

June 14, 2017

The monthly meeting of the Sterling Board of Finance was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman David Shippee. Other members' present-Neil Cook, Neil Delmonico, and Peter Rabbitt.

Members' absent-Bruce Lindberg and Robert Lassan.

Staff present-Russell Gray, Lincoln Cooper, and Joyce Gustavson.

Also present-Frank & Melissa Bood and Sharon Tierney

**Audience of Citizens:** No comment.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Approval of Minutes:** P. Rabbitt made a motion, seconded by N. Delmonico to approve the minutes of the 4/12/2017 monthly meeting, the 4/19/2017 public hearing minutes with the correction to Other members present...“Peter Rabbitt”...instead of “Dale Clark”, the special meeting minutes of 4/19/2017, 5/10/2017, and 5/24/2017. All voted in favor of the motion.

**Unfinished Business:**

**a. Tax Collector's Grand Ratebook Balance Sheet Report:** The report for month ending 4/30/2017 and 5/31/2017 was submitted and reviewed. D. Shippee noted that this is the first year that one hundred (100) percent of the taxes have been collected.

**b. I.T. Upgrades for the Sterling Municipal Building:** D. Shippee reported four (4) vendors attended the pre-bid meeting on 5/31/2017 and J. Gustavson reported that another vendor stopped in this week to tour the building. D. Shippee also reported that the Infrastructure Cabling System bids are due 6/21/2017 for the installation of new cabling and the removal of the old cabling, for the replacement of network switches, and for the replacement of the network server. The installation of the fiber into the building is scheduled to be completed on or before 6/26/2017.

**c. Board of Education's Quarterly Report:** The Board of Education's quarterly report for the period ending 3/31/2017 was submitted and reviewed.

**d. Treasurer's Quarterly Report:** The report for the quarter ending 3/31/2017 was submitted for review.

**New Business:**

**a. Resignation of O'Connor Davies, LLP:** D. Shippee reported that he received a letter dated 5/12/2017 from Marcia L. Marien, CPA of O'Connor Davies, LLP, (copy on file) stating that O'Connor Davies, LLP can no longer do the audit for the Town of Sterling. M. Marien has reached out to another audit firm in our area, Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC, to help us at the same fees as O'Connor Davies, LLP if we want to reach out to them. N. Delmonico made a motion, seconded by N. Cook to accept Marcia L. Marien, CPA of O'Connor Davies, LLP, resignation with regret. All voted in favor of the motion.

**b. Appointment of Auditor for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017:** D. Shippee reported that on 6/6/2017, that he, along with the Board of Education Chairman, the Business Finance Manager, and the Treasurer, met with Susan K. Jones, CPA, of Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC, and were impressed with the new proposal for professional services. The proposed fee is the same as the fee to O'Connor Davies, LLP. N. Cook made a motion, seconded by P. Rabbitt to appoint Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC, Certified Public Accounts of 1041 Poquonnock Road, Groton, CT 06340 as the Town of Sterling auditor for the period of three (3) years (fiscal years ending 6/30/2017, 6/30/2018, and 6/30/2019). All voted in favor of the motion.

**c. Request for Additional Appropriation of \$23,600 from Fund Balance to Board of Selectmen's 2017-2018 Budget to Town Hall Expenses – Maintenance:** This request for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$23,600 is a referral from the Board of Selectmen on behalf of Frank Bood, Chairman of the Sterling Energy Committee. P. Rabbitt stated that this request should have been added in the Selectmen's 2017-2018 proposed budget. F. Bood explained to the Board that the appropriation would be to retrofit the lighting at the Sterling Municipal Building, 1183 Plainfield Pike, Oneco and is a one (1) time cost which would include interior lighting, the parking lot and the gym. The request of \$23,600 was incorrectly stated in the minutes of the Sterling Energy Committee's meeting of 5/11/2017 and the actual amount requested is \$23,040. The upfront cost is

\$40,526. There is a twenty-three (23) percent return investment; the savings (approximately \$6,000 per year) would be seen right away, and in five (5) years the Town would break even. The \$5,000 Bright Idea Grant would be redeemed to offset the cost of the lighting upgrades. N. Cook made a motion, seconded by N. Delmonico to approve the sum of \$23,040 from the Fund Balance to the Selectmen's 2017-2018 Budget – Town Hall Expenses – Maintenance to retrofit the lighting at the Sterling Municipal Building, 1183 Plainfield Pike, Oneco. Discussion followed. N. Cook and N. Delmonico voted in favor of the motion; P. Rabbitt voted against the motion. D. Shippee did not vote. Motion carries 2-1.

**d. Request for Additional Appropriation of \$14,000 from Fund Balance to Board of Selectmen's 2017-2018 Budget to Public Safety – Street Lights:** This request for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$14,000 is a referral from the Board of Selectmen on behalf of Frank Bood, Chairman of the Sterling Energy Committee to replace seventy-four (74) street light fixtures. Sharon Tierney of Graybar stated that Graybar works with Tanko Lighting. The adjusted acquisition cost if we buy the street lights back from Eversource is two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). The maintenance cost is eighty (\$70) per pole. F. Bood stated that the request of \$14,000 was incorrectly stated in the minutes of the Sterling Energy Committee's meeting of 5/11/2017 and the actual amount requested is \$28,626. Moving forward with this project, the Town would save \$10,813 a savings of more than two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) over twenty (20) years. The rebate from Eversource is \$11,900. N. Delmonico made a motion, seconded by N. Cook to approve the sum of \$28,626 from the Fund Balance to the Selectmen's 2017-2018 Budget – Public Safety – Street Lights to replace seventy-four (74) street lights with LED street lighting. Discussion followed. N. Cook and N. Delmonico voted in favor of the motion; P. Rabbitt voted against the motion. D. Shippee did not vote. Motion carries 2-1.

**Any Other Business to Come Before the Board of Finance:** 1) F. Bood also stated to the Board that the Sterling Energy Committee is looking into solar panels for both the Sterling Community School and the Sterling Municipal Building. Eighty (80) percent of the electricity would be generated by the solar panels and the remaining twenty (20) percent would be generated through Eversource at eleven (.11) cents per kilowatt hour. F. Bood will attend the September Board of Finance meeting to discuss the solar panels in greater detail. 2) N. Cook stated that he wanted the Board to be aware of the situation with Empireco Limited Partnership (formerly Re-Energy) because if they continue to be in arrears with water and taxes, the Town is looking at a substantial revenue loss. Currently Empireco owes the Water Authority \$35,531.20 for Grand List 2015; Personal Property \$79,975.70 for Grand List 2015 and \$126,114.68 for Grand List 2016; and Real Estate \$73,660.26 for Grand List 2016. J. Gustavson reported that the Revenue Collector received \$79,975.70 for Personal Property on GL 2015.

**Adjournment:** N. Cook made a motion, seconded by P. Rabbitt to adjourn at 8:09 p.m. All voted in favor of the motion.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Joyce A. Gustavson, Board of Finance Clerk