

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING
40 OLD FARMS ROAD
WILLINGTON, CT 06279**

BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 01, 2018

Members Present:

Jim Bulick, Chairman
Randy Belair, Secretary
Barry Wallett
Peter Tanaka
Laurie Semprebon
Fred Schoen – Alternate
Bill Rankin – Alternate

Members Absent:

Mike Makuch, Vice-Chair

Also Present: Donna Latincsics, Business Manager; Tish Ignatowicz, Treasurer; Erika Wiececki, First Selectwoman; Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Chairman BOE; Jacqueline Jacoby, Interim Superintendent; members of the BOE; members of the public.

Chairman Jim Bulick called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Laurie Semprebon **motioned** to seat Bill Rankin for Mike Makuch, Barry Wallett seconded. All were in favor, **motion carried**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2/22/2018 Budget Meeting Minutes

Peter Tanaka **motioned** to approve the February 22, 2018 Budget Meeting Minutes with the following amendments, Randy Belair seconded. Barry Wallett abstained, all others were in favor, **motion carried**.

Motion approving February 15, 2018 Budget Meeting Minutes was left out:

Peter Tanaka **motioned** to approve the February 15, 2018 Budget Meeting Minutes, Mike Makuch seconded. All were in favor, **motion carried**.

Page 2, under New Business:

0121 Probate Court, date should be February 26, 2018 for Grand List to be certified.

0132 Treasurer, first line should end with: a 2% increase over last year's adjusted budget.

PRESENT TO SPEAK

1st Selectwoman Wiecewski updated the Board on the Snow Budget. The public works overtime line has a balance of \$6,073.09. This would give us approximately 73 hours for each contractor and we have two.

Dave Lytwyn, 163 Ruby Road, shared the State deficit numbers with the Board. Connecticut doesn't have a revenue problem, they have a spending problem. He asked why we are looking at the budget now before we know what's going to happen with the State. He feels that this is too soon. A number of people are moving out of state because it's too expensive to live here.

Judie Threatt, 19 Birch Meadow Lane, spoke in support of the Board of Education budget and the children. If the BOE has a 2% cut it would cut services. We need good services for the children.

Amy McCarthy, 219 River Road, she's had three children go through the school system. It's well worth the additional spending that is being asked for the children. She asked that we support the services for our children. She felt that her children were not as prepared for high school as other children from the other schools.

Mike Foster, 56 Fisher Hill Road, also spoke in favor of the BOE budget. He asked that we support it with no change.

Joy Wrona, Ruby Road, spoke about the enrollment declining and the population is declining. She would like to know how a 3% increase fits into a declining population.

John Blessington was shocked to hear that our children were not getting a good education. We spend more and more every year. There must be some place that money can be cut.

Elena Testa, 11 Meadow Lane, spoke about the Part-time Superintendent position, less students this year, and ways to cut the budget. We've done fine with a Part-time Superintendent.

Christine Psathas, Registrar of Voters, asked that we put in our agenda when each department's budget will be discussed.

NEW BUSINESS**Budget Presentations**

Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Chairman BOE presented their budget request.

The Board of Education (BOE) is requesting \$8,371,814, a 3% increase over the 2017-2018 approved budget of \$8,126,510. Primary factors increasing cost are:

1. Contractual agreements, including labor.
2. Health insurance.
3. Purchased services (transportation, utilities, technology).
4. Special Education mandates.
5. Magnet school tuition.

Major activities to mitigate cost include (but are not limited to):

1. Staffing changes due to attrition/retirement.
2. Reduced Special Education paraprofessionals by 2 based on anticipated need.
3. Reduced Special Education transportation costs.
4. Hired CompuClaim to maximize Medicare reimbursements of Special Education costs.
5. Finalizing Point Of Sale technology implementation for food service and other fund collections with the goal of reducing administrative staff.
6. Conducted internal transportation audit.
7. Exploring feasibility of providing Pre-K Special Education services to nearby communities to generate income.
8. Exploring further shared services with the town.

Budget keeps education services flat, maintains reasonable class sizes of 14-20 students, continues curriculum development, supports professional learning, and funds contracts and benefits. Projected enrollment for 2018-2019 is 419 pupils, down from the current 2017-2018 enrollment of 440 pupils.

Since the Board of Finance only received the BOE presentation a day earlier, we will defer any decisions regarding the budget until the following week of 3/8/2018 when members have had the chance to fully review the package.

The following topics were discussed with the Board:

- Security updates
- Part-time verses full-time Superintendent
- Possibility of combining schools
- Regionalization

OLD BUSINESS

Annual Report for Fiscal Year July 2016 through June 2017 - Copies were given to the Board for review. Motion to approve will be added to next week's agenda.

Investigation to determine if the Teacher Retirement Benefit (TRB) collected will be part of the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) calculation – Jim still waiting to hear from state.

Review Updated Revenue Projections - Donna and Tish updated the Board on the revenue analysis that was requested at the last meeting. The revenue is higher than expected and they feel that there will be no shortfall.

Review Town Discretionary Spending Freeze – Discussion was held with the Board.

Laurie Semprebon **motioned** to unfreeze spending for the Town, Barry Walleth seconded. Peter Tanaka voted no, all others were in favor, **motion carried**.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter received from resident Donna Cook, Common Road, expressing concern over the increased spending in the BOE Budget resulting high per pupil costs

GOOD & WELFARE

The Board thanked Tish and Donna for their work.

ADJOURMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Lewis

Debra L. Lewis
BOF Recording Secretary