

**TOWN OF POMFRET  
BOARD OF FINANCE – PUBLIC HEARING  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2009 AT 7:00 PM  
POMFRET COMMUNITY SCHOOL CAFETERIA**

In Attendance: Board of Finance Members Maureen Nicholson, Carolyn Gerrity, Margie Huoppi, Michael Baum, John DiIorio, Tony Emilio. First Selectman James Rivers, Board of Education Chairman Richard Schad. Approximately 50 citizens.

- I. Public Hearing** – Hearing opened at 7:00 PM by W. Hinchman who was acting as moderator. M. Nicholson stated that no action would be taken this evening and that the Board of Finance would not likely act on budgets before their April meeting. She asked that both budgets be presented and questions and comments from the public will be taken afterward.
- a. 2009/2010 Budget Presentation-General Government** – J. Rivers stated that the Board of Finance had asked for a zero increase to budgets this year and the General Government budget has done this. The revenues shown in this budget tonight are estimates only. He provided an overview of the appropriations presented and also made note to the Board of Finance that an ESRA licensing fee of \$400.00 and an upward adjustment of audit costs of \$585.00 would be added to this budget – these changes would still keep the budget at a zero increase.
- b. 2009/2010 Budget Presentation-Board of Education** – Richard Schad provided an overview of the budget process. He stated that this budget is presented with a slight increase of just under 1% or about \$85,000. He stated that this is not a maintenance budget but that there is impact. He provided an overview of the budget presented.

**II. Citizen's Comments** – Walter Hinchman asked that questions and comments related to the General Government budget be posed first. Peter Mann asked if the Senior Center would be used for various Town Meetings. J. Rivers stated the plan is for three major uses: Seniors, Grange, and meetings. Some meetings are already being held there. David Flath asked if the \$40,000 in Town Aid for a truck is separate from what is seen in Capital budget. J. Rivers stated that it is separate and is shown there to replace a 13 year old one ton truck. He asked about Health insurance grouped with the school. The Town is rated with PCS but the two groups have different brokers. David Patenaude commended all three Boards for tight budgets however his understanding of this as presented would be an increase of approximately 1/3 of a mil. He asked about consideration of reducing the \$250,000 in land acquisition to eliminate any tax increase or possibly decrease taxes. Ann Hennen stated that the Conservation Commission clerk had been cut and she would ask that this be returned to their budget. A woman asked for clarification of the land acquisition program and at what stages any possible purchases were at. David Flath commented on the \$250,000 in the Land Acquisition line and the \$110,000 in the School Facility line and stated this was supposed to be an Operating budget. Walter McGinn stated that there is money allocated to the Conservation Commission, could

they decide themselves to use this money for a clerk, or, could they ask the Board of Finance to add a clerk. Wendy Lupien asked what the fringe benefit line included as it seemed to be high. Pam Cartledge asked that the Conservation line be adjusted to cover for a clerk. Gary Kendal asked about legal money allocated to the ZBA as a court case was pending. Paul Vaida asked for clarification of the School Facility line. Walter Hinchman now asked for questions or comments concerning the Board of Education budget. Joe Makeska asked if the list in front have been cut. R. Schad stated no but they are areas that could be looked at with further reductions. Peter Mann stated that at the last Board of Finance meeting he asked about exploring a wage freeze and if any progress has been made toward that end. David Patenaude asked the Board of Finance to specifically address questions posed tonight when at the Town Meeting and he asked the Board of Selectmen if any consideration of a referendum has been looked at yet. David Flath commended the Boards for having this Public Hearing early. He felt it was the obligation of the General Government budget to reduce by \$85,000 thereby bringing the mil close to zero. He would recommend a snow removal fund, reducing Bulky Waste to 3 times per year, eliminate the contingency line and consolidate or eliminate all the small miscellaneous lines. Wendy Lupien stated that she felt the reduction of a school psychologist in today's age was irresponsible. Peter Mann asked about a Town Meeting date. Probably late April or early May. John DiIorio made a brief statement asking people to view budgets in their entirety as opposed to micro views, reminding people that unemployment trends will probably decrease revenues. Lisa Semancik stated that while she felt bad for people who were unemployed she could afford an increase in taxes and would prefer to see that. Walter Hinchman reminded people that if they thought of additional questions or concerns they could still reach the Board of Finance.

**III. Adjournment** – T. Emilio motioned to adjourn. M. Huoppi seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Ryan, Clerk

Date approved\_\_\_\_\_