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**East Haven Board of Finance
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2024**

The East Haven Board of Finance held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, February 21, at 7:00 P.M. at the Mario Giaimo, Joseph Vitale Meeting Room Lower Level of East Haven Town Hall, 250 Main Street, East Haven, CT.

1. **Roll Call**

Mayor Joseph Carfora and Beth Purcell were not present. Rich Esposito, Ralph Vitale (via phone), Al Purzycki, Chris Perdo and Ronald DeSena were present. Jim Keeley, Finance Director, was present.

2. **Read and Approve Minutes from January 17, 2024**

Al Purzycki made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes, Chris Seconds. Rich Esposito made a motion to approve the January 17, 2024 meeting minutes, Beth Purcell seconds. **Roll call, all in favor.**

3. **Old Business**

None

4. **New Business**

Chris Perdo stated we have not had any updates for a while from legal. Jim stated he would let Attorney Luzzi know.

5. **Public Comment**

None

Jim stated that he had asked all the departments to try and make the transfers earlier this year than last year. We wanted to get a head start because we have MUNIS and we will tie up both systems at the end of the year so that we have a better idea of where we are.

6. **Fire Department-Referral to Town Council**

To:	01-334-0202	Water	\$ 49,500.00
From:	01-334-0887	C-Med	\$ 5,100.00
	01-334-0840	Vol Abatement	\$ 12,000.00
	01-334-0175	Educ. Inc.	<u>\$ 32,400.00</u>
			\$ 49,500.00

Al Purzycki made a Motion to Discuss and refer to Town Council, Rich Esposito seconds.

Ralph asked if 0840 was volunteer abatement. Jim stated yes.

Chief Marcarelli stated the water bill is not for water use, it is for the maintenance of the water infrastructure. We are charged by inch/foot. It was profoundly underfunded seven years ago and we have been trying to keep up with the rise of the bill itself and to the BOF and TC credit, they did give me the increases that I needed. The shortfall is due to loss of hydrants due to car accidents. Some of those are subrogated and some we do not get paid back for. There is a large number of people in the community that do not have insurance or they evade and we have no way of recouping that. A lot of the hydrants that are hit are in economically important areas such as High Steet and Main Street and they need to be replaced. Typically, we hold on to that until the end of year, but as Jim said we wanted to get ahead of it this year. I did have some anticipated surpluses in the C-MED account. The bill came in for that so we have left over money there. We budgeted for the Vol. Tax abatement and we came in 6 people under what we would be paying out and the educational incentive due to the change in grade for employees with less seniority we will have a surplus there.

Ralph asked if when we get paid back for fire hydrants that got destroyed, does that go against the expenses or income account. Jim stated it depends on when it comes in. Sometimes if it comes in after in a different year, I will put it into the self-insurance fund rather than the hydrant account. If it comes in on time then it goes back on the expenditure account.

Rich Esposito stated it is great to see surpluses in the other accounts. Rich Esposito asked how staffing is. Chief stated they currently have one fire fighter in the academy and will be hiring another fire fighter in April and will put us with one vacancy.

Roll call, Chris Perdo abstained, remaining members all in favor.

7. **Fire Department**

To:	01-334-0530 Gasoline	\$ 24,900.00
From:	01-334-0887 C-Med	\$ 24,900.00

Al made a motion to discuss, Rich seconds.

Rich Esposito stated the Chief explained the surplus in the C-MED account and we know gas prices are going higher and higher. Chief stated two years ago the gasoline budget was sliced pretty good and after that we saw a massive increase in fuel prices. When we re-budgeted last year I went with the number from the previous year based on the consumption numbers we had and we were a little off base.

Ralph asked why C-MED is so overfunded. Chief stated it is not we will be funding that from another source, it is a contractual item.

Roll call, Chris Perdo abstained, remaining members all in favor.

8. **Police- Referral to Town Council**

To:	01-332-0190 Overtime	\$330,000.00
From:	01-332-0192 Replacement Vac	\$ 10,000.00

01-332-0110	Reg Salaries	\$ 70,000.00
01-885-0689	Contingency	<u>\$250,000.00</u>
		\$330,000.00

Rich Esposito made a Motion to discuss and refer to the Town Council. Al Purzycki seconds.

