

From: [Bodie, John](#)
To: [Carpenter, Jennifer](#)
Cc: [Kupchick, Brenda](#); [Bertolone, Jackie](#); [Bremer, Tom](#); [Schmitt, Jared](#); [Pulie, Laura](#)
Subject: BOF back up for 4/5/22 meeting
Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 3:40:36 PM
Attachments: [20220404144245.pdf](#)

Jen,

Please response see below for the confusion I caused at the last meeting. I have also attached the 14 points with back up documents for the Micro Grid, and the 14 points without additional documents for the Compost Agitator. Can you please make sure Lori Charlton gets all of this and that she forward to the appropriate board members.

Thank you

As a follow up to my previous request at your meeting of March 31, 2022 concerning the Micro- Grid Project, I am sending you (attached) the "14 point" presentations which should address all your financial questions regarding these projects.

I am also including, also attached hereto, a document showing the additional switches that have to be installed to allow the Micro Grid to be operational for the Fire Training Center, the Conservation Building, and the Animal Control Facility. My statement regarding these switches and them being "improperly utilized by a previous solar contractor" was wrong. I was mistaken about these switches and this came about from my misunderstanding of the role of these electrical switches to the Micro-Grid.

Basically, the Micro-Grid project was designed in 2015 and was completed before the use of solar panels was even being considered for any of these buildings. After the completion of the design and the subsequent installation began, the idea of installing solar panels was introduced. This additional element necessitated the inclusion of additional switches to comply with National Electric Code safety requirements. There were no previous switches that had been used for another purpose. Indeed, there were no switches in existence because the solar panels had never been designed into the system until well after the project had begun. Accordingly, my earlier statements were completely in error. I also confirm that the Board of the WPCA will also be apprised of these facts.

I apologize for any confusion this may have caused and earnestly ask you to move forward with the approval of this project. This project, as you know, has been almost entirely funded through grants. I urge you to support the completion of this project now before any further price increases occur and to not jeopardize the issuance of the remaining grants.

John S Bodie
Superintendent

Fairfield WPCF
330 One Rod Highway
Fairfield, CT 06824
Ph: 203-256-3140
Fax: 203-256-3127
e-mail : jbodie@fairfieldct.org

Fairfield Water Pollution Control Micro Grid project

Project cost \$120,000

\$92,000 for change order

\$19,000 for interconnection to photovoltaic equipment

\$9,000 for Fuel Cell Interconnect

Town Share – NONE

1. BACKGROUND – The Water Pollution Control Facility Micro Grid project which was designed in 2015 to allow the Facility to operate during Emergency/Storm conditions on generator power without the need of fuel deliveries from an outside source. The initial project cost of \$2.813 million was funded by a CDBG-DR grant issued by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, of which \$1.8 million has been paid, the remaining still pending.
2. PURPOSE – To install an adequate sized natural gas generator, conduit, wiring, controls and programing to maintain facility process.
3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL – To complete the work that is needed to incorporate the original designed Micro Grid with the added buildings, Fire Training, Conservation garage, Dog pound and fuel Cell that were not part of the original plan. In addition, the three buildings have Photo Voltaic panels installed; each of the buildings need fused interconnects to be installed to be compliant with the National Electric Code.
4. RELIABILITY OF COST ESTIMATE – 10 out of 10, work quoted and pricing will be held until May 8, 2022.
5. INCREASED EFFICENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY – The project will be complete with everything properly connected for the controls to operate safely, allow the plant to maintain process and offer protection to UI and its workers.
6. ADDITIONAL LONG RANGE COSTS – Maintenance of the system will be bore by the WPCA.
7. ADDITIONAL USE OR DEMAND – Will only be operational during high impact weather events and flooding.
8. ALTERNATES TO THIS REQUEST – None feasible.
9. SAFETY – All work is to comply with the National Electric Code, and will ensure added components outside of original design to be up to code.
10. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS – All trenching has been completed prior to this work and was tested for contamination and disposed of properly.
11. INSURANCE – Contractors carry the necessary insurance as required by the Town.
12. FINANCING – This portion is being funded through the WPCA fund balance.
13. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – None
14. OTHER APPROVALS – Board of Selectman – March 21, 2022
Board of Finance – Pending
RTM - Pending

YANKEE ELECTRIC

Mr. Jeffery Hager
Schneider Electric
6700 Tower Circle Suite 700
Franklin, TN 37067

September 16, 2021

Revised 12.7.2021

Re: Town of Fairfield
MicroGrid
Added Safety Switches

Dear Mr. Hager,

These changes were initiated by the owner / architect / builder at various job meetings, by fax or phone or verbally. These items were not specified on the bid plans and therefore not included in the original quotation and /or contract.

The following is our scope of work related to the adding of fused safety switches at three locations to be in compliance with the National Electric Code with regard to solar interconnects. The following buildings are included:

1. Connecticut Fire Training, 800 amp, 3-phase, materials and labor.....\$ 8,050.00
2. Animal Control Facility, 400 amp, 3-phase, materials and labor.....\$ 5,750.00
3. Conservation Workshop Building, 200 amp, 3-phase, materials and labor.....\$ 5,175.00
4. Labor to install

Total all Locations..... \$ 18,975.00

Notes:

1. Sales tax is not included.
2. Installation is as per the one line Schneider Electric drawing dated 5-6-2021

Sincerely,
Yankee Electric Construction Co Inc

Ray Barry

Ray Barry E1-103043, NY- 1500
President

Accepted:
Date:

YANKEE ELECTRIC CONSTRUCTION CO INC
150 CARTER HENRY DRIVE, FAIRFIELD, CT 06824
P-203-259-5499 F-203-259-4278 CT LIC# 103043,103265

Fairfield Water Pollution Control Facility Compost Agitator Replacement

Project Cost - \$540,000

Town Share – None

1. BACKGROUND – The town has been processing its sludge through an onsite composting system since 1989. This allows us to be partially self-sufficient in our sludge processing, in addition we utilize yard waste (brush, tree debris) that is brought to the Town's brush recycling facility, currently operated by We Care Denali. It is supplied to us at no cost to the Town and is a required amendment needed for proper composting
2. PURPOSE – To replace the existing Agitator that is 16 years old and at the end of its useful life.
3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPSAL – Construct and deliver a new Agitator that is superior in design, construction and technology than is currently being used. Drawing and descriptions have been included.
4. RELIABILITY OF COST ESTIMATE – On a scale of 1 to 10, reliability is an eight. Manufacturer has been keeping ahead of supply issues and is confident that materials are already on site.
5. INCREASED EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY - Efficiency and productivity will increase due to the technological advances in design and controls.
6. ADDITIONAL LONG RANGE COSTS – Maintenance will be bore by the WPCA.
7. ADDITIONAL USE OR DEMAND – Machine will continue to be utilized in the same manner as the current agitator. I believe electrical demand will be less than current consumption.
8. ALTERNATES TO THIS REQUEST - Would require hauling our sludge to an incinerator as a liquid or a partially dried sludge (CAKE). Cake disposal is currently not an option as there is no available space at any of the three in state. Hauling liquid would cost an estimated one million dollars a year for disposal, supporting documentation attached.
9. SAFETY AND LOSS CONTROL – None
10. ENVIROMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS – None
11. INSURANCE – Not insured
12. FINANCING – The replacement machine cost will be funded from the WPCA fund balance.
13. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – None
14. OTHER APPROVALS – Board of Selectman – March 21, 2022
Board of Finance – March 31, 2022
RTM - Pending

From: Schmitt, Jared <JSchmitt@fairfieldct.org>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 4:20 PM
To: 'Lori Charlton' <lori.charlton@icloud.com>; Carpenter, Jennifer <JCarpenter@fairfieldct.org>
Subject: RE: BOF Back-up for 4/5/22 meeting

Hi Lori,

Attached is the backup for the non-General Funds. Here is description of the documents that we would include in the email:

Attached is backup for the agenda item relating to non-General Funds:

- Page 1 is an overview of the categories of different non-General Funds, as well as a description of each of the funds
- Page 2 goes into more detail relating specifically to the **Special Revenue** category. This page was taken directly for the ACFR.
- Page 3 goes into more detail relating specifically to the **Permanent Funds** category. This page was taken directly for the ACFR.
- Page 4 is a Question and Answer sheet relating to the Town's bonding process.

For financials relating to non-General Funds, please see pages 118 to 123 of the ACFR.

Jared

FY21 Funds

Count	Funds	Description	Listing
14	Special Revenue Funds	Special revenue funds are used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditures for specific purposes.	Special Assessments, Community Development Block Grant, Special Education, Recreation, Public Safety, Shellfish, Affordable Housing, ARPA, Public School Lunch, School Activity Fund, WPCA, Miscellaneous Grants, Downtown Parking, Donations
1	Debt Service Fund	Debt service fund accumulates premium to be used for the payment of principal and interest on long-term debt of the Town.	Debt Service Fund
4	Permanent Funds	Permanent funds are used to report resources that are legally restricted to the extent that only earnings, not principal, may be used for purposes that support the Town's programs.	H. Smith Richardson Conservation Fund, Simeon and Carrie Pease Fund, 2 Library Funds
2	Proprietary Funds	Parking Authority fund accounts for the activities of the Town's train station parking operations. The Internal Service Fund accounts for risk financing activities for medical insurance benefits and other self-insured risks.	Parking Authority and Internal Service Fund
1	Capital Fund	Capital Funds account for the financial revenues to be used for major capital asset construction and/or purchases. The types of revenues recorded in this fund are grant revenue, contributions, and other fees.	Multiple active Capital Projects funds (authorizations \$1M and above).
2	OPEB Funds	Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB) funds account for the activities of the Town and Police & Fire plans, which accumulate resources for retiree medical benefits.	Town and P&F OPEB Funds
2	Pension Funds	Pension funds account for the activities of the Town Retirement Plan and Police & Fire Retirement Plan, which accumulate resources for pension benefit payments to qualified employees.	Town and P&F Retirement Funds

Other Governmental Funds

Special Revenue Funds

Special revenue funds are used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are restricted committed, or assigned to expenditures for specific purposes. The nature and purpose of each Special Revenue Fund is as follows:

Fund	Funding Source	Function
Special Assessments	Sewer and beach assessments	Accumulation of resources for debt retirement
Community Development Block Grant	Federal grant	Community development programs
Special Education	State and Federal grants, custodial fees, continuing education and summer school programs	School related programs
Recreation	User fees	Recreation programs
Public Safety	State and Federal grants/ charges for services and contributions	Public safety programs
Shellfish	Permit fees	Stocking shellfish beds
Affordable Housing	Permits and fees	Support the Town's affordable housing programs
ARPA fund	Federal grant	Pandemic related costs and approved projects
Public School Lunch	Sale of food and grants	School lunch program
School Activity	Activity fees and contributions	To account for student activity funds and school scholarships
Water Pollution Control Authority	Sewer use fees	Sanitary sewer operations
Miscellaneous Grants	State and Federal grants, and public health administrative charges	Health, law enforcement, and public safety programs
Downtown Parking	Parking fees	Downtown employee parking and Fairfield Center improvements
Donations	Private donations	Various

Other Governmental Funds

Debt Service Fund

The Debt Service Fund accounts for the payment of principal and interest on long-term debt of the Town.

Permanent Funds

Permanent funds are used to report resources that are legally restricted to the extent that only earnings, not principal, may be used for purposes that support the reporting Town's programs.

Fund	Funding Source	Function
H. Smith Richardson Conservation Fund	Contributions and income from investment	Conservation
Simeon and Carrie Pease Fund	Contributions	Education
Library Fund	Contributions and income from investment	Library

Bonding Process Q&A

What steps are necessary before a project can be included in a bond issuance?

