

TOWN OF BOZRAH

TOWN MEETING

FIELDS MEMORIAL SCHOOL

May 10, 2023

First Selectman Glenn Pianka called the Town Meeting to order at 7:03 PM on May 10, 2023, at Fields Memorial School with 48 people in attendance.

A motion was made by N. Renshaw and seconded by J. Gilman for M. Betten to act as moderator for the meeting. Motion carried.

Moderator M. Betten announced that he no longer would like to act as moderator. He would be willing to guide the new person, and anyone interested in the position could contact him or G. Pianka.

Call of the meeting was read aloud by Moderator M. Betten:

AGENDA

The electors of the Town of Bozrah and those entitled to vote at a Town Meeting are hereby warned and notified of the Annual Town Meeting to be held at Fields Memorial School at 8 Bozrah Street Extension on WEDNESDAY May 10, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. The agenda is as follows:

- 1) Approve Town Meeting minutes of March 29, 2023.
- 2) American Rescue Plan-Tranche 2- to approve re-designation of **Item#5- Additional UST Funds** from February 22, 2023, to include **FMS Emergency Generator Repairs** as part of Item #5 title/assignment.
- 3) To appropriate sufficient sums of money to carry on the various divisions of Town Government for the fiscal year that will begin July 1, 2023, all of which have been approved and recommended by the Board of Finance to the extent of the amounts appearing opposite each category below:

EDUCATION:	\$7,031,171
GENERAL GOVERNMENT:	\$2,031,446
CAPITAL:	\$ <u>809,968</u>
	\$9,872,585

Copies of the detailed budgets are available in the Town Hall during normal business hours.

NOTE: This meeting will be adjourned to referendum to be held at Bozrah Town Hall on Friday May 19, 2023, from 12:00 Noon until 8 PM at the Bozrah Town Hall.

Dated at Bozrah, Connecticut this 2nd Day of May 2023:

Board of Selectmen:

Glenn S. Pianka

William E. Ballinger

Jeremy Tarasevich

M. Betten announced that there will be no vote tonight. The meeting will adjourn to referendum.

R. Barber commented that the agenda is not clear that Item #3 only to go to referendum.

G. Pianka and B. Ballinger commented that BOS intended for only the budget to go to referendum.

R. Barber made a motion to put all Item #1 through Item # 3 to referendum. Second: unidentified resident. Hand vote: Yes: 29 No:4 Abs:1. Motion passed.

Item #1) M. O'Connor made a motion to table Item #1. This item will be discussed at a future town meeting. It will not go to referendum. Seconded by unidentified resident. Hand count. Motion passed.

Item #2) M. Leask made a motion to table Item #2. This item will be discussed at a future town meeting. It does not go to referendum. Seconded by B. Ballinger. Yes: 28 No: 3 Abs: 0 Motion passed.

Item #3) J. Gilman made a motion to discuss Item #3. Seconded by J. Goulart. Motion approved.

Discussion on BOS Budget:

Public comments.

J. Lewitz - How will the referendum question be handled? Will it be 3 items or 1 item?

G. Pianka - One item, not broken into sections.

M. O'Connor – The whole package is considered as a total. If the referendum passes, the Board of Finance will set the mill rate at their next meeting. If the referendum fails, more work will be done and there will be another meeting.

G. Pianka discussed how the BOS budget was formulated including a review of health insurance, savings, maintenance items, Maples Farm pavilion, Rec Field, records review additional hours, ending of TextMyGov, and proposed 5% raise for town.

S. Seder asked about the town clerk's salary.

G. Pianka explained that Workers Comp. is giving back part of the salary to the town.

Discussion on BOE Budget:

D. Grant presented slides of the percentage of town's budget spent on education, per pupil expenditures and how requests compare to other towns. Part of the increase was due to the mandated Reading program. She said there may be more savings which include the resignation of one teacher and the loss of the budget manager.

Public Comments

P. Contino asked about the school populations.

163 students at FMS, with 4 new next fall, and 104 high school students.

J. Lewitz asked if there was a five-year projection for enrollment and was answered that no one on the BOE calculates this number. JL: drop in enrollment should drive the budget down? BOE: this does not always happen. Still need teachers even if student numbers fall.

M. Grey commented that losing students would make the cost per pupil increase. School, buses, etc. can't be less expensive.

J. Goulart commented that personnel changes happened after the budget was sent to BOF. Over \$100,000. How can the money be safeguarded to not be spent?

BOE will inform BOF of changes before the mill rate is set. \$10,000 for the reading program was found out last week and there may also be other grants.

J. Cirritto asked if the person doing the accounting work is qualified.

BOE is not finding qualified person to do the job and is using people they have to do work. Also T. Finn commented that there is not a savings of \$100,000 for the business administrator.

J. Appicelli commented on the hard work the boards have done putting the budgets together. It was his experience that students coming out of FMS were prepared for high school

P. Hibbard commented on the presentation given by BOE and asked if any Special Education students can be brought back in house.

Special Education Administrator said yes, they are looking into this and there may be one in the fall.

Discussion on Capital Budget:

G. Pianka - The capital budget is reduced due to purchase of town truck for cash rather than financing, pole barn expenditures will be put off, ARP money will be used to pave senior center

parking lot rather than from Capital Budget expenditure. Corresponding with Sen. M. Marx to speed up funding on necessary project – sidewalks.

No public comments.

M. O'Connor, Chairman of Board of Finance discussed the budget process. The budget will be voted on as one item due to statutes. The property revaluation will take effect this year. Considerations: money in reserve, state grant money changes, and how it will affect the town's fiscal standing in the coming years. The mill rate will be set when the budgets are approved, and all other information is considered by the Board of Finance. BOF estimates a mill rate of 22.5

The town will go to referendum next week, May 19. If the budget passes, BOF will set a meeting date to set the mill rate.

J. Onsager commented that in total, houses appreciated and in total, businesses depreciated.

Vehicles did not change.

M. Betten announced that the town will go to referendum held at Town Hall from noon until 8:00 PM on May 19, 2023. The town meeting will reconvene at The Bozrah Town Hall after 8:00 PM the same day.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Acting Recording Secretary,

Susan Ververis

TOWN OF BOZRAH
RECONVENED TOWN MEETING

Bozrah Town Hall

May 19, 2023

At 8:20 PM on May 19, 2023, Moderator M. Betten reconvened the Town of Bozrah Town Meeting at the Bozrah Town Hall with 15 members of the public present.

Moderator Betten read the results of the concluded referendum as follows:

Yes votes: 87.

No votes: 77.

Abstention votes: 0.

164 people voted in the referendum.

Motion to adjourn was made by R. Barber, seconded by M. O'Connor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Submitted by:

Susan Ververis

Acting Recording Secretary