

**Town of Colebrook
Board of Finance**

Minutes to Meeting of July 17, 2014

Members Present

J. Millar, Chairman
R. Carfiro
J. Dorazio
D. Johnstone

Absent

T. Corvo
M. Neal

Others Present

T. McKeon
M. Sloane

The meeting was called to order at 6:53 p.m. by Chairman J. Millar.

1. Reviewed the preliminary results for fiscal year 2013-14. Favorable variances in tax collections, state aid, the Board of Education, and other areas could add roughly \$200,000 to the yearend balance of the general fund. The numbers are subject to audit adjustments, but the supplemental appropriations discussed below can be funded from surplus if the preliminary results hold.
2. M. Sloane updated the Board on the MDC lawsuit. The MDC claims that (i) it is tax exempt and, (ii) even if not, their Colebrook hydroelectric facility is unfairly assessed. The MDC filed similar claims against Hartland, and the two towns will respond jointly. Cohn Birnbaum & Shea, Hartland's town counsel, will represent both towns; Federal Appraisal & Consulting ("FAC") will appraise the MDC facilities and provide expert testimony. The litigation is expected to take upwards of a year. Colebrook's share of FAC's proposal for the appraisal work is \$17,500. A best guess for the initial round of legal expense is \$10,000. The Board concurred with the approach being taken.
3. T. McKeon discussed a supplemental appropriation to pay for repairs to the Wolford Hill, Beech Hill, and Old Forge bridges. A state inspection had found that all three required rehabilitation of their expansion joints to fix cracks and leakage. A STEAP grant of \$205,000 was awarded to cover the cost of the repairs and the design work. Those costs had been estimated by GM2, the consulting engineer, at \$160,000 and \$50,500, respectively. Unfortunately, the lowest of the three bids actually submitted for the repair work was \$201,687, by NJR Construction, leaving a shortfall of \$54,487. The Board raised several questions about why the bridge repairs made about 15 years ago hadn't lasted longer and whether or not some of the current repairs could be deferred; however, the final consensus was to proceed with all three bridges as proposed.
4. J. Millar moved to recommend a supplemental appropriation of up to \$60,000 to cover the cost of the bridge repairs. Similarly, D. Johnstone moved to recommend a supplemental appropriation of up to \$30,000 for the MDC litigation. J. Dorazio seconded both motions. Both passed unanimously. T. McKeon will schedule a town meeting to approve the appropriations.

5. D. Johnstone moved to accept the minutes to the meeting on March 25, 2014.
Second, J. Dorazio. Passed unanimously.

6. R. Carfiro moved to adjourn. Second, J. Dorazio. Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Millar
Board of Finance