All projects eligible for bonding are required to have a bond resolution and spending authorization approved by the Board of Selectman, Board of Finance, and RTM.

How do we derive bond issuance sizing?

Look Forward: Reviews with Department Heads of upcoming projects to anticipate cash needs for project progress payments.

Look Backward: 1) Older bond authorizations that have not been fully issued and 2) Unanticipated projects that were approved after the previous bond issuance

When does the Town typically issue bonds and when do projects need to be approved in order to be included in the next bond issuance?

The Town usually issues bonds once a year, around the middle or end of June. In order to be included in the issuance, a project should have all Board approvals done about a month before issuance, at the latest.

What happens after the project is approved by the Boards?

A new capital project account is created for each larger bonded project in MUNIS. Procurement documents and payment progress are tracked within each project account. Spending on projects occurs in compliance with the Purchasing Policy.

How is the Debt Service Fund utilized?

Aggregate receipts of bond premium and expenditures for principal and interest are accounted for in the Debt Service Fund, which is reported in the Town's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

What happens to proceeds (cash) from the sale of bonds?

Bond proceeds go into our pool of General Fund cash, and we report on the use the proceeds each year to ensure that we are in compliance with rules/laws related to bond proceeds for tax-exempt bonds.

Board of Finance Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 16, 2022
7:30 pm
Via Webex

A Special Meeting of the Board of Finance was held via Webex on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 7:30 pm in Fairfield, Connecticut.

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gpjXSvs4rs>

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Miller, Silver, Petrucelli & Associates, Bill Silver, Silver, Petrucelli & Associates, CFO Jared Schmitt, Buildings Maintenance Manager James Ryan, First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, DPW Director John Marsilio, Attorney John Stafstrom, Parks & Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese, Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Operations Manager Fairfield Public Schools Angelus Papageorge, Superintendent of Fairfield Public Schools Mike Cummings, Conservation Director Tim Bishop, FairTV and members of the public.

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. TOWN FACILITIES CAPITAL NEEDS

To hear and discuss a presentation of the report and plan to address life safety and other capital improvements in Town-owned buildings.

There were funds previously appropriated for this report to better understand the condition and needs of Town buildings. Michelle Miller of Silver Petrucelli & Associates shared the presentation with the Board which is on the recorded meeting as well as in the backup materials for this meeting on the website. The buildings included in the report were: When Ms. Miller finished her presentation, Chair Lori Charlton opened up the item for discussion. Sheila Marmion addressed her question to the administration and asked how the projects in this report line up on the Waterfall report. Chief Financial Officer Jared Schmitt said the needs assessment includes funding based on a draft report prior to this report as additional work has been done on some buildings. They will continue to modify and put together a more concise Capital Plan. Some items are separate issues, Neither Penfield nor the Senior Center will be included in this report and Firehouse repairs and improvements that are in progress will not be included either. The administration will take a closer look and take out items that are being done separately. First Selectwoman Kupchick said they will put together a capital workshop and five-year plan. The town planning group seems to be defunct as they have not been active in a while. The First Selectwoman would like to form a working group. Ms. Marmion asked the administration if they could put in writing the group objectives and how it will work.

Craig Curley said there is a potential ten year spend with escalation plan on the report that's missing a total and asked to have the escalation total with inflation. Ms. Miller said it was

\$33,092,673.00. Mr. Curley also asked about prioritizing and why one of the boilers in the library determined to be at the end of its useful life wouldn't be replaced for seven years. Ms. Miller replied that the engineer thought it would have more life left and could therefore be replaced later. Building Maintenance Manager James Ryan explained that that boiler is one of two boilers and doesn't run all the time. Mr. Ryan agrees with where it is on the list. Christopher DeWitt wanted to acknowledge James Ryan and his team. Mr. DeWitt feels the numbers are low for Old Town Hall as he sees the condition firsthand. Ms. Miller said she agreed and said it would be more if other categories had been included. Mr. DeWitt also commented that there was called the Town Facilities Commission and has been defunct for years. First Selectwoman Kupchick said they had talented people in-house and the group she envisioned would get things done more efficiently than an outside group.

James Walsh commented that a Town Facilities Commission should have been involved in Penfield the first time and the second time as perhaps some of the problems would not been avoided. The Town Facilities Commission was to be an oversight to the Building Committees. He then asked Ms. Miller if Silver, Petrucelli & Associates compared the estimates to actual costs with other towns where they've worked. Ms. Miller said the costs have gone up, but they believe their numbers are accurate and a full renovation of Old Town hall would be \$4 million. The reason why it is 1.46 million is because it was analyzed on how it is currently being used and not how it could be used if they did a full renovation. It brings the building up to date but does not modernize it.

John Mitola urged First Selectwoman Kupchick to think about bringing back the Town Facilities Commission. He also asked if there had been thoughts to move offices or tear down walls in Old Town Hall. First Selectwoman Kupchick said the structural integrity at the Old Town Hall is an issue. There is a dirt floor and doors are sinking and James Ryan can't do some repairs because of the way the building is situated. They can apply for historical grants to renovate the building, but she would like to have all the departments at Sullivan Independence Hall. The Old Town Hall is a beautiful building that can be used in many other ways.

Chair Lori Charlton wondered if the items qualified for bonding and if there was any other type of financing that could be obtained and possibly put some items in the Operating Budget. The First Selectwoman thought it would be a discussion for the working group to make a list of non-recurring items and then have a presentation for the town bodies to work with her to determine what can be done by Mr. Ryan and his team. Ms. Charlton wanted to put the schools on that list and suggested a study for them as well.

4. NON-RECURRING CAPITAL – 10 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)

To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$508,445 for the costs of certain nonrecurring capital projects and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation”.

John Mitola made a motion to put Item 4 before the Board of Finance. Jack Testani seconded the motion.

- \$150,000-Oldfield Road Bridge Special Inspection

Engineering manager Bill Hurley said the bridge was built in 1935 and because so much of it is underwater it will require scuba divers to do the inspection. In 2016 the bridge was rated to being in fair to poor condition. Engineering will look into any and all grants that could be eligible.

Mr. Testani asked why repairs weren't addressed at the time of the last inspection. Mr. Hurley said they try to go by the condition. The condition is worse now and needs to be addressed. He will discuss the repairs after the inspection.

John Mitola asked about the locations of the other culverts. Mr. Hurley told him the culverts were in Greenfield Hill. Mr. Hurley will email the information and the inspection will include the other culverts in the town.

Mary LeClerc asked why the bond was over 10 years. Mr. Hurley replied that smaller bridges are inspected every 10 to 20 years and depending on the recommendation, they could make repairs to last another 10 years.

- \$358,445 for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus – Fairfield Fire Department
Fire Chief Denis McCarthy said in 2018, 28 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus units were replaced in the Operating Budget. Four years later they need to replace the remaining 38 units because there are three code cycles out of date and approaching the end of their life. If approved for the grant, FEMA will cover \$7000 for each unit but because of the expense it is out of range for their operational budget. They are asking to put it in the Capital Plan. The Chief and Deputy Chief made adjustments in the grant application to FEMA and hope it will be approved.
Sheila Marmion wanted to know if they were confident that FEMA would give the grant. Deputy Chief Kyran Dunn said it was difficult to say but they wrote the grant application from the ground up and had many discussions with a FEMA liaison. Deputy Dunn said he thinks there's a good chance of them getting the grant and Chief McCarthy added that they modeled the grant application after a neighboring community's successful grant application. The older units can be used for training and in other controlled environments. The life expectancy of a SCBA unit is 15 years. James Walsh asked how old the units were. Deputy Dunn said the old units are 12 years old but since 28 of the units were replaced previously the new 38 apparatus will be compatible with those 28. Mr. Walsh also asked if the FD Capital request will be less since these items were usually in the Capital Plan. Chief McCarthy replied that it wouldn't be less because they also need to replace the portable radios and a vehicle. They have looked at FEMA grants to fund the purchases.
James Walsh stated he would like to note for the record that he will vote for this item with the expectation of getting the FEMA grant. He will support it this time but thinks it should have been in the Operating Budget.

Mr. Walsh made a motion to waive the reading of the full bond resolutions. Craig Curley seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Chair Lori Charlton opened the vote for adopting the 10-year bond resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **NON-RECURRING CAPITAL – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled, "A resolution appropriating \$3,717,899 for the costs of certain nonrecurring capital projects and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation".

Christopher DeWitt made a motion to put Item 5 before the Board of Finance. James Walsh seconded the motion.

The information for this item is located on page 467 of the backup materials.

There are multiple items on this resolution:

- Conservation: Pine Creek-McCleary Tidegate Repair, Riverside Creek Tidegate Repair.

Jack Testani asked if any grants were investigated for the tidegate repairs. CFO Jared Schmitt said he didn't find any appropriate grants for these projects. There are various reasons why they didn't meet threshold. The Grant Coordinator looked through the Capital Projects and she couldn't find a grant for this project.

James Walsh wondered if the tidegates were manual or self-regulating. Conservation Director Tim Bishop said the Riverside Creek tidegate was self-regulating, but the McCleary is a flap gate which is not self-regulating and swings. It is not swinging the way it should.

Mary LeClerc said there were the tidegates installed in 1997 and 2001 and they've exceeded 20 years. She wondered what the estimated life was for the tidegate. Mr. Bishop replied it was 20 to 30 years and that it was site and condition specific. Metal in brackish water will corrode overtime and begin to fail, so the life expectancy can vary. Mr. Bishop also said that cost estimates were in the previous Waterfall lists and might be higher now depending on increases and engineering determination of the integrity of the dyke. Unforeseen issues could increase overall cost.

Sheila Marmion wondered if the Flood and Erosion Control Board was looking into the recommendations. Mr. Bishop said these specific items have been on the Waterfall in prior years and have been moved around. They need to be replaced. The intent was to involve the FECB when the engineer investigates the gates and they will prioritize. Bill Hurley confirmed that these items are on a list from the FECB now considered the Flood and Erosion Resiliency Board (FERB). Mr. Hurley said they will apply for a CIRCA grant and possibly a FEMA grant, but the cost analysis and design have to be done prior to FEMA approving a grant.

- Engineering: Increase Resiliency Ash Creek Open Space-Jennings Beach design

Kevin Stark asked how long the study will take for the Increased Resiliency from Ash Creek open space to Jennings Beach. Bill Hurley said the Army Core of Engineers did a study already and this is for the design. It will take approximately 15 months and they must get permits. A FEMA grant would be for the construction. The design will take about two years so they wouldn't be going out to bid for construction for probably three to four years. Mr. Stark also asked how the town will fund the difference between the cost and what FEMA covers to which Jared Schmidt replied they will address that when the time comes.

- Parks & Recreation: Lake Mohegan-Restoration from Storm Ida Damage, Tennis Center Light Replacement, Post-Tension Tennis Courts at Dwight, Jacky Durrell Pavilion Upgrades

Parks and Recreation director Anthony Calabrese said the beach damage from Storm Ida at Lake Mohegan is eligible for 75% FEMA reimbursement.

John Mitola wanted to know if the 75% from FEMA was confirmed. Mr. Calabrese said they were deemed eligible, but they still have to go through the process. He is optimistic. They are putting out an RFP add alternate for a design to guide the water out so it doesn't run down to the beach, should there be a situation like this again.

James Walsh ask about the tennis court lights and wanted to know if the town could get contributions from the tenants at the tennis center. Mr. Calabrese will speak with Finance and see if the lease can be amended. Mr. Walsh suggested that if the lessee would not contribute the town should not give them lights for the 6th tennis court.

