**Essex Finance Committee**

**Tuesday May 12, 2020**

**7:00 P.M.**

**Meeting Minutes**

The public was able to join this meeting by telephone. The call-in number will be: 717-275-8940. The access code was: 8378315

Members Present: Chairman Ben Buttrick, Rob Fitzgibbon, Michael Antell, Guy Bradford, Michael Flynn and Allison Williard

Also Present: Treasurer/Collector Jeff Soulard, Selectwoman Ruth Pereen

Chairman Buttrick called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., motion made, seconded and unanimously approved.

Discussion ensued regarding Tax Collections and Public Safety Building Bond issuance. Treasurer Soulard mentioned that as of today there is $385,000 outstanding on Real Estate Taxes, which represents 2 ½ percent of taxes outstanding. He anticipates selling the bond in August. Treasurer Souldard will continue to work with Bond Council and hopes first year payments will be a bit less.

Discussion ensued regarding updates for municipal finance policy and status of potential impact to Essex – Accountant Antell mentioned that she was preparing monthly budgets (July, August and September) as requested by the Department of Revenue. Revenue forecasting for FY21 has been reduced and may need to be reduced as we move forward.

Discussion ensued regarding potential opportunities for additional town revenue - Selectwomen Pereen discussed a boat ramp attendant and/or a parking meter. If a parking meter was purchased we could charge a daily fee and collect revenue seven days a week. With an automated system ($7,500 or $8,000) plus a monthly fee for use of the system, it was deemed cost prohibited at that time.

Guy Bradford discussed the potential new cell tower and Selectwomen Pereen mentioned that perhaps the land assessment should be increased, the owner will receive revenue from the cell tower.

Discussion ensued regarding MERSD and requesting cuts to FY21 budgets. Staffing levels, health care costs and special needs programs were discussed. Chairman Buttrick discussed a 3.6 percent increase to FY21 budgets and the struggle of dealing with a revenue shortfall. The district is the majority of our budget and the fixed increases each year shows that we need someone to champion the fiscal quality of the budget. We cannot offset sustained increases with new sources of revenue.

Michael Antell will meet with Brendhan Zubricki, Town Administrator regarding Town Fees and potential increases. Chairman Buttrick will work with Assessor’s office to gain knowledge on assessments. Guy Bradford will meet with the DPW and discuss fees on Transfer Station Stickers for seniors, Advertising signs on ball field.

Michael Flynn will undertake initial fact finding on Solar Panels. Chairman Buttrick and Allison Williard will work together to putting parameters in place to work along with MERSD on budget process.

Chairman Buttrick made a motion to approve minutes from 4/28/2020. Motion made, seconded and unanimously approved.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously voted to approve line item transfers as follows:

$68.60 to cover costs of Ambulance License & Fees. Copy attached.

$500.00 to cover cost of Harbormaster Uniforms. Copy attached.

$500.00 to cover costs of Harbormaster Buoys. Copy attached.

Chairman Buttrick said that he, Chairman Buttrick voted aye in favor; followed by Rob Fitzgibbon, said that he, Rob Fitzgibbon voted aye in favor; Allison Williard said that she, Allison Williard voted aye in favor; followed by Michael Flynn, said that he, Michael Flynn voted aye in favor; followed by Guy Bradford said that he Guy Bradford aye in favor; followed by Michael Antell, said that he, Michael Antell voted aye in favor.

Discussion regarding potential opportunities for additional town revenue

Items that could not be reasonably anticipated by the open meeting law posting deadline - None

Public Comment - None

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously voted to adjourn at 8.47 pm.





