time.

M. O'Connor commented his appreciation for the detail put into the presentation and the work put in to find reductions within the budget. M. O'Connor noted the reductions did not affect school activities such as special classes and after school activities.

Item 5: Review and Act on Budget Requests

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M. O'Connor presented the Board with spreadsheets showing the effect of the proposed budgets within different mil rates for years to come.

R. Barber commented his appreciation to the budget reductions made by the Board of Education. R. Barber noted again the increase to cost of living for the townspeople and they should reduce by 1 mil.

M. Leask noted the steady tax rate in town in past years.

E. Gilman noted his willingness to accept both budgets as they are considerate to the taxpayers, students and the town itself. E. Gilman noted his support of a mil rate of 26.5.

P. Lavalley also commented on his support of a mil rate of 26.5.

MOTION 3: M. Leask made a motion to accept the Board of Selectmen Capital budget of \$775,496, General Government budget of \$2,012,222 and the Board of Education budget of \$6,813,051 and bring them to a town meeting for recommendation. E. Gilman seconded the motion. R. Barber opposed. Vote 4 yes - 1 opposed - MOTION CARRIED

Item 6: Final Public Comment

Ev Brown, Fitchville Road, commented her appreciation to the boards for the time put into preparing the budgets.

Item 7: Adjourn

MOTION 4: P. Lavallee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m. E. Gilman seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous - MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted for the Board,

Heather Provost
Recording Secretary