Kevin Starke wondered if this item should be removed from the bond resolution until it is figured out. Mr. Calabrese added that the lease states the Town is responsible for whatever falls outside courts and this falls in that category.

Mr. Walsh suggested consulting Bond Counsel Attorney John Stafstrom regarding replacing the lights on the five tennis courts and having a conversation with the tenant to do the 6th. Attorney Stafstrom said any amendment that would take place tonight would then have to go through the boards again. Mr. Calabrese will speak to the tenants. Christopher DeWitt said he was in favor of leaving the bond resolution the way it is.

Mr. Calabrese also addressed the Dwight tennis courts saying he wanted to rebuild them using post tension concrete which has a 20-year warranty versus asphalt that only has a 10 to 12-year period. Fairfield Ludlowe High School uses the courts for their JV tennis program.

James Walsh wondered what would happen if the Board of Ed decided to do something else with the Dwight property. Jeff Peterson, Board of Ed liaison to the Board of Finance said they have had no further discussion regarding the long-term fate of Dwight. It is in a highly theoretical phase.

Christopher DeWitt wanted to know what kind of downtime would be involved in upgrading the Jacky Durrell Pavilion. Mr. Calabrese said they usually close the pavilion in October and the upgrades would be done between October and May.

- BOE-Boiler Burner Replacement-Burr, Elevator Modernization-FLHS

Sheila Marmion asked Operation Director for Fairfield Public Schools Angelus Papageorge if there were issues with supplies and were they at risk to not have the items needed so the project would be done this summer. Mr. Papageorge said it will take 14 weeks for delivery once the resolution is approved.

Mr. Mitola and Mr. Curley both asked about replacing the boiler burner and would they have to cut holes in the wall since the burner was placed in an odd spot on the 2nd floor of Burr Elementary School. Mr. Papageorge said the design is being looked into. They are looking at a high efficiency and smaller unit that will be easier to install and they're looking at ways to remove the old boiler without making a hole in the wall.

Mr. Papageorge also said that the elevator at Fairfield Ludlowe High School services the lower area and without the elevator people who could not take stairs would have to exit the building and go around the building to get back in. The elevator was not working at the beginning of the school year. It is safe right now as it has been inspected but needs to be modernized so it doesn't break down again.

The motion to adopt this 20-year bond resolution carried unanimous

6. Adjourn

Craig Curley made a motion to adjourn. Jack Testani seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

Board of Finance Quarterly Review Meeting
Tuesday, February 22, 2022
7:30 pm
Via Webex

A Quarterly Review Meeting of the Board of Finance was held via Webex on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 7:30 pm in Fairfield, Connecticut.

A recording of this meeting can be found here: [youtube.com/watch?v=IAyyEKfQDkM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAyyEKfQDkM)

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: Eric Newman-JRIB, CFO Jared Schmitt, Controller Caitlin Bosse, Budget Coordinator Frank Mangieri, Director of Special Education and Student Services Rob Mancusi, Superintendent of Schools Mike Cummings, Director of Finance and Business Services Courtney Leborious, BOE Chair Christine Vitale, BOE Liaison to the Board of Finance Jeff Peterson, Executive Director of Operations Angelus Papageorge, Tax Assessor Ross Murray

1. Call to Order-Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.
2. Pledge of Allegiance-Chair Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. To review the current status of the Town's Pension and OPEB funds
Mr. DeWitt motioned to put Item 3 before the Board. Mr. Curley seconded the motion.

Eric Newman presented this report in Carolyn Trabuco's absence. The complete report is located online with the backup documents. Total Pension and assets are on page 9 and there is a breakdown of the assets on page 10. The OPEB and allocations breakdown is on page 14 of the report. There was a discussion regarding gains, private equities and allocations which can be accessed on the link to the meeting recording above.

4. To review the BOE FY23 first quarter financial update
Mr. DeWitt motioned to bring Item 4 before the Board. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion.

Director of Finance and Business Services for Fairfield Public Schools, Courtney Leborious went through her Second Quarter Financial Report. She said her report mimicked the Town report so it would be easier to read and referred to page 39 of the report. There are large gaps in Pupil Personnel as reimbursement from the state hasn't kept pace with need. Speech and homebound services increased. Net revenue decreased and the cost reimbursement rate was lower. Open choice revenue hadn't been budgeted but it is now. They had trouble filling vacancies. Transportation savings will offset Special Education expenses and that will be refined in the third quarter report. Magnet school tuition was adjusted to reflect an unencumbered balance. She referred to the Munis report on page 43 and on pages 47-50 is a breakdown of all the grants.

Director of Special Education and Student Services Rob Mancusi said he has tried to be as transparent as possible as to the deficit in the SPED budget and the role of Covid. They have struggled filling positions and have had to use outside sources causing significant increases especially in outplacement and unilateral placement. Mr. Mancusi suggested emailing Mr. Cummings is Board members had additional questions and Mr. Mancusi would address them as best he can.

There was a discussion about this report and the budget for next year. There was frustration shared by both the BOE and BOF. Special Education is increasing across the state, but funding is decreasing.

Mr. Testani wanted to know what steps were being taken to resolve the deficit in SPED. Ms. Laborious and Mr. Mancusi are meeting monthly together and also with the BOE Finance Committee. They will budget more appropriately for next year. Staffing shortages have been challenging as they've had to contract out and it leads to higher costs. Board leadership and district leadership have met with Legislators to discuss funding and the rise of costs.

5. To review the Town FY23 first quarter financial update

Mr. DeWitt motioned to put Item 5 before the Board. Ms. Marmion seconded the motion.

Controller Caitlin Bosse reviewed the report which is in the backup for this meeting on page 51. The numbers are up from the first quarter as the tax collection rate is higher. We are at 74.9% of collectable taxes which trending higher than last year. Expenses are slightly lower. Overall, they expect a \$10M surplus. Mr. Curley asked about the Newport Academy settlement and where it showed on the report. Ms. Bosse said the Newport Academy settlement will not effect these numbers as that comes out of Town contingency.

6. To hear, consider and act upon a recommendation from the BOF Senior & Disabled Tax Relief Subcommittee to convene a joint committee with the RTM to consider potential changes to the Senior & Disabled Tax Relief program

Ms. Marmion motioned to put Item 6 before the Board. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion.

Chair Lori Charlton referred to an email that was received from Mr. Urb Leimkuhler and the Fairfield Senior Advocates. Mr. Leimkuhler read the following letter to the Board.

Members, Fairfield Board of Finance Re. Senior/Disabled Tax Relief (SDTR) Program

Dear BOF Members:

From FSA's on-going interactions with Fairfield seniors we know the cost of property taxes to be a major factor in their ability to remain in our town and state. For this reason, we support continuing improvements in our SDTR program. FSA appreciates the work undertaken by the BOF SDTR Committee to improve the program for FY21, including making it more responsive to the needs of lower income seniors. We also appreciate the tireless efforts of the RTM SDTR Committee. FSA believes important work remains to be done for future program years:

- ♣ The current program incorporates inequities in the way that seniors with differing forms of retirement compensation - annuity vs. IRA - are treated. We have demonstrated this to the Committees.

- ♣ Similarly, the asset (QTAV) test should be reevaluated. For example, a senior who has no traditional pension and a \$700,000 IRA throwing off \$30,000 in income is automatically ineligible. In the future more and more of our residents will fall into this situation. This said, any revision to or replacement vehicle for the QTAV should also bear scrutiny for fairness and financial impact.

- ♣ Deferral program features should be studied. A modified deferral vehicle - better explained - has the potential to more effectively leverage the Town's investment in SDTR.

- ♣ What drives use of the program and how it may retain seniors remain a mystery. We need to seek answers through research, which may not be easy work. This would help resolve the continuing debate over whether the income cap should be raised.

- ♣ A streamlined process to study future program changes is needed. We agree that establishment of a joint BOF/RTM Committee would greatly improve review. An agenda,

action plan and timeline should be established. Supporting resources will be needed, and FSA will continue to offer our assistance.

Sincerely,

Urb Leimkuhler

Urban E. Leimkuhler, Jr.

Coordinating Director, Fairfield Senior Advocates

Mr. DeWitt then shared his presentation with the Board, which begins on page 97 of the backup documents. Mr. DeWitt said the recommendation by the Senior & Disabled Tax Relief Committee was to reopen the ordinance and form a joint committee with the RTM. Mr. DeWitt voted against this, but Ms. Marmion and Mr. Curley voted in favor of it, so it is being brought before the Board of Finance for a vote.

Ms. Marmion said she voted to reopen because the process has changed. If re opened it will be a committee of BOF and RTM members. The RTM is a legislative body with writing ordinances and should be involved at the beginning. She is pleased with the results of last year but feels the process needs to change.

Mr. Curley said forecasting on last year was very good. The program is working and successful but can be further examined. If the program is evaluated, it will go into effect for fiscal year 23. The deferral program can be better utilized, and it should be reevaluated and include the RTM.

Mr. Mitola said that before changing the program there needs to be data and board members agreed that there wasn't enough data to show that there needed to be a change in the process. Tax assessor Ross Murray said he is accepting applications for fiscal year 23 to 24 and nothing can be changed now. If there should be a change of plan, it should be in place by January 2023, so the applications accepted from February 1st through May 15th of 2023 will have the new program in place.

Mr. Walsh said the RTM was involved in the last committee. He said some seniors make \$12,000 a year to live on and they should get the most benefit. Mr. Walsh agreed there needs to be more data and should be data over five years before it's opened up for change.

Mr. Testani said the program that has been implemented is one of the best in the state of Connecticut. It doesn't feel there is any need to change it.

Ms. Charlton wanted to know how it compared to other towns and what is the data that's saying ours the town of Fairfield is the best program in the state. Mr. Murray said there was a report done by the state and Fairfield has the most generous program.

Due to technical issues, the BOF had to take a short recess.

Mr. Testani motioned to take a 10-minute recess. Miss Charlton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The recess began at 10:00 PM

Mr. DeWitt motioned to come out of recess. Mr. Testani seconded the motion.

The meeting resumed at 10:11pm.

The motion to form the SDTR Committee with the RTM failed 3-6-0 (Curley, Marmion, Starke in favor)

7. To hear, consider and act upon the draft minutes of December 7, 2021 (7 pm), January 4, 2022, January 18, 2022, February 1, 2022

Mr. DeWitt motioned to put Item 7 before the Board. Ms. Marmion seconded the motion.

The backup includes the original and revised minutes of 12/7/21 that had been tabled at the 1/4/22 meeting and it was questioned whether or not they could be amended at this point. Town Attorney James Baldwin advised BOF Chair Lori Charlton to vote on the minutes as they will need to be approved.

Mr. Walsh read from Robert's Rules, the definitions and differences of the Correspondent and Recording Secretaries.

- 12/7/21 Minutes

Ms. Marmion made a motion to amend the original minutes of 12/7/21 and recommended adding two paragraphs in Item 10 after the second paragraph:

Various Board members noted the change in scope from the original Gould Manor Park presentation made to the Board of Finance at the June, 2021 meeting, including the addition of a pickle ball court and a score board. Mr. Bremer and Mr. Calabrese noted that discussions related to the pickle ball court and score board were part of original discussions held during the June, 2021 Board of Finance meeting.

Ms. Charlton noted that discussions and debates over what was and was not originally discussed and proposed as part of the Gould Manor Park remediation project could be avoided if the Board were provided with detailed project back up, including descriptions and cost estimates. She noted that the original Gould Manor Park backup from the June Board of Finance meeting lacked specificity, and that this was a bad process. Mr. DeWitt suggested that future proposals include the 14-point description format the Board has received for other projects.

