

TOWN OF BOZRAH
HYBRID PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF FINANCE
FMS GYMNASIUM
ZOOM - VIDEO CONFERENCE
April 6, 2021

Chairman Mike O'Connor called the Public Hearing to order on the Video Conference Application Zoom and at the FMS Gymnasium on April 6, 2021 at 7:06p.m.

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 Carl Zorn presented the Board of Selectmen's proposed budget. C. Zorn noted the total capital proposed is \$742,344, the total general government proposed is \$1,935,201, making the total general combined \$2,677,545.
 - a. Selectman Bill Ballinger explained the American Rescue Plan, a non-education grant. B. Ballinger explained the town may be receiving \$269,146 for COVID town relief. B. Ballinger explained it is unknown what the money can be used for.
 - b. C. Zorn noted an increase in the budget for legal fees due to the potential Data Center looking to build in town. C. Zorn also noted an increase for the Tax Assessor salary due to an increase in work hours.
3. Board of Education chair, Jeanne Goulart, presented the Board of Education's proposed budget. J. Goulart noted the total proposed is \$6,545,049.
 - a. Superintendent, Dr. Portia Bonner, noted on the cost savings with new staff coming in to replace retired staff.
4. Comments:
 - a. Steve Seder commented on the food service line item in the BOE budget. P. Bonner noted the increase is due to the free meals offered and the low amount of students opting to buy lunch. S. Seder also commented on the new hires in the school. P. Bonner noted for the potential new hires they are looking for tier 5 teachers.

- b. Ray Barber commented on the amount of students in school and those doing distance learning. P. Bonner noted the state requires that the students have an option to go to school in person or online. R. Barber also commented on the summer camp. P. Bonner noted it is not on the BOE budget because the BOE chose not to pursue the summer camp program.
- c. Robin Barry commented on the summer camp program. G. Pianka noted the summer program is in the BOS proposed budget. C. Zorn noted there is no one qualified to run the program.

M. O'Connor closed the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted for the Board,

Heather Barber
Recording Secretary