



Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

BURLINGTON BOARD OF FINANCE

FULLY REMOTE VIA ZOOM

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 24, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Max Tracy

Karen Paul

Ali Dieng

Zoraya Hightower

Miro Weinberger

OTHERS PRESENT: Katherine Schad

Rich Goodwin

Dan Richardson

Jordan Redell

Cindi Wight

Tony Berry

Jon Murad

Brian Pine

Richard Haesler

Chapin Spencer

Mark Barlow

Norm Baldwin

1.0 CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA



Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
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1/24/2022

Mayor Weinberger called the Board of Finance meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

1.
 - i. Motion to amend/adopt agenda

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to adopt the agenda as presented.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

2.0 PUBLIC FORUM (VERBAL)

2.01 Verbal Comments

None at this time.

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

3.01 Motion to adopt the consent agenda and take the actions as indicated

3.02 January 10, 2022 Board of Finance Meeting Minutes, Draft – approve the minutes.

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by Councilor Paul, to adopt the consent agenda and take the actions as indicated for items 3.01-3.02.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.0 FOR APPROVAL AND RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

4.01 Approval of Marina Slip and Mooring Fees – BPRW

Director Wight said that this item is for mooring and dock fees which need to be approved prior to making increases. She noted several areas where the fees are increasing, which will make them more competitive. She said that it has been relatively quiet during the pandemic at the marina, as much of the volume is from Canadians.



Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to approve and recommend that the City Council approve the 2022 marina fees as set forth in the above table.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.02 Amendment to Contract with OpenGov – CAO

Chief Administration Officer Schad said that OpenGov is the new permitting software the City has started to use. She noted that there is an additional feature related to capital software that isn't currently being used, but that it would help the City provide transparency to the public regarding their capital dollars. She said that the software would be part of project budgeting and accounting records and would feed directly into the City website for public access.

MOTION by Councilor Paul, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to approve and recommend that City Council authorize the Interim Chief Innovations Officer to sign the amendment to the OpenGov contract in the amount of \$73,350 subject to the final review and approval by the City Attorney.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.03 Creation of three (3) Clerk/Treasurer positions - HR/CT

Chief Administration Officer Schad walked through the positions. She noted that the Commission & License Assistant position was created by a request for more support for the Police Commission and it will also provide general support for the Clerk/Treasurer Office. She said that the other two positions would be created in light of additional federal dollars being available to the City, and the need to apply for those dollars. She said that after a working group met regarding how to best go after this federal money, it was determined more cost-effective and advantageous to recommend two limited services positions (rather than hire consulting firms to do the work).

Councilor Hightower asked about the several other vacant positions and the likelihood that these newly-proposed positions would be filled, given those existing vacancies. Chief Administration Officer Schad agreed that there is concern around filling at least one of the positions, but that the City will mount aggressive recruitment activities.

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to recommend that City Council approve the:

□ Creation of the Commission & Licensing Assistant, a Regular, Full-Time, Non-Exempt, AFSCME, Grade 13, role in the Clerk/Treasurer Office; □ Creation of the Grants Associate, a Limited Service, Full-Time, Non-Exempt, Non-Union, Grade 15, role in the Clerk/Treasurer Office; and □ Creation of the Senior Grants Manager, a Limited Service, Full-Time, Exempt, Non-Union, Grade 20, role in the Clerk/Treasurer Office.





Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.04 Reclassification of One (1) position in Innovation & Technology - HR/I&T

Chief Administration Officer Schad noted that there is incumbent staff in Information Technology that was reclassified in 2018 to only be paid as if 25% of their time was spent on IT activities, but it has now become apparent that the staff-person does as much IT work as others in the department. She said that this reclassification is to make the pay equitable.

MOTION by Councilor Paul, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to recommend that City Council approve the:

□ Reclassification of the Project Manager, a Regular, Full-Time, Exempt, Non-Union, 25% Market Factored Grade role to Project Manager, a Regular, Full-Time, Exempt, Non-Union, 100% Market Factored Grade role in Innovation & Technology.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.05 Creation of one (1) new position, Digital Media Redaction Specialist, within Police Department - HR/Police

Mayor Weinberger said that this item was created in order to operationalize some of the new elements of the body camera policy that the Police Commission recommended. He noted that this position was budgeted for.

City Council President Tracy asked about the redaction process. Chief Murad said that the position would not edit film, but would redact the film by obscuring faces of witnesses, juveniles, indecent exposure, obscuring of audio, to comport with the State's privacy laws.

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to approve and recommend that the City Council approve the:

□ Creation of a Digital Media Redaction Specialist within the BPD, a Regular, Full-time, non-exempt, AFSCME, Grade 14, position.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.06 Retroactive award of community credits to the Lake Champlain Community Sailing Center for the lease payment due for 2020-21 – CEDO



Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

Director Pine said that the lease was structured to be set at a base price that was discounted if the Sailing Center provided services of benefit to the community. He said that during Covid, the Sailing Center was challenged to provide all of the typical services to the community, but did provide services such as child care for essential workers, scholarships, and programs. He said that the City is asking for an exception and credit for full service due to Covid, which would put their lease payment at \$10,000.

MOTION by Councilor Paul, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to approve and recommend that the City Council approve and authorize, the awarding of \$40,000 in Community Credits for the year 2020, to be applied to the annual base rent of \$50,000 due to the City of Burlington from the Lake Champlain Community Sailing Center and authorizing the Community Sailing Center to pay a base rent of \$10,000 to the City for 2021.