Mr. DeWitt asked to remove the last sentence from the second paragraph added by Ms. Marmion.

Ms. Marmion amended her original motion and made a motion to amend the original minutes of 12/7/21 and by adding the two paragraphs into item 10 after the second paragraph, excluding the last sentence by Mr. DeWitt.

Ms. Charlton noted that discussions and debates over what was and was not originally discussed and proposed as part of the Gould Manor Park remediation project could be avoided if the Board were provided with detailed project back up, including descriptions and cost estimates. She noted that the original Gould Manor Park backup from the June Board of Finance meeting lacked specificity, and that this was a bad process.

Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion

The motion carried 5-4-0 (Walsh, Testani, LeClerc, DeWitt opposed)

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to add his sentence to Item 10 after the second paragraph, but to have it separate from Ms. Marmion's added paragraphs:

Mr. DeWitt suggested that future proposals include the 14-point description format the board has received for other projects.

Ms. Marmion seconded the motion.

The motion carried 8-1-0 (Testani opposed)

Mr. Walsh made a motion to add the following to the minutes of 12/7/21:

The contractors that contaminated our fields and did not properly perform the work were hired by Fairfield American Little League. The Flatto and Tetreau administrations did not require any type of performance bond or surety bond which would have allowed the town to recover sums for the improper work we are paying for with this bond before us.

New bathrooms are necessary for various recreational uses including two baseball fields, tennis, fishing and ice-skating hundreds and hundreds of people tend this field on a weekly basis. The bathrooms need to be replaced as part of this project. Little League baseball has

been part of this town for many years after sending multiple teams to the Little League World Series.

Mr. Testani seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- January 4, 2022 minutes:

Mr. Walsh made a motion to amend the minutes of 1/4/22 to include the following:

There was a lively discussion of Ms. Marmion seeking to table the Recording Secretary's minutes of this meeting. Ms. Marmion said she wanted more balanced minutes of this meeting. Mr. Walsh advised the board that Roberts rules only requires taking attendance recording motions and votes. Mr. Walsh stated that we have always in the past followed the secretary's minutes. Mr. Walsh stated that he does not want verbatim minutes. If anybody wanted to see the details of the meeting, they can watch the entire recording of every meeting either on fair TV or on YouTube. Mr. Walsh and Mr. Testani both separately stated that they thought the minutes for this matter were getting political and it should never have been this way.

Mr. Testani seconded the motion.

This amendment will be added to Item 5, paragraph 6 of the 1/4/2022 minutes.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Walsh motioned to approve the amended minutes of 1/4/22. Mr. Testani seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

- January 18, 2022 Minutes

Mr. DeWitt motioned to approve the minutes of 1/18/22 as presented. Mr. Walsh seconded the motion.

The motion carried 8-0-1 (Charlton abstained)

- February 1, 2022 Minutes

Mr. DeWitt motioned to approve the minutes of 2/1/22 as presented. Mr. Starke seconded the motion.

The motion carried 8-0-1 (Marmion abstained)

8. To hear, consider and act upon any communications

- Ms. Marmion requested presenters share reports on the screen so they are easier to follow. Mr. Walsh agreed and would also like the presenter to stop sharing once the report is finished so it is easier to see the attendees in the meeting.
- Mr. Mitola wanted to confirm with CFO Jared Schmitt that the BOF will get budget books once the BOS vote on it. Mr. Schmitt confirmed that is correct. Mr. DeWitt asked to have the reports in loose leaf binders as they did last year and the board agreed that was better.

9. Adjourn

Mr. Walsh motioned to adjourn. Mr. Testani seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:51pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

**Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #1 Thursday,
March 10, 2022
7:30 pm
Via Webex**

The Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #1 was held via Webex on Thursday, March, 10, 2022 at 7:30 pm in Fairfield, Connecticut.

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmcpBGqFkAA>.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sheila Marmion-Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda L. Kupchick, DPW Interim Director John Marsilio, Erika Eng, Executive Director, Discovery Museum, Eileen Bakos, Director of Development, Discovery Museum, Joyce Leiz, Interim COO & Director of Development, Audubon Society, Ruthann Greco, Administrator, Sullivan-McKinney Elder Housing, Stephanie Coakley, Executive Director, Pequot Library, Christine Catallo, Chief Librarian, Pequot Library, John Gleckler, Finance/HR Manager, Pequot Library, Betsy Browne, Town Clerk, Alex Vishno, Chair, FairTV Commission, Gerry Speno, Manager, FairTV, Matt Waggner, Registrar of Voters, Steve Elworthy, Registrar of Voters, Jim Wendt, Planning Director, Tim Bishop, Conservation Director, Mark Barnhart, Community & Economic Development Director, Jared Schmitt, CFO, Gerald Foley, Purchasing Director, Ross Murray, Tax Assessor, David Kluczowski, Tax Collector, Frank Magneri, Budget Director, FairTV, members of the public

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Summary Budget Presentation by First Selectwoman

First Selectwoman Kupchick shared her presentation with the Board and on the screen. She said it was updated with the Board of Selectman changes. The full presentation can be found in the backup documents as well as the meeting recording link at the top of this document.

Craig Curley referred to page six of the First Selectwoman's presentation regarding the Fund Balance and maintaining it at 11.34% from the surplus. Mr. Curley asked what the dollar amount was that represented the 11.34%. First Selectwoman Kupchick said it was \$2.3 million. Mr. Curley then referred to the \$2.5 million reduction in the Board of Education budget and wondered if the list of suggested BOE cuts could be shared, but that list was actually from the BOE. Mr. Curley asked First Selectwoman Kupchick if she had a cut list of her own or if the reduction was to get the overall budget to a certain amount.

First Selectwoman Kupchick said the last two years of increases in the BOE budget have been the largest she has seen in 20 years, and she based her reduction on the average BOE budget funding of 2.8%. Mr. Curley then asked about the investment income that dropped by almost \$1 million. First Selectwoman Kupchick said when you are a Municipality, you have to be careful of the investments and the funds don't typically yield what other people are getting from more fluctuating or riskier funds.

There was also a discussion on staff changes and if they were in line with where First Selectwoman Kupchick had wanted to be; some departments have added positions. Jack Testani asked about First Selectwoman Kupchick's reduction to offset insurance increases referring to a reduction in the DPW capital outlay. Mr. Testani asked how much the reduction was. First Selectwoman Kupchick said she is recommending a \$200,000 reduction, but not relating to a specific item. Interim DPW Director John Marsilio said he will determine where the reduction will be from. He said the insurance increases are \$800,000 split evenly between the Town and BOE. CFO Jared Schmitt said an increase in tax collection would account for \$570,000 which would also help offset the insurance increase. A more detailed discussion followed.

James Walsh commented on the ARPA funds for paving and the costs of asphalt going up. Mr. Walsh talked about the surplus and putting some of it toward paving to avoid bonding and keeping it in the operational budget. Mr. Walsh then spoke about the BOE budget.

4. Discussion on the Following Budgets:

Miscellaneous: Not-for-Profit Organizations:

2170 The Discovery Museum – page 88

Eileen Bakos, Director of Development, talked about the afterschool programs that address the learning loss due to COVID and meet the New Generation of Science Standards (NGSS). She said Fairfield is struggling to meet these standards. She said there is a program for fifth graders called Challenger and it is an interactive exhibit. Ms. Bakos said the Museum had to turn Fairfield students away last year. Erika Eng, Executive Director, also spoke about the programs that benefit children. She said the Museum is asking for \$34,500. Chris DeWitt asked if that money would be for all children's programs or just for Fairfield. Ms. Eng said it would be just for Fairfield. Mr. Walsh asked about the Museum's relationship with Sacred Heart University (SHU). Ms. Eng explained that the museum needs a lot of work and SHU helped it upgrade and supply technology. She said SHU also does landscape and janitorial work so the money the museum raises can go directly to programs and salaries for teachers. Funding and the different ways it is being spent was discussed.

2210 Audubon Society – page 90

Joyce Leiz, Interim COO & Director of Development, talked about programs during the pandemic that served Fairfield schools such as reading, writing and math skills, as well as hands on Science. She said these programs were funded by a donation that the Society cannot guarantee will be supported this year. She said the \$5,000 increase in the budget is to keep these programs going.

2370 Sullivan-McKinney Elder Housing – page 99

Ruthann Greco, Administrator and Property Manager, said SMEH added \$16,500 to cover repairs on a brick structure that is part of the fire pump room that is leaking. She said it is located in the courtyard. She said there are tenants in the building so she needs to keep everyone safe. She said the structure is old, and the fire pump room is very important. Mr. Walsh commented that he supports this increase.

2130 Pequot Library – page 84

Stephanie Coakley, Executive Director, thanked the Town for helping Pequot Library meet its capital needs last year for the roof repair. She said the Town support is 24.4% of the Library's budget and everyone at Pequot is grateful. Craig Curley said last year the Library asked for \$350,000 which is \$50,000 more than this budget. Ms. Coakley explained that the \$50,000 was specifically for the roof repair and it is finished now. She said the historic red roof is now watertight and looks amazing. Mr. Walsh commented that the Town has a third library with Pequot Library and thanked Ms. Coakley and her team for all they do for the Town.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

Administrative & General: 1010

First Selectwoman's Office - page 30

Craig Curley asked why there were three salaries listed in Contingency. Frank Magneri, Budget Director, said they are for current salaries. He said last year's increases were budgeted in contingency and distributed during the year. Chair Lori Charlton said last year's budget did not include increases and the increases were put in Contingency. She said what shows as increases are current salaries in effect as they were allocated out of Contingency. First Selectwoman Kupchick said that Contingency is based on assumption of where increases might fall. Mr. Walsh asked if increases were based on performance. First Selectwoman Kupchick responded that non-union increases are based on performance and are in line with what Unions are paying. She said union increases are based on their contract. Mr. Curley said he noticed Education and Membership and Training and Travel went up and wanted to know why. First Selectwoman Kupchick explained it was for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) membership. She said she also wants to have training for employees. First Selectwoman Kupchick said the account hasn't increased since 2020. She said the Travel account is for meetings and trainings held in other towns.

1030 Town Clerk – page 32

Betsy Browne, Town Clerk presented her department budget. She said increased revenue lines are due to the Conveyance Tax. She said there are potential sales coming up that will bring gains and conveyance tax. Mr. DeWitt said the budget book did not reflect the increase voted on by the Board of Selectmen of \$50,000 in Recording Fees revenue. He said the line should now read \$350,000. Ms. Browne talked about expenses and specifically, advertising. She said there is a lot of verbiage on the RTM agendas and they need to be published publicly. Ms. Browne said she is trying to get that changed to be able to use media and not print publishing.

1040 FairTV – page 35

Gerry Speno said the budget went up from \$79,350 last year to \$101,948 this year because of the expansion of core work service regarding virtual meetings that will be “Zoom Rooms”. He said FairTV has to provide access to Town government through live and recorded meetings of the seven larger town bodies. He said the increase will cover the additional labor. Mr. Speno said he wasn’t sure if the proposed increase would cover paying an extra person and he said he might need more money in the coming year.

