**Board of Finance Regular Meeting**

**September 14, 2023 6:00 PM**

**Meeting Held Remotely**

**Call to Order:** Board of Finance Chair Michael Imber called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Attendees were Vice Chair Rone Baldwin, Theresa Brasco, Jeffrey Farr, Amy Gare, Jeffrey Goldstein, Maxwell Rosenthal, Finance Director Rick Darling and Interim Town Administrator Lee Palmer.

**Update from Karen Paulson on the OPEB trust.** Mr. Imber welcomed Karen Paulson of Fiducient Advisors who reviewed the August 2023 OPEB trust portfolio performance. A summary of asset class performance was given. Most asset classes were positive. Over the summer, performance saw slight volatility. Fixed Income index rates increased. Equities across the board saw negative returns in the summer but YTD has a strong showing. Large caps are strong due to overly concentrated technology indexes. Small caps are strong as well, interest rates of recent are reflecting a negative for the past few months.

Ms. Paulson reviewed the OPEB trust. More recent performance has been slightly negative for August however for the calendar YTD the fund is still up by 7.9%. Ms. Paulson reviewed asset allocation on Metropolitan West Total Return Bond Fund and explained that the long-tenured portfolio manager was retiring. Mr. Imber asked about Met West’s past success in transitioning portfolio managers while maintaining fund performance standards. Ms. Paulson confirmed that Met West had done this successfully before. Ms. Brasco inquired about reducing allocations in the Met West fund. Ms. Paulson will review diversifying suggestions and will get back to the BOF with a formal recommendation.

**Property Transfer Transaction Summary (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023).** Mr. Farr reviewed the property transfer transaction summary for FY 2023. In January, sales were trending less than the previous year and have continued through the rest of the FY. At the end of the fiscal year, total sales volume of houses was 74% of what it was previous year, a downward trend since the 2021. In terms of average sale price, sales prices have continued to increase over the past 3 yrs. In 2021 we saw the average sales price of $997,000. This year it is $1.28 million. There is an overall increase in 39.8% for this year for all sales. Revaluation, projected grand list, assessments and mill rates were discussed. Mr. Baldwin asked when will we see the revaluation numbers. Mr. Darling will get information from the Assessor’s office. When the revaluation is done it will impact July 1, 2024 taxes. Discussions continued on the assessment appeals process.

**Proposed Procurement Policy.** Mr. Baldwin reviewed a document which is a proposed, draft set of Procurement Policies and Procedures for the Town of Weston. The document was the result of efforts by BOF members Rone Baldwin, Amy Gare, Selectwoman Amy Jenner, Interim Town Administrator Lee Palmer and Finance Director Rick Darling to recommend updated procurement policies and procedures for the Town of Weston. Mr. Baldwin noted that the last time the policy has been updated was approximately 23 years ago and that this document has been designed to be consistent with the Town Charter. The BOF would like to have an updated procurement policy reviewed and approved by the BOS.The policy covers all town departments with two exceptions. Non-facility Police Department procurements are to be detailed separately under authority of the Police Commission and WPS are detailed separately under the authority of the BOE.

Highlights reviewed:

* Authority for procurement. The Town Administrator serves as the purchasing authority for the town and directs the procurement program through the Finance Director who acts as purchasing agent.
* Special appropriation procedures outside of the budget have not changed and are subject to the constraints outlined in the Charter.
* Ethics of procurement were reviewed.
* Thresholds for sourcing and purchasing - to ensure appropriate competitive bidding for certain levels of procurement, streamlining administrative procedures for smaller procurements, focusing limited town resources on more rigorous competitive bidding and supplier selection for larger procurements.
* Thresholds for verbal, non-competitive bids, written bids and public RFP’s were reviewed.
* Multiple year procurement contracts were discussed.
* Competitive bidding requirements and supplier selection authority delegation was reviewed for multi-level bids.
* Public RFP and RFB over $25,000 was discussed.
* Waivers for competitive bidding was discussed.
* Purchasing ordering/payment authority delegation was discussed.
* Specifications for competitive bidding was detailed.
* Process for publicly posted RFP’s and RFB’s was discussed.
* Emergency Waiver provisions was discussed.

Mr. Imber clarified that the BOF does not have approval authority over this policy. Mr. Imber asked the BOF to review over the next month and provide questions/comments for discussion at the October BOF prior to presenting a revised draft to the BOS for their consideration and approval.

**Updates from other summer study groups.** Mr. Farr gave an update on the special appropriation protocal form. Updates to the appropriation request form have been made and is ready for BOF review at the next meeting.

Cash Flow Modeling – Mr. Farr and Mr. Imber have had meetings and are preparing a final format. Models will be ready for review and discussion at the October meeting.

The long term forecast work is continuing and Mr. Imber will present an update at the October meeting.

Discussion on key financial ratios and how that plays with the credit rating agency work will be done in October.

**Discussion/Decision regarding approval of the June 15, July 13 and August 10, 2023 minutes.** Mr. Imber asked for a motion to approve the minutes of June 15, 2023. Motion made by Mr. Baldwin. Seconded by Mr. Rosenthal. Ms. Brasco and Mr. Farr abstain. Motion carries.

Mr. Imber asked for a motion to approve the minutes of July 13, 2023. Motion made by Ms. Brasco. Seconded by Mr. Rosenthal. Mr. Baldwin, Ms. Gare and Mr. Goldstein abstain. Motion carries.

Mr. Imber asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 10, 2023. Motion made by Mr. Goldstein. Seconded by Mr. Farr. Ms. Gare and Mr. Rosenthal abstain. Motion carries.

**Adjourn.** Mr. Imber called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Baldwin made the motion, seconded by Ms. Brasco. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Minutes Submitted By:

Shawn Amato, Recording Secretary