Chief Lennon stated essentially after speaking with Mr. Keeley we are being pro active going into the new year. Everything has gone up and we have high incidents, which you do not see a reflection of, of worker's compensation usage because we do not have a lot of workers comp usage we have a lot of light duty this year. That has impacted us a lot. Every time an officer comes off the schedule they get paid for physically working but not doing their normal duties. We have had a push in proactive enforcement this summer to squash down the issues we were facing in regards to some of the violent crimes occurring in town, at least during some of the warmer months which had a huge impact on our budget that we had not planned for. Lastly are the state mandates on training. I found out today that it is going to get worse. It will have a huge impact on all communities, not just ours. Rich stated he hoped we would see some funding from the state. Jim stated he sat down with the Mayor, the Chief and Deputy Chief to go over the overtime and look at and it comes down to so many state mandates and when they happen, we have no choice but to follow them. It puts us in a tough spot especially when they are non-funded state mandates.

Al Purzycki stated when we look at the budgets, we have not seen a budget on inaudible under \$975,000.00 since inaudible. In the next budget year are we going to have a real number? Jim stated yes. That is one thing that has been brought to our attention by several departments was yes we cut their budgets because we like them to be at a certain dollar amount, unfortunately when things happened like these mandates, there is nothing we can do. We have to make the numbers in the budget what they really are. Our goal is to get the numbers up to where they need to be. Jim stated contingency should be for emergencies, but it is a 2-part problem. Chris stated we are seeing a lot of budgets like the BOE with different mandates and staffing where they are requiring more people there and it is not being funded but are there grants available to help with the costs. Chief stated we will be eligible for a couple of federal grants, next federal fiscal year. We have to meet other additional criteria. We have been tied up and ended up with an extra additional year because of it. It will not have an impact on this budget but it will have an impact on next year's budget.

Chris asked about staffing. Chief stated we filled 2 vacancies in the last 60 days. One was a certified officer from New Haven and the next is recruit and he starts the academy in two weeks. We still have one vacancy. We have gone through a hundred candidates and we came up with one candidate that was uncertified. Sometimes certified candidates apply sometimes they do not. Chief stated we have an open enrollment. There are 17 or 18 applicants and Andrea will test them in the coming weeks.

Al asked Jim. A lot of these things in overtime are also we are paying for these services. Jim stated police extra duty is accounted for in 885, so it is not included here. Jim stated our rate is 45% over the salaries because of MERS, salaries, etc.

Rich stated the force is younger.

Roll call, all in favor.

9. **Animal Control**

To:	10042331-51190	Overtime	\$6,000.00
From:	10042331-51667	Temp; part-time	\$6,000.00

Al Purzycki made a motion to discuss, Chris Perdo seconds.

Emily stated they are seeing inaudible an increase in calls in East Haven, inaudible It is for our own Town. We ate through overtime in the first part of July as I was the only one to answer the overtime calls every day. Now we are fully staffed and we have 2 extra part timers we have seen the overtime go down. We are being proactive and the warmer months are coming and our call rates sky rocket so I am being proactive and know we have it in there. Rich asked if we see any deer getting hit often. She stated not really.

Roll call, all in favor.

10. **Public Works - Referral to Town Council**

To: 10084226-53676 Recycling townwide \$190,000.00

From: 10043224-51110 Regular Salaries \$190,000.00

Rich Esposito made a motion to discuss and refer to Town Council. Al Purzycki seconds.

Jim stated for Animal Control and public works, the first 5 digits can be replaced by 01 to be in conformity with the old system. These are the new numbers. The department numbers we kept the same, you will still see 331 and in the past 01 meant it was a general fund, every fund had its own number. Now we are having a separating of funds. The numbers that we used were the numbers that CT GFOA asked us to use. Basically 1000 is all general funds, the last digit is what department it is.

Rich Esposito stated to Charlie, recycling is getting very expensive at this point. Charlie stated yes. He is being proactive right now so we do not have to do this at the end of the year.

Chris asked if he was down on manpower that there was that much left in the regular salaries. Charlie stated there were some guys that left and they have some adjustments and we will be back to normal.

Jim stated they were hoping to go out to bid for the trash and recycling.

Roll call, all in favor

11. **Adjournment**

Adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Dated This 7th day of March, 2024,
East Haven, CT 06512

Susan Mauro, Board of Finance Clerk