1070 Registrar of Voters – page 40

Registrar Matt Waggner started the budget presentation. He said there is a significant dollar change in the budget. He said there might be a redistricting this year and polling places may need to be changed. He said the increased costs for redistricting is approximately \$60,000. Mr. Waggner said primaries are in August and with redistricting, approximately \$30,000 will be needed. Registrar Steve Elworthy was also present to answer questions regarding this budget. Mr. Waggner said the State is looking to buy new voting machines and a new voting system. Mr. Elworthy said he was concerned about that and whether or not it will be settled by November 2022. Mr. Walsh said he wanted to be sure that if the money was approved, but not spent, it would be given back to the Town and not put it into another account to pay for something else. Mr. Waggner and Mr. Elworthy agreed.

1110 Town Plan and Zoning – page 45

Jim Wendt, Planning Director presented his budget. Mr. Walsh excused himself as he could not participate in these conversations. Mr. Wendt said highlights on budget changes include: 17.3% increase from 2020 for three floater positions; a new communications line for iPads to connect to the new billing system; and \$1000 per staff member for trainings.

1230 Conservation – page 54

Tim Bishop, Conservation Director, presented his budget. He said there is a 27% decrease in anticipation of the fee structure changes. He said revenue is permit driven and dollar amount is less than in past years. He said there were 300 inland wetland applications from last year, both staff level and commission level translated to the old fees and then used those same applications with proposed fees and that is how he came up with the percentage of the decrease. Mr. Bishop said the current fee structure is cumbersome, and he found the Town was overcharging residents. He said he performed a comparison study with surrounding towns and Fairfield will have the same level fees. He said the Conservation Commission will review and vote on the fee structure in the next few meetings. Mr. Bishop said expenses went up for fuel as those prices are increasing and for training his staff. He said he is also requesting a PT administrator in the office. Mr. Walsh rejoined the meeting.

1350 Community and Economic Development – page 73

Mark Barnhart, Community and Economic Development Director, presented his budget. Mr. Barnhart said this budget reflects a decrease of 8% year over the year due to the Marketing Coordinator position. He said he was able to upgrade a PT staff position to a FT Marketing Coordinator allocating 100% of that salary into the Town budget. He said in prior years, a portion of that salary was funded from the Downtown Improvement Fund and the Downtown Employee Parking Fund as the position included administering those downtown programs. Mr. Barnhart said those programs still exist, but with a PT employee. Mr. Walsh asked about large properties in town that have been sold and if Mr. Barnhart could speak about them publicly.

Mr. Barnhart said there is a pending sale of the Fairfield Metro Station to a new development team which would like to close on the property in the next 30-60 days and are waiting for approval from the State. He said there is nothing pending at this time for the Exide property, but he and First Selectwoman Kupchick meet with the owners periodically. Mr. Barnhart discussed other potential sales, proposed housing and commercial properties filling up.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

Finance:

3010 Finance – page 115

Mr. Schmitt presented his budget. He said there is increased revenue related to the State pilot program due to hospitals and private universities in Town. He said there is a new formula for funds distribution and based on that, Fairfield is entitled to more funding. He said it has gone up over \$1 million. Mr. Schmitt said the Dividend and Interest income is declining in revenue due to the limited sources the Town is allowed to invest in. He said there are bonds in higher rates that will mature, and they will go down to lower rates. Mr. Schmitt said he has spoken with the Town advisors. He said there is a RFP for Investment Advisory Services that is being worked on now. Mr. Curley asked about the Dividend and Interest income and why there is a drop year after year. Mr. Schmitt said the amounts are down significantly this year and the budgeted numbers are not far off. He said there are maturities at a higher rate, but most of them won't get the high rates and will ultimately result in a loss. Chair Lori Charlton thought there would be many questions in regard to this topic and since the meeting had already gone late, she asked if the Board members could email Mr. Schmitt any questions they have and discuss this on another budget evening.

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to postpone the budget review of accounts 2020, Fund Balance, and 10030, Debt Service, to the budget hearing on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 7:30pm. John Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. DeWitt said he will update the budget schedule and send to the Board members. Mr. Walsh had questions regarding the Veteran Tax exemption and why it had decreased. Frank Magneri stated that the Veterans were passing away and that caused a decrease in the number of exemptions. Mr. Walsh had other questions for Mr. Magneri who said he'd send answers to Mr. Walsh. The discussion is on the recording linked at the top of this document.

3030 Purchasing - 118

Purchasing Director Gerald Foley presented his budget and said there were no major changes. He said he did ask for adjustments in staffing - an Assistant Director position for an internal candidate and to keep the other Junior Buyers. Mr. Walsh asked about the PT payroll line that was zero. Mr. Foley said last year, a FT position was approved and filled and now he has three Buyer positions. He said the Assistant Director creates a steppingstone for the department. Mr. Walsh also asked about a shredder that is requested under capital funds. Mr. Foley explained the shredder will be used by multiple departments. He said a shredding service is used for record retentions, but this is more for sensitive documents.

1050 Administrative Services-page 38

Mr. Foley said the mailroom service is outsourced and there were no major changes to this budget.

2020 Fund Balance

Postponed to Tuesday, March 22, 2022

3050 Assessor – page 122

Tax Assessor Ross Murray presented the highlights of his budget including that contractual software went up 7%. He said Fees and Professional Services went up due to court appeals that are remnants from the BAA (Board of Assessment Appeals) from last year. He said 108 cases went to Court, and it was reduced to 76. He said he is hoping to close them this year. Mr. Murray said there was also an increase in cost for the Motor Vehicle Guidebooks used to assess vehicles. Jack Testani asked about the fuel line and wanted to know what that was for. Mr. Murray said his inspectors use the cars to do field work and that line is for the gas. Mr. Walsh asked about if this will be the last year for the appeals in court. Mr. Murray said this year is the lowest for appeals in five years. He said the numbers should start coming down next year.

3130 Board of Finance – page 135

This budget is for the RFP for the new auditor. Chair Lori Charlton said she was concerned with the budget being flat as she thinks fees are going up. She said the Purchasing Policy is ongoing, and she is concerned with the fees relating to this. Mr. Schmitt said he is comfortable with this budget and if there are additional fees, he will have a transfer proposal to cover the cost.

10030 Debt Service

Postponed to Tuesday, March 22, 2022

3090 Tax Collector – page 125

Tax Collector Dave Kluczowski presented his budget. He said there is nothing major for revenue and the lines in the budget are three-year averages. He said there are no plans for a tax sale, so he used the averages. Mr. Kluczowski provided the collection rates for the last five years to compare to the collection rate in the budget for next year. He said FY17-98.73%, FY18-98.95%, FY19-98.85%, FY20-97.96% (deferment year), FY21-99.01%, FY22-98.89%. He said these are four-year averages not including the deferment number. There was a discussion about the deferments mandated by the State during COVID. In expenses, Mr. Kluczowski said he has proposed to add a position for sewer tax collection as well as regular tax collection. He said the sewer clerk in DPW used to handle that, but the position has been vacant and Mr. Kluczowski has been doing that work. He said this position would be funded 80% by the WPCA and 20% by the Tax Collector budget because the position would be collecting other taxes as well.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

5. Adjourn

Mr. Walsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 am. Christopher DeWitt seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien

Recording Secretary

Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #2
Tuesday, March 15, 2022
7:30 pm
Via Webex

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KickIFqNAHE>.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Mike Cummings, Executive Director of Operations and Processes Dr. Zakia Parrish, Executive Director of Personnel and Legal Services, Title IX Coordinator Colleen Deasy, Executive Director of Finance and Business Services Courtney Leborious, Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services Robert Mancusi, Executive Director of Operations Angelus Papageorge, Executive Director of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Dr. James Zavodjancik, BOE Chair Christine Vitale, BOE Liaison to the BOF Jeff Peterson, Town of Fairfield CFO Jared Schmitt, CAO Tom Bremer, Budget Director Frank Magneri, First Selectwoman Brenda L. Kupchick, FairTV, members of the public

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Discussion on the Following Budget:

Chair Lori Charlton wanted to let the public know that the Board will be reserving time for responses to emails by any Board member who would like to comment. She said the Board has not received any emails regarding the budget yet, but she encouraged public comment and participation.

Board of Education:

8010 Board of Education Budget

Superintendent of FPS Mike Cummings and Executive Director of Finance and Business Services Courtney Leborious presented this item. Mr. Cummings said the presentation is an overview of the 22-23 Board of Education (BOE) budget, where they are now, and the nature of the request, as well as what has happened since the budget was reduced by the Board of Selectman (BOS). Mr. Cummings said COVID has impacted their ability to deliver a full educational program and hire staff. He said the impact on learners is catching up and his presentation will show that. The BOE presentation was shared on the screen and is included in the recording and available online with the backup documents for this meeting.

Chair Lori Charlton opened up the discussion to the Board of Finance (BOF). Chris DeWitt said he appreciates the Fairfield school system and has children who have gone through it. He said the BOE budget is two thirds of the Town budget, and everyone needs to consider there is still another third including Fire and Police. Mr. DeWitt said his questions are not meant to undermine any of his colleagues on the BOE, but the BOF needs to know where the money is going. Mr. DeWitt asked about the Special Education (SPED) budget and why tuition went up almost \$4 million. He asked if it was due to students needing outplacement because FPS cannot meet their needs. Mr. DeWitt also asked about the increase in SPED settlements.

Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services Rob Mancusi said the outplacements are recommended by school-based teams. Mr. Mancusi said there has been a significant increase in unilateral placements. He said parents place their students in unapproved schools in the area and file for due process against the district. He said he put this process in a link with the presentation. He said it is a cost that is negotiated in litigation.

Sheila Marmion said she appreciates the budgeting process and asked about the middle school blocking program with a .6FTE. Ms. Marmion said there was a discussion that this program will be delayed until next year. Mr. Cummings said they are delaying the intervention period as teachers are doing the interventions in the classroom. Ms. Marmion said she had concerns about delays with the Purchasing Department moving things forward and referenced the RLMS roof project. Ms. Marmion wondered if there had been talk about separate purchasing departments and if that was something Central Office (CO) could handle or if it would impact the budget next year. Mr. Cummings said items are hard to get so it isn't necessarily the Town. He said there is a vetting process at CO before sending it to Purchasing and feels the BOE could handle everything at CO.

James Walsh said he watched the last BOE meeting and heard criticism toward Purchasing and that projects are being delayed there. Mr. Walsh wondered if all the information that Purchasing needed was getting to that department. Ms. Leborious said there is a good relationship with the Town, specifically the Purchasing Director Gerald Foley and the CAO Tom Bremer. Ms. Leborious said she had concerns about projects being held up when she felt the information was provided. She said proactively, they can work with the Town. BOE Liaison Jeff Peterson said Mr. Cummings asked him to present challenges at a recent BOE meeting. He said the meeting's intent was not to insult anyone, but he needed more information. There was a longer discussion at the meeting about the Purchasing Department and the relationship with the BOE. Chair Lori Charlton said a conversation was needed with members from CO. Ms. Marmion asked if the impact of the past two years of COVID flowing into this budget is other than SPED. Mr. Cummings said the interventionists at the middle schools didn't have those needs in the past. He said the high school intervention courses have been redesigned and there is no need for additional staffing. He said the elementary schools addressed intervention with current staffing to balance proactive and reactive work. He said reactive with current staffing will be prioritized.

John Mitola said past BOE presentations have included things that are positive in the school system and asked about AP Classes, honors classes, and test scores.

Mr. Mitola said he wants the public to know young residents are getting a great education. Mr. Cummings stated that 77 high school students were in the reading intervention program. He said 23 students exited the program mid-year and have gone back to core classes. Mr. Cummings said during the last two years of COVID, over 700 students have graduated in the district and went to college. He said the school district also supported non-college routes. He said the AP enrollment is up, but standard scores didn't achieve what they wanted which he said is happening all over the State. Mr. Cummings said the greatest achievement was the ability to meet the needs of the students despite the obstacles. He said he will give more data if requested.