DISCUSSION:

- **Councilor Dieng asked if there were other alternatives, such as other sources of fees or an alternative payment plan. Director Pine replied that the Sailing Center kept their costs the same but saw a decrease in their funding sources. He said that they did use the Payroll Protection Program at the federal level and also attempted to raise revenue in other ways, but that they were not able to make up their typical revenue.**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.07 Authorization Re Reimbursement Of Waterfront TIF District And Downtown TIF District Related Costs FY2021 – CEDO

Mayor Weinberger said that this is the annual action necessary to ensure that the City remains in compliance with its TIF rules. Director Pine added that under the Vermont Statute, VEPC needs to approve the City's financial plan for both TIF Districts (Waterfront and Downtown), and then the City needs to go to voters and get approval. He said that once that is approved, the Board of Finance and City Council then need to approve the allocation of funding for these costs.

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to recommend that the City Council approve the attached resolution.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.08 March 1, 2022 Annual City Meeting - Pledging The Credit Of The City To Secure Indebtedness For Public Improvements Within The Downtown TIF District – CEDO

Councilor Hightower asked for clarification around whether a certain amount of funding is being set aside for the Burlington School District. She also asked about the public projects that would be part of the Downtown TIF District. Mayor Weinberger replied that there is a cumulative debt policy between the School District and the City, but that TIF debt is carved out of that policy. He said that the smaller bond being proposed has ameliorated some concern on the part of the School District. Director Pine explained the "but for" concept of the Downtown TIF, saying that the public investment would



Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

spur private investment to incur increment.

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to recommend that the City Council approve the attached resolution.

DISCUSSION:

- **City Council President Tracy voiced support for the Downtown TIF District and welcomed improvements to the street that would be friendlier to alternative forms of transit. He also spoke in support of the stormwater upgrades that this would bring.**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

4.09 March 1, 2022 Town Meeting Day Proposed Increase to General Fund Tax Rate – CAO

Councilor Paul asked what the next steps would be if the tax increase is not approved. Mayor Weinberger replied that if voters do not approve the increase, the administration will assess its options, such as asking for a reduced amount. He said that if there is still a gap, the administration would come to the Council with a plan to cut department budgets to address that gap. Councilor Paul stressed the importance of communicating that this proposed increase is predicated on inflation, and communicating clearly what will occur if the tax increase does not pass.

Councilor Dieng said that Burlington is one of the highest-taxed municipalities in the State and that he would not be supportive of a tax increase.

City Council President Tracy said that though tax increases are painful and should be avoided where possible, it would be difficult for the City to cut services that residents depend on.

Councilor Paul said that it will be important for the administration and City Council to continue exploring cost-saving options, even if a tax increase is approved by the voters. Mayor Weinberger noted that even if the voters have approved a tax increase, the City has not used its full taxing authority for the last five years.

Action was not taken on this item.

4.10 March 1, 2022 Town Meeting Day Authorization to Issue General Obligation Bonds for Capital Projects – CAO





Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

MOTION by City Council President Tracy, SECOND by Councilor Paul, to recommend that the City Council approve the attached resolution.

DISCUSSION ON AMENDMENT:

- Councilor Dieng said that he continues to believe that the amount of the general obligation bond is too large. He said that he would be in support of waiting to see what federal dollars are available through the federal infrastructure funding that would be coming to the City.
- Councilor Barlow said that there were two resolved clauses in the \$40 million request that stated that the City should look to other sources before it looks to bonding authority to pay for capital needs and limit the fungibility of the capital funds. He said that the language on lines 45-47 limits the fungibility, but would like to see language that would come from the original \$40 million request that would prioritize other funding sources prior to using bonding authority. He said that Councilor Paul suggested adding that to the ballot language to convey to the voters that that is the City's intention as well.

MOTION TO AMEND by Councilor Paul, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to amend the resolution to add the following resolved clause on Line 44: "If the City succeeds at securing other capital funds in excess of the current projections, which can be used in place of General Obligation bonding, the Administration will prioritize taxpayer savings as a goal and may not reallocate bond proceeds to other investments, except with explicitly City Council approval of the reallocation."

VOTING ON AMENDMENT: unanimous; motion carries.

DISCUSSION ON RESOLUTION AS AMENDED:

- City Council President Tracy expressed support for the resolution as amended, saying that the City has a significant number of capital investment needs, and this bond would address at least some of them. He said that deferring the work related to this General Obligation Bond would result in the deterioration of capital assets and public safety, as well as increased costs down the road.
- Mayor Weinberger noted that 20% of the bond is for local matching grants, which would help secure many millions of dollars in federal spending.
- Councilor Paul said that she is supportive of the revised and reduced bond proposal because it has kept critical and important items while removing placeholder lines like Memorial Auditorium.
- Councilor Dieng said that he supports the items within the bond, but does not support the amount of the bond. He said that the City needs to prioritize work on building a new Burlington High School.

VOTING ON RESOLUTION AS AMENDED (by roll call): Councilor Dieng – nay, Councilor Hightower – aye, Councilor Paul – aye, City Council President Tracy – aye, Mayor Weinberger – aye; (4 ayes, 1 nay; motion carries).

5.0 ADJOURNMENT



Board of Finance Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022, 5:00 pm
****Remotely via ZOOM****
1/24/2022

5.01 Motion to Adjourn

With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 PM.

RScty: AACoonrad