We held a joint Finance Committee meeting with the Board on January 13th to receive the Audit. Leslie Zoll, partner from BlumShapiro reported that Coventry received a clean audit opinion for our financial statements, the federal single audit report and the state single audit report.

Leslie Zoll reported favorable budget variances for both revenues and expenditures in fiscal year 2019. She noted a recommendation to review the segregation of duties as it pertains to cash receipts in the building department but that no issues had been identified in connection with their testing.

Leslie said that John and Amanda were pleasant to work with – as is the BOE staff. A question was raised about the cancellation of end of the year encumbrances and it Amanda said that approximately $12k of the canceled encumbrances were the Town’s with the remaining $46k coming from the Board of Education.

Then we went through several of the Board of Education’s monthly reports with Bob Carroll providing information about each and answering questions of any of the members of the committee.

This was very helpful and informative.

Then we discussed a number of current building projects to get an update on their status.

These included the Auditorium Wall project and the need to reinforce it due to insufficient rebar; the Security grant that was received last year in the fourth round of security grants which has provided window film for the K-5 schools, bollards for outside of both schools, and some new locks/doors/cameras; and the Coventry Grammar School parking lot project.

Amanda Backhaus distributed a spreadsheet showing the financial status of the School Building Energy Efficiency Committee. Amanda reported the State has finally agreed that the fire door was a code violation and we are waiting to hear back from them about our State grant application. We will go out to bid once that is determined.

Next we discussed the CGS/GHR Roofs. John Elsesser reported that the roof on the complex is now 22 years old and is starting to actually have leaks. This is also true of the roof at Robertson school. John said it is time to start preparing a plan to deal with this issue. He thinks we need to get the design work done this summer.
Next we discussed a number of IT issues related to Data Backup and Recover; Cyber Security and the WANRack Fiber Install at CGS/GHR.

After concluding the joint meeting we held our regular Finance Committee meeting.

Amanda Backhaus reviewed her report and our current tax collections are up slightly over last year. Both the Town and BOE are on track for their expenditures. COVRRRA and Sewer Use collections are both up from last year.

We discussed the drastic current year change in the COVRRRA balance and wanted to clarify that it was due to the change in our recycling contract. Rather than receiving payment for recycling we are now paying to have it collected.

Amanda had done an analysis of the impacts of our Waste And Recycling Pickup Contract Renewal and reported that she is projecting that next year COVRRRA expenses will exceed our anticipated revenue by almost $50,000. She suggested that we should consider an increase in the household charge of up to $10 and/or changes in service during our budget deliberations this year.

We also had a discussion about end-of-the-year encumbrances and have requested more information.

Our committee unanimously recommended that the Town Council Accept the Audit.

I recommend that you read the minutes for more detailed information and let us know if you have any questions.

Matthew O’Brien Sr.
Chairman