

**MINUTES
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL AUDITORIUM / ZOOM
October 17, 2023**

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Finance was held on Tuesday, October 17, 2023. Attendance was by Zoom and in person. Present at City Hall were Mayor Elinor Carbone, Comptroller Robin Stanziale, Treasurer Dan Farley, and the Board of Finance Members James Wright, and Laurene Pesce. Board of Finance Members Christopher Beyus and Christopher Anderson joined via Zoom. Board of Finance Members Mark Bushka and Deborah Iannacito were absent.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 5:14 p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

On a motion by Mrs. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public. No members of the public wished to speak.

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board voted to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2023. Mr. Beyus abstained.

RED MOUNTAIN AVENUE

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mrs. Pesce, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to use \$25,000 from Contingency to acquire 11.3 acres on Red Mountain Avenue, MBL 120/003/006, from the Tax Collector. This has previously been approved by the City Council. Mayor Carbone explained to the Board that this property was going to be going up for a Tax Sale with the Tax Collector in September. She said that this property abuts the planned trail and has wetlands on it, so it's not easily developmental property. She went on to say that this would be an opportunity for the City to add additional field space, trail space, and other items. Mr. Wright asked if the \$25,000 was past due taxes, and Mayor Carbone told him it was. Mr. Wright also asked where the access was for the property, Mayor Carbone told him that Red Mountain Avenue is the access point for the property. Mr. Beyus asked if the City was able to put another dog park there, Mayor Carbone said that the possibilities for this property are endless for recreation purposes. Mr. Anderson asked if they would be able to relocate the skate park to this location, Mayor Carbone told him that it had already been decided and planned that the skate park would be going on the Besse Pond Park property. Mr. Anderson also asked if this property was where the tent city was located, Mayor Carbone told her that the encampment was located on private property, where there are now no trespassing signs, and the Police Department can enforce this. Also building on this property would deter that kind of activity.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

On a motion by Mr. Beyus, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Board of Education Budget Performance Reports. Mr. Beyus said that this is the first report the Board has seen in a long time, Mayor Carbone said that it was, but it covered Fiscal Year 22, and the first three months of FY 23.

DISCUSSION ON POLICIES TO ADDRESS AUDIT FINDINGS

Mayor Carbone reminded the Board that the Audit report was distributed last month, along with Clifton Larson Allen's (CLA) findings. She explained that CLA found significant deficiencies with internal controls, which led to considering what policies the City and Board of Education (BOE) could put in place to adhere to the rules. CLA identified areas where the Municipality could improve, for instance, that there were a lot of turnovers in the City and BOE Finance offices. Also, CLA said that the BOE did year-end transfers that didn't comply with City Policy, which is to go to the Board of Finance (BOF) to request a transfer of 2% of their surplus be moved into the Capital Reserve account. Mayor Carbone suggested a policy regarding a year-end review with the BOF and the BOE to ensure all expenditures are identified and there is a paper trail. Mr. Beyus asked for a meeting with Ms. Stanziale's office and BOE's Finance office to determine an action plan going forward to correct the deficiencies found in the Audit. Mayor Carbone said that she is looking to have a joint meeting with the BOF, City Council, and CLA to go over Audit findings. She went on to say that this was a difficult Audit for the City, with lots of learning opportunities. Mayor Carbone also noted that another area to have in a policy would be the purchasing standards, so that would be a meeting with the Comptroller and the Purchasing Agent. Mrs. Pesce asked when the joint meeting would happen, Ms. Stanziale said that the meeting is scheduled for the next BOF meeting on November 21, 2023. Mr. Wright asked if there was any cost to the Taxpayers because of the Audit findings, Mayor Carbone said there wouldn't be any impact on the Taxpayers as these were all new findings and not repeated ones.

BUSINESS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by department heads.

Treasurer Dan Farley said that the Audit can affect the Bond Rating of the City if not completed promptly, however, since Robin and he were in constant contact with them on the progress of the Audit, it didn't have any effect on the City's Bond Rating.

Mayor Carbone suggested a pre-audit kickoff between the City and the BOE to establish roles and responsibilities for who is in charge of getting paperwork to the Auditors.

BUSINESS BY MAYOR & MEMBERS

On a motion by Mrs. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the Mayor and members of the Board of Finance.

Mrs. Pesce asked for an update on the ARPA Funds. Mayor Carbone told her that she would get a full report for the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 5:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK