

RECEIVED FOR FILING  
DATE 3/28/2022 TIME 11:10 A.M.  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
EAST HAVEN, CONN

*Lisa Butler*  
TOWN CLERK

**EAST HAVEN BOARD OF FINANCE  
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 8, 2022**

**The East Haven Board of Finance held a Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, at 6:30 P.M. at the Senior Center**

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Joseph Carfora, Rich DePalma, Beth Purcell, Rich Esposito, Al Purzycki, and Chris Purdo were present. Ralph Vitale was absent. Jim Keeley, Finance Director was also present.

**a. Engineering/Inlands/wetlands/Flood/Erosion (223) (117) (118)**

Johnathan, Town Engineer presented and stated his budget is pretty straight forward. Rich DePalma asked how his department is going. Jonathan stated going pretty good. Jonathan stated the only issue is the inland wetlands I have requested \$1,000 and the mayor recommended \$500. Every time I have a se cease and desist I have to hold a public hearing and I have to advertise it so I need it to go to \$1,000.00

Mayor asked if it was good with everything else and Jonathan stated yes. Flood and erosion and inland wetlands. No questions on those; pretty straight forward.

**b. Public Service (224) Sanitation (226)**

Charlie spoke and stated basically everything stays the same except the only thing we should go up on is our gasoline because the prices are going up. Full staff according to Charlie. All is good. Al asked about waste collection and recycling if that is month-to-month or is it contractual. It is contractual however it fluctuates. Al asked how often it will change. Charlie stated it will go up in summer sometimes. Jim stated the affordable waste is contractual and it's a set amount. The flexible one is the recyclables. Rich DePalma asked if the tipping fees close. Charlie stated we are good. Almost the same right now.

Chris asked about rental of land and buildings. Chris asked if that was something we weren't doing. We have to pay ??? Inaudible. Mayor Carfora stated he just signed a five-year lease agreement. It is through the State of Connecticut. I received from the state the lease agreement and I forwarded it to legal counsel to review it. So, we are good for another 5 years. Charlie stated they are trying to keep on top of the trucks. We try in house to fix it. Rich E asked how the flow has been this winter. Charlie said there was a lot of the material, the salt. Rich D asked

### **c. Building Maintenance (229)**

Al stated he understands that the water company change the billing to monthly but it seems like sewer fees increased. Charlie said it's about the same. Our buildings are holding up. Charlie said there is a lot of maintenance. The lobby here was done. The roof was fixed. The biggest problem is the boilers. Honeywell sucked the blood out of us. We have not seen the savings. We are going to change company 3, the boiler. Because we already have the money from last year. Full staff. No open vacancies.

### **d. Town Clerk (109)**

Lisa Balter presented. She stated she was happy to be presenting her first budget. She spent first 2 months in the office learning the different systems and more in depth about my duties, utilizing state statutes, Town ordinances, the charter, the state library, Secretary of State office, the town clerk's association and networking with other town clerks across the state. Lisa acknowledged and thanked the Town Clerk's staff and the employees at Town hall. Everyone has been extremely accommodating and helpful with the transition. I am focusing to see if there's a more efficient way to do things. I have decreased the cost of printing letterhead by switching to online templates and I have price shopped to find the lowest cost without compromising on quality. I was able to find perforated paper for burial permits and dog licenses at half the cost of standard supplier. I have realized that our credit card processor in house is taking away a little from our revenue charging 2.6 percent plus .10 cents per transaction to the clerk's office. I am in the process of researching new software and improve the revenue. I am also looking at another program to help manage the boards and commissions for our Town which has been a little bit of a task for us. At a minimum, hopefully these changes will defray from some of the rising supply costs. I am working applying for the annual municipal historical grant offered through the historical documents preservation program to further improve our office in the area of preservation. I already see several different projects for the future. This year I am looking to apply for scanning of land documents. Rich D asked if we were all caught up with scans. It will be a continual process as there are so many years per Lisa. We are scanned through 1977. Our revenue is on track to surpass our goal of \$515,000.00 this year. As of March 1st, we were at \$506,000.00 with 4 months to go. Lisa pointed out a few line items. The increase in line item 110 is contractual. 111 is now included in the regular salaries. Being a new clerk there are more expenses than being a seasoned clerk. I've been in the process of my certification. There is a wealth of knowledge to be gained by attending semi-annual conferences. I have budgeted for that as well. Line 510 photo copy/ printing supplies. I average the usage over the last 12 months and took increases into consideration. Printing and binding. The request for increase was based on past years needs for codifying ordinances and required proper binders for documentation storage. Data processing software...last year we requested \$20,000, this year I requested \$34,000. When we begin working with IQS for land recordings and indexing and web share, which is another service IQS offers. It is revenue that is earned from online printing and land records. Between the months of September 2020 and July 2021, IQS was taking the revenue earned and deducting it from the bill before sending it to us. That has been adjusted from August 2021 on.

Other contractual services were calculated over the last four months. We have spent approximately \$2,195 over the last eight months. Microfilm storage which increases slightly each year and any time we have to pay another Town money for vital records we pay them for

the service of that vital. We have several methods of storage because we're dealing with the historic documents, they are stored in several different methods. The same document is stored in more than one way.