There was a discussion about expenses that were originally in the town budget being transferred to the BOE budget and the effect it will have in the classrooms with the overall BOE budget reductions. Mr. Curley acknowledged the items being contemplated for cuts and said he knows that the BOE will need to go through a process, but the list seemed harsh. Both Mr. DeWitt and Mr. Walsh talked about the email that included Mr. Cumming's list of potential cuts to the schools that was sent to the residents with children attending schools. They said the email was sent without having it vetted through the BOE and caused reaction from the public. Mr. Walsh said the list included \$4.2 million in cost cuts despite the fact that the First Selectwoman cut \$2.4 million. There was a lengthy and passionate discussion that followed. Mr. Testani agreed that the potential reduction in a proposed \$10 million budget was egregious and alarmed parents. He said he received many emails, most of which were respectful, but many were not. Mr. Testani added that the BOF has no control over the list or how the BOE chooses to spend the final allotted amount. He also asked about the \$800,000 deficit in the current BOE budget and asked what had been done to rectify it and what will be done going forward to prevent it in new budgets. Ms. Leborious said Mr. Mancusi's budget increased to reflect needs and thinks it is adequate. She added that the current year updated second quarter shows his budget coming to balance as there were shortages in other areas.

Kevin Starke asked about structural change and possibly cutting CO staff. Mr. Starke asked Mr. Cummings if there has been a study of productivity with CO staff. Mr. Cummings said he reduced a position last year and he is well aware of the work CO staff is producing. He said many staff are fulfilling multiple roles. There was a discussion about an evaluation audit for CO staff. Mr. Starke and Mary LeClerc asked questions and started a discussion about who determines when a child needs special services and the process that follows. There was also a conversation regarding COVID, pre-COVID and a mental health crisis with kids.

A discussion about enrollment followed and Mr. Cummings said there is a breakdown of levels of schools. He said trends are declining in Middle and High School, but Elementary is increasing. That report is on pages 160-161 in the proposed BOE budget.

Mr. DeWitt and Mr. Mancusi had a discussion about enrollment and potential revenue in the Walter Fitzgerald High School (WFHS) and the Early Childhood Center (ECC).

Mr. Walsh had additional budget and educational questions that were addressed, one being about a scoreboard for FLHS that costs \$238,000. Mr. Testani said that scoreboard generated revenue when he was in Trumbull as corporations paid to have their logo on the scoreboard.

Ms. Vitale said there will be a BOE Town Hall meeting on March 23, 2022 that will address the cut list and who will ultimately make decisions on how the money is spent/cut.

11030 Health and Welfare Services

Mr. Mancusi said there is a grant from the Town to meet the obligation to identify special needs students who attend private schools in Fairfield. He said the BOE is obligated to identify them. He said the Individuals with Educational Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires that they are identified, but if they want an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and services, they need to return to the district school. He said if students are identified and an IEP is written, but not serviced if they don't return to the public school system.

2531 Private School Bus Transportation

Ms. Leborious explained the increase in the budget was due to a rate increase of 2.5% annually, fuel costs rising, and the number of runs being utilized for non-public schools to reflect actual enrollment for the upcoming school year. The costs could go up more due to the continuous rise in fuel.

Mr. Walsh asked if the school district was running short on drivers, but still getting students to school. Executive Director of Operations Angelus Papageorge said there is a limit to the length of time a student can be on a bus, otherwise the district could use fewer drivers to make less runs and still get students to school.

Mr. Curley asked Mr. Papageorge to go back to the scoreboard and asked why FLHS isn't getting a comparable scoreboard to FWHS since that scoreboard was installed a couple of years ago. Mr. Papageorge said the district is working with other companies to see costs. He said non-ad scoreboards are approximately the same price. There was a discussion on the ad sale process and potential revenue for the Town. Mr. Papageorge added that the BOE will have the final say on what is advertised and what can be advertised per State law with children present.

There was no public comment.

4. Adjourn

Chris DeWitt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:42 pm. Sheila Marmion seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #3
Wednesday, March 16, 2022
7:30 pm - Via Webex

A recording of this meeting can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_1_0x9hSY.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Kevin Starke, James Walsh

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary LeClerc, Jack Testani

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, Sands Cleary-Health Director, Julie DeMarco-Director of Health and Human Services, Scott Jarzombek-Town Librarian, Jan Fisher-Deputy Town Librarian, Shawn Reed-Chief Building Official, John Marsilio-Interim DPW Director, John Cottell-Assistant DPW Director, Bill Hurley-Engineering Manager, John Bodie-WPCF Superintendent, Anthony Calabrese-Parks & Recreation Director, Jared Schmitt-CFO, Frank Magneri-Budget Director, FairTV, members of the public

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Discussion on the Following Budgets:

Health and Welfare:

6010	Health	page 180	\$3,215,972
------	--------	----------	-------------

Health Director Sands Cleary presented his budget. For revenue, he said all categories are within a three-year average and has been stable through the pandemic and should continue in that direction. Chris DeWitt asked about restaurants closing during COVID and if that decreased revenue. Mr. Cleary said some did close, but most remained open and new restaurants came in. Regarding expenses, page 180, Mr. Cleary said he is asking for a 0.8% increase over the FY 22 budget. He said this is largely due to contractual wage increases and gasoline and diesel increased costs. He said he moved \$2,000 from the Fees and Professional Services line item to the Overtime line item as staff has been going over on that in the last couple of years and he shifted funds from Fees & Professional Services which had some surplus over the last few years. He said he is confident that when activity starts back up as we come out of the pandemic, his department will stay within the budget of those areas.

Sheila Marmion asked about the Health Educator line and asked if it was eliminated. Mr. Cleary said the position has been changed to an Assistant Director position as part of the reorganization in the Town. He said responsibilities have been shifted. He said there is no net increase, just a change in title and more responsibility.

Chair Lori Charlton asked about the Motor Vehicle Fuel & Lube line that appears repeatedly in the in the budget and wondered about the formula that Finance gave him to use to calculate the

costs. Mr. Cleary said he was given the gallons his department used in previous years and the price that has been bid out for the future. Frank Magneri, Budget Director, said the Finance Department takes the gallons used in prior years and multiplies it by the projected rate provided by Purchasing Director Gerald Foley. Mr. Magneri said he will reach out to Mr. Foley to see if the rate has changed or not.

James Walsh asked if the nurses got reimbursed for miles or if they drove Town cars. Mr. Cleary said nurses work at the schools and they don't have to travel for work. He said there is a handful of nurses who cover a few schools part-time and they will get reimbursed. He said that comes out of Travel & Meetings as well as for staff going to trainings. Mr. Cleary said the fuel line item is for the fuel he and the inspectors use during a normal workday in the Town cars.

Jack Testani asked about the Fuel and Travel & Meetings lines and the difference between them. Mr. Cleary said the Fuel line item is for the gas used in the Town cars during the workday that he and his inspectors use. He said the Travel & Meetings is for meetings, trainings, and school-to-school travel for nurses using their own cars. He said his department is required to reimburse them for work travel. He said no one was travelling during COVID, but trainings are starting up again. Many of the BOF members thanked Mr. Cleary and his department for all they did for the Town during the last two years.

6050 Human and Social Services page 184 \$734,552

Human and Social Services Director Julie DeMarco presented her budget. She said the budget is mostly about continuity and consistency as it is mostly flat except for Fuel & Lube and a couple of PT and FT positions that had been changed. She is asking for the Senior Center Director and Social Services Coordinator to become FT positions because she said both are critical positions. She said the Bigelow Center has grown from 2,000 members five years ago to more than 5,500 members now. She said of those members 3,300 are active and participate in 4-6 classes per year. She said she is combining a PT Program Director and PT Senior Center Director. She said the FT person would also provide consistency.

Ms. DeMarco said there are six PT Social Workers. She said there has been an increase in need in the seniors in the last few years, even before COVID. She said she needs to have someone there all day to answer people's calls for help and the residents will know who that person is and feel comfortable. She said social workers also provide suicide prevention and other mental health programs.

Mr. DeWitt commented that the Social Services Coordinator also helps with Veteran programs. Mr. DeWitt said he is also Commander of one of the American Legion posts and is desperately trying to get a Service Officer to help Ms. DeMarco and her team. Mr. Walsh said he is in support of the FT positions as he sees the Senior Center thriving.

Ms. Marmion asked if Ms. DeMarco will continue to offer Zoom classes and asked if they will be part of the Town's hybrid technology. Ms. DeMarco said she will take a survey with the seniors to see what they want to do. Ms. DeMarco said she feels the seniors need to have socialization. Ms. Marmion asked about renovations to the current Center or if there is a new Senior Center in the plan. Ms. DeMarco said the ARPA funded work and the Waterfall work for the patio is out for bid and should coming together soon. She said renovations or considering a

new building will be looked into next year. Ms. Marmion asked if there was a ten-year plan for the Center. Ms. DeMarco said she has a five-year plan and she will send it to Ms. Marmion.

Mr. Mitola asked about the membership. Ms. DeMarco said anyone 50 and older can join. She said it is free right now, but there is a waiver that everyone has to sign and become members so staff knows who is there. She said the Human Services Commission is looking at a change to charge out-of-towners a fee. She said it hasn't been confirmed, but it is possibly \$25.00. Mr. Testani asked about printing, binding, and photography line. Ms. DeMarco said lifelong learners have classes and that is the line item for sending the brochures and announcements. Chair Charlton asked about grants for services that are provided by the Senior Center. Ms. DeMarco said her department receives donations from the United Way for programs. She said her department also asks for donations for lunch and receives money from HUD.

There was no public comment.

Culture and Recreation:

7010 Library-Main Branch page 190 \$2,581,841

Town Librarian Scott Jarzombek and Deputy Town Librarian Jan Fisher presented their budget. Revenue: Mr. Jarzombek said the revenue is tied to how much the library is open and what services it can provide. He said the majority of revenue is from meeting room use. He said his department was cautious in its projection because it wasn't sure how comfortable people would be using spaces. He said the other revenue generator is fines. He said as non-digital circulation returns, the Library will see an increase in fines as well. He said in some ways, digital circulation hurts the library as you can't return a digital book late. He said his department is looking into other ways for expanding revenue.

Chair Charlton asked about the Invested Funds. Ms. Fisher said the money is a schedule from the renovation in 2005. She said the Library Board made a commitment to the Town to pay that money back and the Library is in the last year of the agreement. She said the funds come out of the Library Investment Funds.

Mr. Walsh asked if the Library is getting back to full capacity. Mr. Jarzombek said circulation has surpassed the two previous years and is already above the three-year average and close to pre-COVID times. He said visits are trending over 200% and demand for programming has grown. He said Saturday is the busiest day, and the Library is operating at half the hours it typically would. He said the increase in usage is occurring at both libraries. He said donations from the library Friends group funds the classes so participants don't have to be charged.

Expenses page 191: Ms. Marmion asked what percentage of the materials budget is devoted to digital versus traditional books, tapes, and videos. Mr. Jarzombek stated that although 42% is digital, he wanted everyone to be aware that digital books are very expensive as the Library doesn't own them, but has to pay licensing fees. He said adults prefer this, but parents and children prefer physical books. Ms. Fisher said 50% of the Materials budget is for physical books, but staff has two libraries to cover. She said DVDs have dropped, but the Library does provide streaming services. She said there is a law coming out, HB 131, trying to reduce the cost of e-books.

