

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR  
11 RYE STREET  
BROAD BROOK, CONNECTICUT, 06016**

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**Wednesday, April 8, 2020**

**\*\*\*These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting\*\*\***

**Regular Members Present:** Jerilyn Corso (Chairman), Bill Syme, Karen Christensen, Barbara Petano, Tom Talamini, Tom Lansner

**Regular Members Absent:** None

**Alternate Members Present:** None

**Alternate Members Absent:** Noreen Farmer, Danielle Godeck

**1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Chairman Corso called the Public Hearing to Order at 7:01 p.m.

**2. TIME AND PLACE OF HEARING:**

Wednesday, April 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m. (Via Zoom, Virtual Meeting)

**3. ATTENDANCE/APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES:**

The whole Board was present so no alternates needed to be appointed.

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**Sarah Muska – 25 Maple Ave.,** Stated she would like to thank all of the Board members for their service on this Board. She stated that it is not an easy task especially this year with what you have in front of them, so she would like to thank the Board for their commitment and time. She also would like the Board to reconsider reinstating the Communications and Technologies Supervisor position for the Police Department that was recommended by the Board of Selectmen. They gave a through presentation explaining each ask and she thinks that the community would best be served with the sworn staff focusing on what they were hired to do, which is protecting and serving the community and enforcing the law. She thinks that this is a very necessary position and she hopes the Board will consider looking at it again. Also, please reevaluate Warehouse Point Fire District and discuss it as a Board just to see where the Board

stands on it. She stated that the Board of Finance does have the authority to allocate funds if they so choose to. This was not a unanimous decision by the Board of Selectmen to not fund it. So, she just asks that the Board please consider alleviating some of that double taxation for the Warehouse Point residents and thank you very much.

**Fred Stucklen** – He states that he seconds the comment about the Warehouse Point Fire District. He states that it is an unfortunate situation where the District is double taxed for fire services. He thinks the Selectmen need to reconsider the situation and come up with a solution for the Town as a whole.

**Selectman Nordell** – He also echoes Sarah's view on Warehouse Point Fire District. He would like to also see something done. He stated that a MOU could be provided to the Board of Finance in a matter of days if it is so warranted. He states that it wasn't a unanimous decision and they tried to get it put in but were outvoted on the Board of Selectmen. He also would like to echo Sarah's thoughts on the Police Department position. He realizes that the Board of Finance cut all new positions except the one position on Parks and Recreation. He stated that the Police position would save money down the road with overtime and get the officers on the road more and save on their overtime calls. This would save the Town money in tax dollars.

**Andy Heath – 15 Steeple Chase Rd.,** He would also like to echo the Warehouse Point Fire District issue. He states it has been going on quite a while, he has been to a number of meetings and has listened to a whole bunch of solutions. He feels there is one out there and he knows it is tough. He knows that during this point in time if the Finance Board could find it to put in some money, it doesn't have to be the whole lump that was initially proposed by the Board of Selectmen but anything would help. He hopes to get this issue resolved as quickly as possible.

**Marie DeSusa – 10 Rice Rd.,** She would like to commend the Board of Finance for doing what they are doing under these circumstances and having to put the budget together. Although we all have things we want to have happen in Town she thinks we have to look at what is happening as far as people losing their jobs. People may not have their jobs in a couple months and she knows that it won't be an issue for some people but to go in with a budget that the Town can't afford is wrong. She stated that she voted to have the extra position put into the Police Department budget because she felt it was important. She feels that if anything is put back in the budget that should be the one place that it should be. She thinks as far as the two fire departments majority of the Board of Selectmen voted not to put it in the budget because of the dollar amount and the unity between the two fire departments has not taken place. At this point she strongly feels it is up to the two fire departments to work out a solution because what they wanted to do turned out not to be. The last vote at the Broad Brook Fire Department didn't pass therefor things between the two departments have stopped. To go in and come up with a budget much greater than what the Town's people normally have voted to do something would be a disservice to the Town. She thinks that putting in a 14-15% increase would not do the Town any good. Also having a 2% increase is not going to do the Town any good either so she thinks that the budget has to come in around 3-3.5% in order for it to pass. She thinks giving any sort of money to Warehouse Point Fire it will not fix the inadequacies between each side of Town. She thinks until that can be resolved putting a band-aid on it isn't going to serve the Town any justice, so she thinks the

Board of Selectmen need to continue doing what they are doing by working on it to have the two departments to come together.

**Bob Leach – 39 Church St.,** He wanted to know if the Board of Finance voted on the budget for the Town side at their last meeting. He would like to also reiterate Selectman Muska's request that you put the Police IT position back in. He asked that they keep in mind that they have a candidate in mind to fill this position and this is a position that will most likely that would carry a salary that is upwards of \$100,000. They are able to get this one person just as they were able to do with dispatch. They have an opportunity to create an efficiency position and he strongly urge the Board to put that back in.

