

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
TOWN OF BRANFORD, BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT 06405**

JOSEPH W. MOONEY, CHAIRMAN

HARRY DiADAMO, JR.  
VICTOR J. CASSELLA  
ROBERT IMPERATO  
CHARLES F. SHELTON, JR.  
JEFFREY E. VAILETTE



EX-OFFICIO  
JAMES B. COSGROVE,  
First Selectman

CLERK  
LISA E. ARPIN, CMC CCTC  
Town Clerk

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 25, 2021**

RECEIVED  
 2021 JAN 26 P 4: 02  
 Lisa Arpin  
 BRANFORD TOWN CLERK

Chairman Joseph Mooney called the remote meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. The meeting was also available for remote public viewing via BCTV/Comcast Channel 20 and Facebook Live.

The full board was present: Harry DiAdamo, Victor Cassella, Robert Imperato, Joseph Mooney, Charles Shelton, Jr., and Jeffrey Vailette. Also present were James Cosgrove, First Selectman; Selectman Ray Dunbar; James Finch, Finance Director; Kathryn LaBanca, Assistant Finance Director; Lisa Arpin, Town Clerk; Margaret Lubberda, Director of Human Resources; RTM reps connected remotely were Anthony Alfone, Tom Brockett, DeeDee Hakun, Ray Ingraham, Carolyn Sires and Frank Twohill.

1. Approval of minutes: Motion by Mr. Shelton, seconded by Mr. Vailette the approval of the minutes of the March 30, 2020 special, May 21, 2020 special, July 20, 2020 special, August 31, 2020, October 26, 2020 and December 7, 2020 special meetings were approved unanimously.
2. Citizen's Communications: Resident Wayne Cooke spoke regarding town development.
3. To consider, and if appropriate, approve the following budget transfer for the Tax Collector to fund a Tax Associate/Sewer Clerk position for the remainder of FY21:

<u>From:</u>		
10149040-588802	Contingency	(\$21,561)
<u>To:</u>		
10141070-517000	Regular Wages & Salaries	\$2,370
10141070-518000	Overtime	15,000
10141070-519040	Accrued Payroll	191
10141070-533280	Consulting Services	4,000

Jamie Cosgrove reviewed his memo (attached) and discussed the ongoing evaluation of operations of the Tax Department and the decision to move to the 2010 level of staffing (adding back a position.) Margaret Lubberda added salary, process/workflow and job description input. It was noted the Tax Collector was not present due to a prior engagement. Jim Finch reported the contingency balance as \$699,439 should tonight's item be approved.

Mr. Imperato made a motion to approve the transfer request, seconded by Mr. Cassella. The vote carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Finance recommends to the RTM the transfer of \$21,561 in the Tax Collector budget.

4. Adjournment – Prior to adjournment, Chairman Mooney expressed it is not his intention to be harsh during citizen's comments, however he discourages communications not germane to agenda items.

By motion from Mr. Vailette, seconded by Mr. DiAdamo, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021



Lisa E. Arpin, CMC CCTC  
Clerk, Board of Finance

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN

BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT

JAMES B. COSGROVE  
First Selectman

RAYMOND E. DUNBAR, JR.  
ANGELA M. HIGGINS



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Date: January 22, 2021  
To: Joseph Mooney  
Board of Finance  
From: James Cosgrove, First Selectman  
Re: Tax Collector - Budget Transfer FY 2020

RECEIVED  
2021 JAN 22 P 4: 16  
Mae S. Higgins  
BRANFORD TOWN CLERK

I request the following transfers be placed on the agenda for the Board of Finance in January. The request is made to fund a Tax Associate/Sewer Clerk position, and other personnel accounts for the remainder of FY '21.

<u>From:</u>			
10149040	588802	Contingency	\$21,561
<u>To:</u>			
10141070	517000	Regular Salaries	\$2,370
10141070	518000	Overtime	\$15,000
10141070	519040	Accrued Payroll	\$191
10141070	533280	Consulting Services	\$4,000

Last fall, the Tax Collector and Finance Department made a presentation to the Board, identifying a series of challenges the Tax Department was facing. The identified challenges included retirements of seasoned staff, loss of in-person training time due to Covid-19, the postponement of the Tax Collector certification training classes, and the impact of the Governor's executive order to defer tax payments. These conditions were hindering operations within the tax office. Pursuant to the presentation, the Board approved a transfer, providing dollars for tax office consulting, and overtime for tax office staff and the Assistant Finance Director. Additional funds are required to adequately fund the related accounts for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Assistant Finance Director was asked to evaluate current processes and procedures, internal controls and incorporate suggestions identified by the consultant(s) and auditors. The purpose of these ongoing efforts is to improve operations, and ensure our tax office is resilient to changes and challenges. The recent developments exposed the office's vulnerabilities. Through a review of

the efforts conducted over the past few months, it has been determined that the Tax Department should return to the staffing level which existed prior to Fiscal Year '10, with the addition of a Tax Associate/Sewer Clerk.

In FY '10, the tax office eliminated a fulltime position, and began utilizing a shared position with the Finance Department. This structure was sufficient due to experience and knowledge that existed within the department at the time. However, we have learned that it wasn't sustainable with the turnover of elected and staff positions. Returning to a staffing level of four, an elected tax collector and three fulltime positions, will provide the department with improved efficiency, continuity, and resiliency. The additional staff will free up resources to address many of the other office tasks including, but not limited to, back taxes, liens and address changes as well as other payments not payable through lock box.

I was intending to address the staffing needs during the budget process since I recognize the board is often reluctant to add positions during a fiscal year. However, Human Resources believes the town has an applicant pool, which will allow us to fill a newly created position within the next few weeks. This will allow adequate training by our consultant before the July collection period.

Thank you for your consideration of this item, and I along with the Director of Human Resources, and Finance staff will be available to discuss this transfer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Cosgrove', written over a horizontal line.

James Cosgrove