

Public Hearing
March 29, 2017 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. The selection of comments are not direct quotes of the speakers.

Present: Board of Finance Chmn Steve Ezzes, board members, Allan Grauberd, David Finkel, Dick Bochinski, Bob Ferguson and Melissa Koller. Donna Anastasia, Clerk of the meeting.

Also present: First Selectman Nina Daniel, Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, Dr. William McKersie Superintendent of Schools; Town Hall employees and Department Heads; members of the Board of Education; School Administration personnel, teachers and representatives of the PTO for all schools. There were approximately 50-60 others present.

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

Chmn Ezzes went over many components of the Governor's proposal to address the current 1.7B deficit the state faces. Included in the proposal is the likelihood of losing state aid (ECS) of 558K, covering a large portion of underfunded pensions plans (2.5M) and an unfunded mandate for water quality management (125K). There are no definitive answers right now and most likely decisions will be made in Hartford after the ATBM, possibly in June.

Mr. Grauberd wanted to clarify that the proposal does not only separate out the affluent towns to pay into the pension fund but the proposal actually increases funds to other towns in the restructuring. The overall plan is fraught with legal issues and we as a board are trying to protect Weston from unfair treatment.

There was discussion regarding options such as the 'rainy day' fund and reducing some capital spending.

*Chmn Ezzes opened the floor to public comment and questions
regarding the Town Operating Budget*

Margaret Wirtenberg, Wilson Rd thanked the board for keeping all informed on the issues at Hartford.

Amy Sanborn, Old Hyde Rd requested the budget for the Library board be approved as submitted.

There was discussion regarding the water quality mandate which is estimated to cost 125K and associated fines for noncompliance.

Mr. Darling added that without the water quality mandate the town would have a 1.7% increase.

Several residents with school children expressed concern over the capital item of air conditioning systems and wish to not have this item removed.

Bob Machson, Steep Hill Rd, would like the board of finance to make a cut, if necessary, to the air conditioning item instead of a program or staff reduction.

Mr. Bochinski added that the Capital budget should not be treated as an operating budget not to be looked at as frangible. A capital request requires six approvals and we should be reluctant to use the capital budget casually to fill in.

There was further discussion regarding the proposals in Hartford and various scenarios based on the outcome which will most probably be in June.

There was discussion about hiring a third party advising firm to analyze spending.

There was some discussion regarding the debt service dropping in 2023. (Bond issue for school construction)

There was discussion regarding possible shared services with other towns such as tax collection or dispatch except positions required by state statute.

Mr. Bochinski added that regionalization works well when the *need* is presented first, such was the case with our paramedic service with the town of Wilton. This area would need a lot of discussion down the road.

There were more comments from a few residents that are concerned over 'cuts' to the schools. Mr. Finkel explained that when the board of finance meets with the school we negotiate decreases in the *proposed increase* not look to cut the school budget.

Chmn Ezzes asked for a motion to adjourn, so moved by Ms. Koller and seconded by Mr. Bochinski and meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM

Respectively submitted
Donna M Anastasia, Town Clerk

Call of the Meeting

Legal notice is hereby given of the Public Hearings of the Board of Finance of the Town of Weston on Wednesday, March 29, 2017 and Thursday March 30, 2017 (if necessary), at 8:00 p.m. at the Weston Middle School Library, 135 School Road, Weston, CT for the following purpose:

To discuss the proposed budgets for the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Education, Capital Improvements and Debt Service as submitted to the Board of Finance for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2017. Said budgets are as follows:

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|----------------------------------|----------------|
| BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S BUDGET | |
| General Government | \$6,298,537 |
| Public Safety | 2,879,488 |
| Public Works | 2,082,472 |
| Sanitation, Health & Environment | 353,803 |
| Human Services | 791,445 |
| Parks & Recreation | <u>436,520</u> |
| BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S BUDGET | 12,842,265 |
| BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET | 49,907,522 |
| CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET | 1,223,600 |
| DEBT SERVICE BUDGET | 6,237,213 |
| GROSS TOWN BUDGET | 70,210,600 |
| Less Estimated Revenues | (2,379,081) |
| NET TOWN BUDGET | 67,831,519 |

Dated at Weston, Connecticut
this 21st day of March, 2017

Steve Ezzes
Board of Finance, Chairman