#### **e. Library/Library Building Comm. (551)**

Bruce spoke and stated the library was appreciative of the recommended budget. There were cuts in regular salaries and in data processing line. For regular salaries the library requests an increase of 3%. The mayor recommended 2%. 56 percent of that increase will go toward paying for two minimum wage increases and the remainder will go toward paying 5 times at 1 percent. Which is a reduction of the 1.5 percent salary increase that was planned. Data processing primarily pays for the hardware for the library. We need a window 11 upgrade. Rich E asked if people are using the library. Bruce stated yes, it is getting back to normal. We are at 60 percent. We rely on part time help. There are 15 part time and 7 staff.

#### **f. Animal Shelter (331)**

Owen stated he thinks there will be little to no effect. The regular salaries were increased per contract. The administration put an assistant animal control in. It will reduce overtime. It is an increase in salaries but reduces overtime. That \$17,000.00 is a wash. The one thing is larger are cruelty cases. When someone is evicted, by state statute your pet is your personal property you have to hold it for 45 days. On a positive side covid helped us because people were home. So, as we are getting pets in, the staff is keeping track of who is looking. We started a new venture with Branford Vet Hospital. They gave us at a reduced rate. They donate some time. We got a donation from someone who wanted to remain anonymous so we picked up a used vehicle. Last year we were approved for a new vehicle, so we are taking possession of it this Friday. Building is in good shape. We applied for a grant and the staff is really great. We have a food pantry as well. Beth stated that the cost of supplies and food is that going up? Owen stated that we get a lot of donations. It isn't a problem. Mayor asked about natural gas line budget line item. Owen stated we are fine. Chris asked about rental equipment. Owen stated we are able to save a little bit of money. What we have done with police accountability act. Chief Lennon is ...inaudible. Body cams. The rental equipment is our freezer and our copier. We do a lot of wildlife calls and have managed that. The staff is licensed.

#### **g. Insurance//Legal Services (881/113)**

Mike Luzzi stated that he wanted to add to the next BOF agenda an executive session to discuss the legal cases. Danelle Feeley will update on workers comp. Mike stated he hopes to have projected numbers for the executed session. The Honeywell project predates this administration and the projections they were showing had the schools shutting off air conditioners on weekends and at 3 during afternoons and we are struggling with the settings. To be determined. During the summer the Mayor said it was 85 degrees in his office. Mike Luzzi stated we are trying to resolve more cases. We have a litigation assistant town attorney. Lynch, Traub, Keefe and Errante. Every time a case goes into suit it gets sent to them. I have asked them to start giving us totals of what it will cost to get to this case and that case. We are finding that we have \$5,000.00

or \$6,000.00 cases and we are spending \$10k dollar cases. Getting more of a budgetary package from them. We settled a lot more smaller cases to get them off the books. We are making sure we have sufficient funds in that account. We want to get it to the million-dollar mark. We are getting more trial dates now. We want to try and settle earlier.

Excess insurance is mostly driven by what PMA tells us. Danelle will speak on that as well. We have a regular claims review on workers comp quarterly. Trying to get more aggressive with getting people back to work.

113 legal are salaries will stay the same. We need an increase for inaudible.....we have the Quarry case that is scheduled for trial in November. There have been additional discovery requests. We are pushing back hard on that case. We are self-insured. We filed suit against our two excess carriers. The first million is our deductible after that we have an excess carrier. That can be up to \$6 million dollars. We filed suit against the 2016 and 2017 carrier as we thought they should have been brought in. We filed declaratory action. Whether it is in totality or combined. It had to be done. In 2020 there was a police case and there was a death. Mike Luzzi does not think we have much culpability. 6 officers and one supervisor were involved. We have 4 lawyers in this case. We had to provide them attorneys. We had a revaluation this year. Our numbers are up. Probably 30 to 40 percent increase. Planning for that. I recused myself from the D.C. Moore case. I anticipate Mr. Mauro will file an action against the town to enforce the ordinance that was voted on in 2019. Exceptionally pleased a how we are pushing back with the quarry.

We have labor negotiations. We have fire, town hall and public works. Other contractual. Our budget last year was 17,000, we asked for 22500.00. We are trying to limit damages so that means experts etc. that is additional money. Investigated services. It is necessary with a couple of cases.

#### **h. Probate (114)**

Jim Keeley stated we share probate with North Haven. Requests on our side stayed the same.

#### **i. School Building Committee (500)**

#### **j. Purchasing (105)**

Jim Keeley is presenting for Purchasing, and introduced new purchasing agent, Dawn Cummings Jim stated she is going above and beyond. She has been here for 3 weeks. We had some backup. The biggest increase is salaries. We have asked to move Dawn to 35 hours. Now that we have ARPA funds we are making sure everything is done correctly. We want someone to take it from the beginning until the end. She is strictly Town, dawn is going to be helpful with bidding process and we are trying to get bid process on line. Mayor stated that they started a new town website. All departments are on website.

**Adjournment: 7P.M**