

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

BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 08, 2018

Members Present:

Jim Bulick, Chairman
Mike Makuch, Vice-Chair
Randy Belair, Secretary
Barry Wallett
Peter Tanaka
Laurie Semprebon
Fred Schoen – Alternate
Bill Rankin – Alternate

Members Absent:

Also Present: Donna Latincsics, Business Manager; Tish Ignatowicz, Treasurer; Erika Wiecewski, First Selectwoman; Registrars, Christine Psathas & Suzanne Chapman; Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Chairman BOE; members of the BOE; members of the public.

Chairman Jim Bulick called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

SEATING OF ALTERNATES – not needed

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3/01/2018 Budget Meeting Minutes

Mike Makuch **motioned** to approve the March 01, 2018 Budget Meeting Minutes. The motion was then changed to add: with the following amendments, Randy Belair seconded. Mike Makuch abstained, all others were in favor, **motion carried**.

Change the second page two to page three.

Add comment from Amy McCarthy, 219 River Road after comments by John Blessington. She added that her children did get a good education, they were not as prepared.

PRESENT TO SPEAK

Robert Jellen, 38 Lucerne Drive, is on the Region 19 board. He has observed that even though Willington children may not be as prepared when they come to EO Smith, by the end of Senior year they are extremely prepared. It all depended on how much the K-8 schools want to fund in the 7th & 8th grade levels.

John Patton, spoke about changes in the finance department. There is a restructuring of the department that he feels is not being conducted properly. The department was set up by the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Superintendent which would create redundancy in the department. They are already down one person and have laid off another without a replacement.

Judie Threatt, 19 Birch Meadow Lane, spoke in support of the Board of Education budget. Cuts would result in cutting services. The students deserve the same education as prior students. Taxes don't come first, the children do.

Joy Wrona, Ruby Road, has been a teacher for years. She feels that a 3% increase will not go over with tax payers, but she feels that cutting teachers is not the answer.

Amy McCarthy, 19 River Road, did say that her children weren't as prepared. She asks the Board to consider not cutting increase.

Barry Wallett **motioned** that Finance Department Staffing be added to the agenda, Mike Makuch seconded. All were in favor, **motion carried**.

NEW BUSINESS

BOE Budget Discussions

The following topics were discussed:

- Librarian salary
- List of things stopping the merging of the schools
- Feasibility of having 2 principles, 1 being 50% Superintendent
- Having full-time Superintendent moving quicker to merging two schools
- Cuts to ECS Grants
- state statutes changing for younger students
- increase closer to 2% then 3%
- cost over \$19,000 per student
- look at other Town's budgets with lower per pupil costs
- regionalizing

Registrar of Voters Budget Discussions

The registrars were asked how they came up with the number for the salary request. Christine Psathas and Suzanne Chapman said that it's in line with other positions in the Town. They have called other Towns and found that everyone does the registrars salaries different. They have an increase in training and need to be certified. Their responsibilities have increased. The voting process has been simplified for voters but made more difficult for them.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee Review

Stuart Cobb, Chairman CIP presented the Board with the request. The request for the 2017/2018 Fiscal Year is for \$544,160.

Selectmen's Budget Review

First Selectwoman Wiecenski presented the budget request. The request is for \$3,403,499 which is an increase of \$46,756 or 1.4%. The reason for the increase is due to the Town Clerk's salary is now an appointed position and under the Selectman's budget.

Finance Department Staffing

Questions were asked by the Board concerning the handling of personnel changes in the Finance Department. The question is with how this was handled and not including the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman in the decisions. A special meeting is scheduled for Friday at 2:00 pm with the Town Attorney to discuss this.

Revenue Review

Tish Ignatowicz distributed the Revenue Budget Estimate to the Board. The Grand list has gone up .56%. The figures are based on what's forecasted from the State and an educated guess. Adjustment to Grand List because of the crumbling foundations is 1.4 million.

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 heard that it does effect the MBR. More information is needed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Email from Judie Threatt in support of BOE Budget
Email from Michael Foster in support of BOE Budget

GOOD & WELFARE

Laurie Semprebbon appreciates all the work everyone is putting in.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Lewis

Debra L. Lewis
BOF Recording Secretary