

Public Hearing
March 26, 2019 8:00 PM
Weston Middle School Library

Summaries of the budget are available at the Public Hearing and from the Town Clerk. A copy of the detailed budget is available for public inspection in the office of the Town Clerk. This meeting was videotaped and is available upon request. The Call of the Public Hearing, the town/school budget summary is attached hereto. Selections of comments are not direct quotes of the speakers.

Present: Board of Finance Chmn Steve Ezzes, board members, Allan Grauberd, Jeffrey Farr, Dick Bochinski, Gregory Murphy, and Melissa Koller. Shawn Amato, Clerk of the meeting.

Also present: First Selectman Chris Spaulding, Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, Dr. William McKersie Superintendent of Schools; Rick Darling, Finance, Lou Martirano, Director of Public Works, Town Hall employees and department heads; members of the Board of Education; School Administration personnel, teachers and representatives of the PTO. There were approximately 75 others present.

This Public Hearing was called to order by Chmn Ezzes at 8:00 pm.

Chmn Ezzes welcomed attendees and opened the floor for questions or comments concerning the Town Operating budget. Chmn Ezzes discussed the current Hartford proposals, regionalization topics, Motor Vehicle taxes and pensions.

Jean Marie Wiesen, Blueberry Hill Road expressed concerns over the mill rate and property taxes and assessments. Also expressed her concerns for the Transfer Station and the cutbacks.

Dean Robert, Georgetown Rd asked the Board of Finance to take a deeper look at the capital budget and asked if line items are being considered for decrease. He expressed concern for the lack of paving and asked what the total cost of the emergency repair sewage at the Middle School would cost.

First Selectman Spaulding discussed the roads and the emergency repair sewage: Steve Ezzes expressed that the repair is a \$500,000 estimate. Melissa Koller expressed that the costs for the emergency repairs will likely come out of the \$14 million general fund.

Gina Albert, Chairman Board of Education. BOE is finalizing appropriation requests.

Marylyn Parker, Richmond Hill Road expressed concern for costs associated with dog park.

Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz and First Selectman Spaulding explained there are some legal fees and the cost of building a road.

Melissa Koller asked the Town for an accounting of what has been spent to date on the lawsuits associated with the dog park. Jonathan Luiz to provide.

Eric Strumingher, Silver Ridge Common. Concerned with long term budget and asked the BOF to determine if there are cost opportunities if the proposals from Hartford come to pass.

Chairman Ezzes expressed that these issues are concerning to the entire state. The BOF is looking at long term budget issues, the Middle School being the biggest challenge.

Bill McKersie, Superintendent. Goals are to continue high education, possibly combining schools in the future. McKersie also discussed optimizing the academic program.

Sibyl Meyer, Merry Lane expressed her concern over paving. Asked if the town would consider a bond for road paving.

Allan Grauberd expressed that bonding could happen but challenge is to look at all the potential issues that we need to bond for and to plan for them accordingly.

Catherine Morris, Timber Mill Lane expressed her support for the Board of Education budget.

Mark Harper, Kettle Creek Rd expressed his opposition to the reduction to the Transfer station. The ability to take waste up to transfer station is essential and something we need to keep open. He opposed the reduction of the transfer station hours. He also expressed his opposition to the purchase of a new truck. Proposed taking the money for the truck and use it towards paving the roads.

First Selectman Chris Spaulding clarified the transfer station cuts. In order to keep the Transfer Station hours the Town would need to subsidize, increasing costs for bags from \$1.50 to \$5.00.

Allan Grauberd is in favor of covered garages which would result in longevity for the vehicles.

Steve Ezzes closed with comments expressing that many of our future budget issues will depend on the Hartford proposals. Hartford proposals will have a future impact on Weston. Ezzes encourages everyone to become familiar with all of the proposals and contact Senators with concerns.

Chmn Ezzes meeting adjourned at 9:14 PM