

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 28, 2025**

1. Call to Order

Michael Parker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Members Present

In attendance were Michael Parker, Joe Tolisano, Kathy Devlin, Bruce Devlin, and Paul Hart. Also, in attendance were Superintendent Dr. Sam Galloway, CFO Brian Wissinger, and First Selectman Tim Keeney.

3. Board of Education Update

Dr. Galloway informed the Board that the first budget proposal had been presented to the Board of Education on Monday, January 27. The proposed budget is a 5.72% increase, or \$30,487,415. This budget maintains and improves current programs, is fiscally responsible, and supports student growth and development. The budget does not contain any new positions. The SES HVAC project is on schedule.

Michael Parker asked for the census data from year to year. Dr. Galloway said the student population remains stable and provided the number of pupils per school.

Joe Tolisano asked what class sizes are. Dr. Galloway responded that the Elementary School and MBA are both manageable. SHS is alternating class offers to maximize class sizes. Tolisano asked for the percentage of the fixed increase in the budget. Dr. Galloway stated the increase is about 90% fixed with salaries and benefits making up most of the increase.

4. Board of Selectmen Update

Tim Keeney informed the Board that we have met with Ellington and proposed the same ALS Agreement to them that we have with Stafford. They are presenting it to their Board of Selectmen in February for approval. The library had boiler issues in the prior week. Public Works and the Fire Department maintained the building and used space heaters to keep pipes from freezing and bursting while repairs were taking place. A Charter Revision Commission has been seated, and they should begin meeting in the coming weeks.

5. CFO/Finance Department Update

Bruce Devlin asked Wissinger and Keeney about the deficits the Town is facing in the upcoming budget and if other towns are also facing the same issues. Wissinger and Keeney explained the various state mandates that were handed down that are changing our Grand List with no assistance being provided. The State changed the formula for motor vehicle valuations, creating a graduated depreciation scale, reducing the Grand List

by \$18 million. The Veteran's exemptions are another \$3.5 million reduction in our Grand List. The Bilton Road Solar Field has also been made fully exempt causing the Grand List to be reduced by almost \$10 million as well. Lengthy discussion followed.

6. CIP Update

Joe Tolisano updated the Board on the status of the capital budget and the plan to finalize the budget by their March meeting.

7. FY2026 Budget Update

This update was covered during the CFO Update. Wissinger gave the Board a calendar of proposed meeting dates for the Board's Budget Cycle.

8. 2024 Grand List Summary

This update was covered during the CFO Update.

9. Appropriations and Transfers

There were none.

10. Other Business

There was none.

11. Approval of Minutes

a. 12/17/24 Regular BOF Minutes

Bruce Devlin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Paul Hart. There was no further discussion, and a unanimous decision followed.

12. Adjournment

Joe Tolisano made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 pm, seconded by Bruce Devlin. There was no further discussion, and a unanimous decision followed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Wissinger

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FIU4XoiAQ0>