7011 Library – Fairfield Woods Branch page 194 \$1,193,083

Town Librarian Scott Jarzombek and Deputy Town Librarian Jan Fisher presented this budget. Mr. Jarzombek said the Branch Library is vibrant and coming back full steam. Mr. Jarzombek suggested having one budget for both libraries going forward. He said digital purchases are not separated and it's the same staff going back and forth performing the same services. Mr. Curley asked why Fees & Professional Services are down \$30,000 from last year. Mr. Jarzombek said the Library asked to have someone for in-house cleaning during the day when people are there, and incidents can happen. Mr. Walsh asked if there were ideas on raising revenue. Mr. Jarzombek stated the Library is looking into passports and notary services for evenings and weekends. Mr. Jarzombek said his budget is standard for libraries in the State and in the area. He said Fairfield is the second highest for e-book circulation and the materials line is a combination of both libraries. Mr. Walsh asked if out-of-town members get charged for membership. Ms. Fisher said there are 30,000 cardholders and 6,000 are non-residents. She said during COVID, the Library only allowed residents, but if it starts charging out-of-town residents, it could lose state funding.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

Public Works:

5050 Building page 172 \$728,379

Mr. Walsh recused himself from this budget. Chief Building Official Shawn Reed went over his budget. He said there were no significant changes to Revenue. He said there were three changes to line items. Mr. DeWitt asked if building permits were still expected to be high next year. Mr. Reed said yes and that there are talks of a new SHU building. Mr. Reed said there were changes in expenses because the permits are completely online and the department had to add monthly cell service for the iPads purchased for Inspectors. He said the Education line went up so give Inspectors could take monthly electrical classes online as they are all licensed in electrical. He said Clothing & Dry Goods increased because the State issued a new code cycle as of October 1st. He said the department needs to purchase new books.

Mr. DeWitt asked if there are still had counter hours. Mr. Reed said the hours are the same and the department has a Kiosk in the hall in case someone needs help doing a permit. He said the hours haven't changed, but Building is the only department that is totally online. Mr. Testani asked why Printing, Binding & Photography was down significantly. Mr. Reed said the department can access everything on the iPads.

6070 Solid Waste and Recycling page 187 \$4,677,279

Assistant DPW Director John Cottell presented this budget.

He said the Revenue is based on a three-year average. He said it is consistent on all lines. Mr. Curley asked why the scale weighing decreased in projection from last year. Mr. Cottell said he went with a conservative number. Mr. Curley asked for more information at a later date. Mr. Walsh said all the numbers were down which prompted a discussion on revenue and recycling which included the Interim DPW Director John Marsilio who explained the issues that occur when estimating for the budget.

Mr. Cottell went through the expenses that were up. He said in Fees & Professional Services, Hazardous Waste is up \$15,000 due to an increase in the contractual services with the Hazardous Waste company and a Police Officer needs to be hired for the annual HazWaste collection. He said a Special Officer is also hired on Saturdays at the Transfer Station. He said the Waste Disposal tip fee is based on the CPI which is jumping up. He said there were other expenses including Maintenance & Repair for the 40-year-old transfer building which is deteriorating: stairs rotted, drains not working, and exposed rebar. He said there is money to replace the roof, but an upgrade is needed in electrical and bathrooms need to work properly. He said the damage is from the roof leak. There was a discussion with Mr. Marsilio about the building.

5011 Public Works Administration page 162 \$379,925

Interim DPW Director John Marsilio went through this budget. He said the Administration budget is small as it consists of Mr. Marsilio, Mr. Cottell, an Administration Assistant and a PT clerk. He said the DPW Finance person role was transferred to the Finance Department. He said that position was recommended by the DPW audit. CFO Jared Schmitt added that the position was transferred to Finance to track transactions in DPW, and he wants to expand it to other departments that have heavy capital projects. He said more project management is also needed, but the person hasn't been hired yet.

5030 Public Works Operations page 165 \$11,930,701

Assistant DPW Director John Cottell presented this budget. He said some Personnel & Expenses have been transferred to Parks & Recreation in the Parks Department budget which created a decrease in salaries. He said there was an increase in communication to add GPS to fleet and equipment. He said Educational Membership went up for Transfer Technology classes out of UCONN and Public Works Academy for fundamental training. He said Clothing and Dry Goods increased to be sure reflective clothing met OSHA requirements for job sites. He said the BOS added \$200,000 to Capital Asphalt Paving. There was a discussion about the DPW budget and Capital Outlay, supply chain issues and replacing old unsafe vehicles. There was also an informative discussion about paving and funding.

Mr. Walsh asked about contracted services and wondered if it was cheaper to hire outside to do work or use DPW workers. Mr. Marsilio said some outside services work with DPW for tree cutting/trimming and grass cutting. Parks & Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese said it is worth using outside sources for mowing and the RFP that went out broke the job down by location. Chair Lori Charlton said she recalled that through the DPW audit, analysis on outside services was recommended. She asked if it had been done and if so, the BOF would like to see the report.

5070 Engineering page 176 \$838,584

Engineering Manager Bill Hurley presented his budget. He said there were significant changes and increases to the budget. He said there are three dozen grants and upcoming projects which required a reorganization within the department to meet demands of the projects. He said Fees and Professional Services increased because of wastewater testing and traffic signal management and repairs which was transferred from DPW operations. He said there were also roadway and sub-based samples, permit fees, software fees, design revisions DEEP mandates. He said the Motor Vehicle Fuel went up based on the formula sent from Finance. He said a communication

increase was a mobile phone upgrade. He said Legal Ads and Public Notices increased due to posting requirements when getting a grant.

Mr. DeWitt asked about the personnel changes. Mr. Hurley said that in FY 2022, the department did not have an Assistant Engineering Manager in the budget, but it is proposed in FY 2023. He said there is also a Project Manager added for FY 2023. He said two drafting positions were eliminated as part of the reorganization and because of grants and high technical projects. Mr. DeWitt said he supports the added positions.

Mr. Walsh asked about a traffic signal management plan and if it was ARPA funded. Mr. Hurley said they are related. He said he has to get an inventory of traffic lights and there will be safety improvements. He said the department is hiring a consultant with the ARPA funds to see what lights need replacement. Mr. Testani asked if the Town would receive a LoCIP grant. Mr. Hurley said the Town will receive the LoCIP (Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program) for the bridge project and it will pay for 85% of the total cost.

4070 Street Lighting page 152 \$503,800

Mr. Marsilio said this budget is based on the number of street lights and the tariff set by PURA (Public Utilities Regulatory Authority). He said it doesn't change until UI (United Illuminating) requests a change and the Town can dispute the tariff.

13013010 WPCA page 242 \$6,865,733

WPCF Superintendent John Bodie presented this budget. He said there is a 16% increase, part of which was for payroll and health. He said WPCA is paying the Town back \$153,000 for engineering services last year. He said money was put in contingency for increases and a Project Manager is being added. He said there is \$336,944 for bond interest and principal. He said the WPCA is a self-supporting department and sets the sewer use rate to take into account the upcoming expenses. Mr. Bodie said he set his projected fees based on what taxes have been collected this year.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment
There was no public comment.

Culture and Recreation:

7030 Penfield Pavilion Complex page 198 \$236,922

Parks & Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese presented this budget. He said there is a decrease in revenue for the Penfield Pavilion rentals and concession due to the Pavilion closing October 31st. He said this created an increase of use at the Jacky Durrell Pavilion.

Mr. Calabrese said expenses increased for seasonal and PT payroll with the \$2.00 per hour minimum wage increase. He said there is a slight increase with Penfield payroll since it is closing. Both Mr. Curley and Chair Charlton were confused with the payroll numbers as they seemed higher than last year. They discussed this issue and the pending closure of the Pavilion.

7050 Parks and Recreation page 201 \$3,663,635

Parks & Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese presented this budget. He said the revenue items are swim lessons, programs, tennis and field rentals and miscellaneous. He said the only

increase in expenses was in Contracted Property Services for the Christmas Tree lights as the cost went up.

7070 Waterfront page 205 \$542,249

Mr. Calabrese presented this budget. He said revenue items are beach stickers, beach parking, beach concession (Jennings), out-of-town beach stickers which cost \$250 and daily parking prices which are \$40 on weekdays and \$50 on weekends/holidays.

He said the expenses went up in payroll for lifeguards, parking attendants and Lake Mohegan staff. He said there was a decrease in capital outlay. Mr. Testani asked about the overall improvement update at Lake Mohegan. Mr. Calabrese said a RFP was put out to the short list for design and it went with a company called RACE. He said the company is working on the construction RFP. He said RACE knows the timeline and thinks it will be done for Memorial Day opening.

7090 Marina page 211 \$316,122

Mr. Calabrese presented this budget. He said revenue items are boat slips, storage, summer storage, boat racks at Jennings, Penfield and Ye Yacht Club, gas dock and concession. He said there is a decrease in expenses due to a reduction in Capital Outlay for security cameras that are moving forward. He said seasonal payroll is up due to minimum wage increase.

7080 Parks Department page 207 \$1,867,317

Mr. Calabrese said this is a brand new department that has been separated from DPW and added to Parks & Recreation. Mr. Cottell and Mr. Calabrese said they did their best to estimate the budget. Mr. Calabrese said there are nine FT employees, and a Supervisor of Parks & Recreation who are on all the jobs around Town. He said there will also be seasonal payroll for garbage and bathrooms at the beaches. He said Contracted Services are for properties around Town Hall and fields and there is a small Capital Outlay for tools. Chair Charlton said she was notified that the Webex was going to end shortly. It was decided that any BOF member who needed additional information regarding the following budgets could email Mr. Calabrese directly:

7111 Carl Dickman Golf Course page 215 \$311,938

7113 H. Smith Richardson Golf Course page 218 \$1,611,565

4. Adjourn

Mr. Walsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 am. Mr. Curley seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #4
Tuesday, March 22, 2022
7:30 pm
Via Webex

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iy6xkJc-IfU>.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Kevin Starke, James Walsh, Mary LeClerc, Jack Testani

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, CAO Thomas Bremer, CFO Jared Schmitt, Controller Caitlin Bosse, IT Director Dave Kelley, Budget Director Frank Magneri, Fire Chief Denis McCarthy, Police Chief Robert Kalamaras, Deputy Police Chief Keith Broderick, Deputy Fire Chief Kyrann Dunn

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Lori Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Discussion on the Following Budgets:

Public Safety:

4030 Police page 144 \$15,742,765

Police Chief Bob Kalamaras presented his budget. He said there was a .48% reduction from last year in the Capital line, Maintenance & Repair Auto, Crossing Guards were removed and nine vehicles were purchased with Outside Jobs Fund which reduced the Capital Outlay by \$569,000. He said staffing increased by two. He said there were 108 officers and now there are 110. He said expenses were up for fuel for the patrol cars and Clothing & Dry Goods increased due to new uniforms and patches. He said revenue was up 1.92% with increased in Pistol Permits, LPR parking program, Funeral Escorts, False alarm responses and more. John Mitola asked about the Outside Fund and how much money was in it. Mr. Schmitt said the Outside Fund is not an appropriated budget account. He said outside sources, such as utility companies, hire officers when doing jobs in Town and pay for the officers to be on the jobsite. He said there is a little over \$1 million dollars in the account and it is projected to accrue balances each year. Chief Kalamaras said the department will use it to buy nine cars next year and reduce that amount by two cars each year until the cars have been replaced. A discussion ensued about the Outside Job Fund and how it should be distributed. Craig Curley asked if any of the cars being purchased were electric and would this start a transition. Chief Kalamaras said the department is starting a pilot program for two electric vehicles purchased with ARPA funding that has already been allotted. Mr. Mitola asked about the officer vacancies and Sheila Marmion asked if filling the positions would affect the overtime paid. Chief Kalamaras said there will be eight vacancies as of April 8 and more are projected as some officers will retire and some officers go to other towns. Deputy Chief Keith Broderick said that filling the positions would help with overtime,

but not in this budget as they usually aren't ready for almost a year and training is finished. There was a discussion about overtime expenses and staffing issues.