**James Barton – 108 Main St.,** He just wanted to clarify a couple statements from earlier. He states it is not up to the fire department to correct this taxing issue. The fire departments are together on everything. He feels it is up to the Board of Selectmen and the tax payers to fix this double taxation. To put it on the fire departments and to have them agree on it isn't right. He feels it is the job of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to look out for every tax payer in East Windsor not just the tax payers on the Broad Brook side. He feels putting it on the fire department is not right. He hopes the Boards can handle it and in a quick fashion.

**Alan Baker –** Stated that the Board of Selectmen voted to not put Warehouse Point Fire back in the budget because it would have been a 14% increase and he could not see how that was going to pass. He says there is a plan and it is not all on the Board of Selectmen and it is not all on the fire department, it is on everyone. He thinks they should continue with the plan that was started last fall early winter that they were trying to get the District fixed and he thinks that is the way forward. He thinks if you put money in this year then next year maybe you get money or maybe you don't. It is not being fixed and it is almost impossible to put a 14% increase into the budget and no one be allowed to vote on it is just not fair. It is a bad situation and he thinks that they should stick to the plan and move forward and try and finish it for next year. He feels they have to give it a try then they can look at other options.

**Bob Leach –** He thinks the point that everyone is missing on Warehouse Point Fire District issue is that money is going to be paid either from the Town or the Warehouse Point District tax payers budget. Either way those funds are going to be paid, whether it is spread out over the whole town as it should be or you hang it on the Warehouse Point Fire District. Those bills are going to be paid, so whether it is going to be a 14% increase on the Town budget or whatever the percentage increase on the Warehouse Point, someone is paying it. Fairly is the question?

**James Barton –** He just wants to ask a question, is it fair for Warehouse Point Taxpayers to fund 75% of the fire protection in the Town of East Windsor. If you want to start talking about fairness, for the last four years the Warehouse Point tax payers have paid over \$3 million in fire protection where Broad Brook residents only paid half that.

**Alan Baker –** He agrees with James Barton that it is unfair and he feels that it is not fair that people can't vote on that matter.

**Nicole Vicila – 53 Prospect Hill Dr.,** She states that she knows that it is technically on the Board of Selectmen to fix it but if the Board of Selectmen come to a decision that the fire departments don't like are they still going to support it?

**Alan Baker** – He stated that in reference to Ms. Vilila's question that it has become incumbent on the Board of Selectmen to try and help come to some kind of agreement on this. He thought they were heading in that direction with the District stuff. He knows there is opposition to it and it is hard to do. He agrees with Bob's point too that bills are getting paid anyway. He thinks that in this situation right now the reason they did what they did is because they didn't think that the people want that back in and for the budget to fail makes it difficult to get all the other things they want to get done in Town done.

**Amy O'Toole – Treasurer,** Wanted to confirm that the Town has only spent \$1.6 million over the last four years, including this year, on the Broad Brook Fire Services budget.

**James Barton** – Wanted to agree with Amy, she is right the Town has only spent \$1.6 million on Broad Brook Fire Department and nothing on Warehouse Point.

**Fred Stucklen** – He wanted to clarify that \$1.6 million was at the burden of the whole Town which is double taxation for Warehouse Point. The Selectmen need to address the double taxation situation. It may not get resolved in this finance period but it needs to be resolved in the Town.

**James Barton – 158 South Water St.,** He wants to know how they can stop talk about the fire department. They Town is protected by both Warehouse Point Fire and Broad Brook Fire and both components are required to protect the Town and the residents. For four years now, the Warehouse point tax payers have carried the burden of approximately 75% of the fire protection for the Town. It was his hope that with a new administration in Town after an administration that was...he cut in and out and could not be heard. He got back on and stated that he has been frustrated for four years over the fire department problem and the Board needs to fix it. For four years they have been dysfunctional and he was hoping they could get over that. It is up to the Town leaders to fix this. He cut out again and could not be understood.

**Bob Leach** – he stated that regardless of where it comes from the money is still going to be expended. The whole thing is whether or not you are going to extract it from Warehouse Point residents or you are going to extract it fairly among the Town. He does not know how anybody on the Board of Finance does not realize that and being Board of Finance member's, he would expect you to understand that somebody is paying that bill. Whether it is being done fairly across all Town residents or whether it is being done how it has been for the last four years you are screwing the Warehouse Point residents. He does not know if his point is getting across to the Board or not.

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**5. ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Corso adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca D'Amicol, Recording Secretary