BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Monday, March 21, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom remote meeting.

Committee Members present were: Councilor Kenneth McClary, Chair, Deputy Mayor Gregory Davis, Councilors Anthony Harrington, C.F. Politis and Joseph Merritt

Also present were: Stanley D. Hawthorne, Town Manager, Keri Rowley, Finance Director, Nancy Haynes, Risk and Purchasing Manager and India Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Guest were: Glenn Cassis, Nancy Bowden and Patricia Davis – Alliance for Bloomfield’s Children (ABC)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Presentation from American Rescue Plan Act Consultant and Review of Draft Survey

Mr. Stanley D. Hawthorne, Town Manager gave a brief status update regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Consultant and Review of Draft Survey.

Mr. Hawthorne noted that two consultants responded to the Request for Proposal (RFP). The Town initially chose UHY Consultants. Mr. Hawthorne spoke with the consultant to be ready for an introduction to the Finance Subcommittee/Draft Survey (electronic portal or written) version. The Town Manager received initial draft too late for adequate time for feedback and no response until Monday, March 21, 2022 late afternoon. The Town is in need of a consultant who is ready and able to design a full engagement plan and commitment to Bloomfield.

Ms. Keri Rowley, Finance Director and Mr. Hawthorne introduced the draft Community Survey in outlining broad categories and descriptions.

There was an ensued discussion regarding the Request for Proposal/Consultant Services, options regarding the Standard Allowance vs. Categories listed in the federal regulations, the importance of an extended community engagement process and current allocation proposed in the FY 2023 proposed budget. In addition, subcommittee members discussed partnerships with community organizations and utilizing allowable categories identified in the original ARPA regulations.

Ms. Rowley noted that the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities gave an Educational Overview of ARPA, which provided a broad explanation to residents.

Deputy Mayor Davis commented on panelist coming in as guest for some and not for all. He cautioned the subcommittee to be careful not to show special privileges or groups. Deputy Mayor Davis also noted the importance of providing the Consultant with guidance and direction relative to the scope of work outlined in the RFP.
Councilor McClary apologized to the subcommittee for inviting the Alliance for Bloomfield’s Children (ABC) to the meeting as panelist. It was noted that this group expressed great interest in ARPA and the community engagement process.

Public Comment

1. **Councilor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown** reiterated that the ARPA funding allocation is a once in a lifetime opportunity. She noted that it is important to have a neutral party that can listen to the needs towards the wish lists of the residents, businesses and other organizations that's looking for support from the town. In addition, it is extremely important to be able to spend this money intentionally so whether the consultant is a person or a company, they will be responsible to assist the Town to spend the money intentionally, in an unbiased manner with the necessary reporting as well.

2. **Glenn Cassis, of Alliance for Bloomfield’s Children (ABC)** commented on how the community survey would be administered and the overall importance of educating the community on ARPA funding and its potential benefits to the community.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business agenda items for discussion.

Review of the February 2022 Financials

Mrs. Keri Rowley, Finance Director presented the detailed report on the February 2022 financials.

Revenues

The tax collection rate through February was at 98.0%, which is slightly below the rate of 103.0% for the same period in FY 2021. This is because there have been tax appeal settlements that have resulted in a few large scale refunds which decrease the total collection rate for the year. As of the end of February, the prior year tax revenue is running a deficit of $(1.62 million) which is impacting the collection rate. If the focus is just on the current year levy, the Town has collected 99.9% of the budgeted amount.

Ms. Rowley adjusted the taxes and assessment projection by $367,000 to account for the projected shortfall in the prior year tax revenue account.

The Town did not receive any State grants this month, but it is anticipated that all budgeted grants will be received. There was an increase in the projected revenue for State grants because of the “tiered” state payment in lieu of payment received that was $380,000 more than budgeted.

Building/Demolitions Permit revenues continued to increase in the month of February, collecting over $54,000. To date, this revenue account has collected 97.9% of the budgeted $800,000 and is projected to exceed budget by an estimated $100,000.
Expenditures

Overall, expenditures for the month of February are about 63.2% of the total year’s budget.

Expenditures include $1.99 million in encumbrances, i.e. purchase orders that have been taken out for various accounts but for which funds have not yet been expended. This is slightly under the 66.6% that should be expended by the eighth month. Discounting the encumbrances, we have only actually expended 61.10% of the budget.

To date, the Town has recorded the Board of Education spending $27.14 million of their $46.74 million budget or 58.10%.

The total projected expenditure amount has been kept flat with the adopted budget. Therefore, as presented, the Town’s fund balance would absorb the variance between budgeted revenue and expenditures, which was anticipated during the budget process to be $2.75 million.

Although, the overall expenditure budget projection hasn’t been adjusted, Ms. Rowley have projected the below variances in departmental budgets:

- Town Manager – increase of $20,000, from $642,000 to $692,000
- Finance Admin – decrease from $188,000 to $183,000
- Finance Assessor – decrease of $25,000, from $511,000 - $536,000
- Registrar of Voters – increase from $106,000 to $131,000, up $15,000
- Inland and Wetland Commission – increase of $1,670 from $5,330 to $7,000
- Economic & Development Commission – adjusted upward from $2,891 to $4,000, an increase of $1,109
- Fixed Costs – projected savings of $38,000, overall decrease from $13.38 million to $13.34 million

Ms. Rowley also noted that it is will anticipation, that unlike previous years, the Town will have to allocate the budgeted assignment of fund balance, $2.7 million to close out fiscal year 2022, as there are no any major revenue overages or expenditure savings at this point.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for discussion.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes
It was by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Deputy Mayor Davis and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of February 22, 2022 with noted corrections.

**Adjournment**

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Deputy Mayor and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.