STATE OF CONNECTICUT • COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

ROBERT K. PAGANI
Chairman

BOARD OF FINANCE

RICHARD J. CLEARY
ROBERT J. CLEMENTS
VAUGHN E. GERBER
MARK A. JOYSE
BARRY C. PINTO

REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2006

Members Present: Robert J. Pagani-Chairman, Robert J. Clements, Mark A. Joyse, Barry C. Pinto

Members Absent: Richard J. Cleary, Vaughn E. Gerber

Others Present: N. DiCorleto-Fin Officer, D. Roberson-Chmn BOE, M. Blanchette, D. Keune-BOE, T. Littizzio-Dir Bus Svs, M. Varney-EVFD Chief, P. Lombardo-Tax Collector, R. McCarty-Tax Assessor.

1. Chairman R. Pagani called the meeting to order at 8:16 pm.

2. **Citizens Forum** – No one came forward

3. **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 3, 2006 AS WRITTEN.

MOTION (JOYSE) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED TO ADD TWO ITEMS TO THE AGENDA, BOARD OF EDUCATION HEATING FUEL DEFICIT AND CONN MUNICIPAL CONSORTIUM FOR FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY.

3A. Board of Education Heating Fuel Deficit

Dale Roberson presented to the Board of Finance a 05/06 operating deficit due to increased energy costs in the amount of $207,000. If this deficit is not dealt with this year, next year's budget will suffer. Under State Statutes the Board of Education can request additional funds from the Town after it has approved by a motion to request these supplemental funds. Tonight the Board of Education is looking for a commitment from the Board of Finance to cover their deficit. The alternative is to take drastic action such as closing the schools to outside and evening activities, shortening the school year by 2 days or layoffs. This is the first time in 24 years that the Board of Education has had to ask the Board of Finance for additional funds.

Mr. Joyse asked if this needs to go to the Town Meeting and Mr. Pagani stated that it did.

Mr. Clements asked what if all the money is not needed at the end of the year. He would like to see them segregate the energy accounts so that what is left over can be returned. The Board agreed that there should be an accounting of the funds. Mr. Joyse also asked for a list of items that would be cut if this money was not committed. There is no guarantee that it will go through at the Town meeting. Mr. DiCorleto stated that there are consortiums that are purchasing electricity from alternative sources at a reduced rate. Mr. Littizzio stated that there is also an education consortium also. There was discussion of the electric rates going up a total of 44% by the end of 2006.

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO SUPPORT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN THEIR EFFORT TO REQUEST FUNDS TO COVER THEIR DEFICIT AND TO FOLLOW THE PROCEDURE OUTLINED IN THE TOWN CHARTER.

4. Financial Statements

- Tax Assessor – Rhonda McCarty stated that the revaluation is completed and is showing a 49.21% increase in the grand list. 5% of taxpayers came in for the informal hearings regarding their assessment. The average value for tax purposes for a single family home is $289,456.

- Tax Collector – Pam Lombardo stated that collections were exceeding budget. 96.16% has been collected to date. She is recommending that the Board budget 98.4% for fiscal year 2006/07. She has estimated that back taxes to be collected next year to be $370,000. With the revaluation, motor vehicle taxes will be reduced and there was discussion regarding doing away with splitting motor vehicle tax bills.

The Ellington Housing Authority has sent a letter asking that the Town forgive its PILOT funds payment due to the State not having the funds available for reimbursement. Last night the Board of Selectmen approved to abate the funds from the Housing Authority in the amount of $8,888.51. The Board of Finance does not have to act on this; it is for informational purposes in budgeting.

Mr. DiCorleto went over his financial statements. The budget to actual taxes collected shows a favorable balance of $40,304. The Building Department's revenue has exceeded the budget. He then went over the debt schedules for 2005 and it was noted that the items from Capital Improvements that were decided to be purchased through leases, are now on the debt schedule and therefore, still have an effect on the bottom line.

5. Additional Appropriations – Asbestos Bid EVFD

The bid packages were received for the asbestos abatement for the hose tower. Oscar's Abatement of Hartford which was the second lowest bidder was chosen by the Fire Dept. The low bidder was from New Jersey and Chief Varney did not get satisfactory answers from speaking to them about the project. The balance for this project is $9,490 and the bid is $13,100, therefore they are requesting an additional $4,000 to cover the project. The Board of Selectmen approved this at their meeting last night.

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO APPROVE THE AWARD OF THE BID TO OSCAR'S ABATEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF $13,100 AND AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION TO THE ELLINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT. IN THE AMOUNT OF $4,000 TO COMPLETE THE ASBESTOS ABATEMENT PROJECT.

Mr. Pagani stated that the fire proofing of the hose tower will be put into the capital improvements budget.

6. New Business

Mr. Pagani asked that the Board of Finance workshop be scheduled for Saturday, March 11 at 9 am. They will be reviewing the budget in greater depth.

The Board of Selectmen met last week with the Volunteer Ambulance Corps regarding their funds charging system. Mr. Pagani and Mr. Cleary attended. The Corps was very possessive about their funds and they hired a consultant to speak for them at the meeting.

The Senior Citizens needs study showed that they need more transportation. The Dial-a-Ride program will be requesting additional funds in the budget.

Mr. Pagani asked that the Board of Finance consider joining the Connecticut Municipal Consortium for Fiscal Responsibility. The Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen have agreed to join.

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO JOIN THE CONN. MUNICIPAL CONSORTIUM FOR FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY.

-Board of Finance Budget

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO SET ACCOUNT 121 BOARD OF FINANCE AT $8,000 FOR FY 2006/07.

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO SET ACCOUNT 121 AUDITORS AT $29,500 FOR FY 2006/07.

MOTION (PINTO) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO SET ACCOUNT 122 AUDITORS SPECIAL PROJECTS AT $100 FOR FY 2006/07.

MOTION (JOYSE) SECONDED (CLEMENTS) AND PASSED TO SET ACCOUNT 1010 CONTINGENCY FUND AT $150,000 FOR FY 2006/07.

The capital reserve fund will be set by the Finance Officer.

Adjournment

MOTION (CLEMENTS) SECONDED (JOYSE) AND PASSED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:45 PM.

Submitted by Lori Smith
Lori Smith, Clerk