4050 Animal Control page 149 \$342,800

This budget decreased by 4%. There were no questions from Board members on this budget.

4150 Emergency Communications page 255 \$3,106,754

Chief Kalamaras presented this budget and said this has been separated from the regular Police Department budget and is with the Self-Supporting budgets. He said there is an overall increase of \$172,000. He said FY23 Contingency is related to the newly adopted contract. He said there is an increase in payroll for the typical longevity steps. He said it is a self-funded budget, but the amount of revenue from other sources isn't enough to make it solely dependable. Mr. Schmitt said the Town hopes to add towns to the ECC and it will make revenue over time. There is an Executive Session scheduled for Thursday, March 24th for questions regarding the ECC.

4010 Fire page 139 \$14,664,462

Chief Denis McCarthy presented his budget. He said there are changes in the projected revenue with the universities' projects bringing in a significant amount of money. He said expenses increased due to sick relief, injury, and retirement which creates vacancies and requires new hires to attend the academy. He said the FD has to pay for the training. There was a discussion about radios needing replacement and grant money. Chief McCarthy said the radios will need to be purchased by July 1st and the radios will make it easier to communicate with other towns. First Selectwoman Kupchick said the Town reached out to Senator Blumenthal about applying for a grant through the Federal Airmark Corporation, but kept the amount in the budget to not jeopardize public safety.

Jack Testani asked about the line item for Travel and Meetings which doubled the amount of last year. Chief McCarthy said they hadn't sent anyone to meetings or training due to COVID. He said when purchasing new equipment, the Chief sends people from the department to the factory to do inspections and new employees will go to conferences and trainings. Mr. Testani asked if there were grants for other Capital Outlay. Chief McCarthy said the department is purchasing fire apparatus for \$320,000. He said the department has applied for a grant that would offset the cost to \$160,000. He said the department will be notified in May if it will receive it or not.

126 Regional Fire School page 236 \$229,066

This is a self-supporting budget. Board members did not have questions regarding this budget.

4090 Hydrant and Water page 154 \$2,012,231

Deputy Fire Chief Kyran Dunn presented this budget which he said is based on the information from Aquarian regarding the proposed rate changes. He said there are 14 million inch feet of water mains and 178 hydrants. He said the amount proposed is for the charges for the water lines and fire hydrants at Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) approved rates. Board members did not have questions regarding this budget.

4110 Emergency Management page 157 \$151,027

This budget amount did not change. The Board members did not have questions regarding this budget.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment - There was no public comment.

Finance:

3110 Information Technology page 129 \$2,128,664

IT Director Dave Kelley presented this budget. He said the IT budget has been steady although there are some changes. He said IT support for the PD and Library was moved to the Town IT budget which increased payroll and social security lines. He said as part of the reorganization, two positions were eliminated, and two positions were created to better serve the department. He said the new positions are higher technology positions. He said some other increases were replacing software to comply with Cyber Insurance and Equipment Replacement which is for data storage servers that were purchased in 2016. He said the vendor has announced the end of life on the equipment and it will need to be replaced. He said it might not be suitable for bonding so the department will replace in smaller pieces over time. Sheila Marmion asked if IT was involved in the Town hybrid meeting system and if the cost was in the budget. Mr. Kelley said there is an RFP to find a vendor to install the system at eight locations to implement at home and in person participation. He said the project is ARPA funded.

2020 Fund Balance \$0

The Fund Balance will be replenished with surplus funds. The Board members did not have questions regarding this budget.

10030 Debt Service page 225 \$24,210,208

Controller Caitlin Bosse presented this budget. She referred to the breakdown on page 225 of the budget book regarding the contracted debt service payments. She said this budget is for issuances that have already happened. Ms. Bosse said the Debt Service decreased this year and the biggest reduction is for principal on the Clean Water State Loan. She said this is the last year on that 20-year bond. She said it went from almost \$1 million dollars last year to a little over \$300,000 this year. She said the Fees & Professional services is the cost of market bond and bands and bond counsel costs. She said the Principal and Interest is on authorizations that have already happened. Ms. Bosse went through the rest of the line items and asked the Board if they had questions. Mr. Curley said most of what he saw were fixed numbers, but the only variable to the expenses is \$337,000 of estimated interest on bonds not yet issued. Ms. Bosse said that is the estimate based on the Waterfall, but the exact amount won't be known until July. There was a discussion about bonds and interest rates, the capital plan and possible State reimbursements.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment - There was no public comment.

4. Adjourn

Jack Testani made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:11 pm. John Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #5
Thursday, March 24, 2022
7:30 pm
Via Webex

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpIcUvmLCxk>.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair (9:00 pm), Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda L. Kupchick, Consulting Actuary, Milliman, Jenn Castelhana, AON Advisor Joel Chamberlain, AON Advisor Carlton Lindgren, AON Advisor Tom D'Acona, Human Resource Director James Haselkamp, Senior VP Assured Partners Robert O'Connor, Town Attorney James Baldwin, CFO Jared Schmitt, Budget Director Frank Magneri, Comptroller Caitlin Bosse, FairTV, members of the public

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chris DeWitt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Discussion on the Following Budgets:

Retiree:

1310 OPEB

Chair Lori Charlton went through the backup documents regarding OPEB. Backup items are located in the backup documents online. Last year's OPEB documents were done by Hooker & Holcomb, but this year the Town has changed the actuarial provider to Milliman. Last year's documents are included in this report. Page three lists the Town's OPEB at \$4,246,850. On page 232 of the Budget book, it splits that amount between the Town, ECC and WPCA. Page 27 in the backup lists Police and Fire at \$5,596,727 which is the same in the Budget book.

There were no questions from the Board members.

1310 Pension page 228

Jenn Castelhana, Consulting Actuary, Milliman presented this item. Backup for this item starts on page 47 of the documents for the meeting and also in the Budget Book on page 230. Kevin Starke asked why the Police ADEC is going down substantially over the next few years. Ms. Castelhana said the plan is expected to become 100% funded in 5-6 years and once it is funded, the payment will just be paying the value.

James Walsh commented that the Town-side graph is going down because no one can be added and the number of people in the plan will be decreasing. He said Police and Fire estimates are on assumptions that contracts stay as they are. Ms. Castelhana agreed. A discussion followed.

Chair Lori Charlton said there was a change in methodology which made the contribution increase. She said it is represented in the last two columns on page 14 of the presentation. A discussion followed.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

Administrative & General:

1320 Active Employee Benefits (Health & Life) page 65 \$10,906,805

AON Advisor Carlton Lindgren presented a six-page document for this item on page 62 of posted backup. He said active population outlines active medical and dental historical claims for 15 months to project costs in FY 22-23. He said the claim base is \$11,821,627. He said there were no COVID adjustments in the prior 12 months. He said the historical headcount for the claims is 457. Mr. Lindgren said for the larger claim data, the Town purchased Stop Loss coverage which covers claims between 7/1-6/30. He said the Town is responsible for the first \$150,000. He said using fee history to Anthem, proposed costs for FY 22-23 are: Medical Administration \$320,993, Stop Loss Protection \$1,469,534, and Dental Administration \$29,418.

Mr. Lindgren said large claim activity is down as there were suppressed claims due to COVID. He said he is seeing a “bounce back” effect where elective surgeries that were put off are now being done. AON Advisor Joel Chamberlain said chronic conditions that have not been well managed have great chance of turning into large claims. He said estimated cost for claims in FY 22-23 were \$13,904,693. He said an updated analysis changed numbers in the budget. Budget Director Frank Magneri shared the updated allocations which includes Gross Healthcare minus employee contributions (all union employees and new employees included), HSA contributions and out of plan stipends. The total projection for FY 22-23 is \$14,328,795.

Jack Testani asked if other providers have been considered. Mr. Magneri thought that due to contractual issues, it would be difficult to do that and referred to HR Director James Haselkamp. Mr. Haselkamp said he would discuss it in Executive Session.

1330 Human Resources page 69 \$5,795,451

Human Resources Administration page 70

HR Director Jim Haselkamp presented his budget. He said there were changes to the department with the reorganization to make the department more modern. He said the Risk Management position was eliminated and will now go to the proposed new position of Assistant HR Director. He said some of the Admin support will also take some Risk Management responsibilities. Mr. Haselkamp said an HR Generalist was added to perform general HR functions. He said there is also a part-time position to assist in recruiting and Affirmative Action. He said here was software purchased for use in the Police Department. He said it provides management and communications management which cost \$20,000. He said there is also a line for Time & Attendance software that was approved two years ago, but hasn’t been set up. He said it is still in the budget, but it is being reviewed by Finance to be sure it will work with other software.

Mr. Walsh said that though that software will save time, he asked if it can also increase time if someone were to punch out 10 minutes late and they would have to be paid for that time. A discussion began about handling late arrivals, vacation time and sick time.

Worker's Comp page 71

HR Director Jim Haselkamp introduced the Service Manager for PMA Companies Dan Roach. Mr. Roach went over numbers for claims handling service, loss control, worker's comp liability for the upcoming year for the Town and BOE and Heart and Hypertension. He said the WC is a projection and Heart and Hypertension is a projection of all claims in the coming year. Mr. Walsh said he noticed that claims had gone down and wondered if premiums were down as well. Mr. Roach explained that the Town is self-insured so there are no premiums, but COVID slowed things down. He said regular claim reviews are done to get people back to work as soon as possible. A discussion began regarding Heart & Hypertension.

Liability page 71

HR Director James Haselkamp said there was an increase in Liability and a significant increase in Cyber Insurance. Assured Partners Senior VP Robert O'Connor said his company looks into everything to be sure the Town gets the best premiums. He said CIRMA handles liability and Casualty & Property. He said premiums are up, but there is a cap at 5%. He said Cyber Liability, Flood Insurance and Excess Liability all have projected increases. He said these are guesstimates and the numbers could change. Mr. DeWitt said he didn't see liability for inter scholastic sports and Mr. Schmitt said it had been shifted to the BOE.

There was a discussion about the Interscholastic Sports and the Cyber Liability policies and Cyber security and risk.

ISF/Risk Management page 72

Controller Caitlin Bosse went through the Internal Service Fund. The report was shared on screen and is on page 69 of the backup documents. There was a discussion about the fund.

1270 Legal Services page 61

Town Attorney James Baldwin presented this budget. He said the increases were related to the tax appeals and that it is an accurate representation of legal exposures. He said the fill pile costs are not part of the budget. He said the Risk Management side is covered in the Liability budget.

Mr. Testani said there has been significant increases since FY 2020. Attorney Baldwin said the fill pile has consumed a great deal of time and cost. He said contract reviews also increased as this administration is reviewing them robustly. He said Professional Services had increased as that is outside counsel and they are billed on an hourly rate. Attorney Baldwin said he is the first line of legal defense for the Town and if there are things he can't do, he will obtain outside counsel on a case-by-case basis.

Chair Lori Charlton said even taking out the tax appeals, legal services are still higher. Attorney Baldwin said the caseload has increased and if outside counsel was hired, it would be much higher. Mr. Walsh mentioned that the previous HR Director was handling Employee Labor and receiving a stipend. He said since he is no longer employed, so that would bring the costs up.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

Finance:

3150 Unemployment Compensation page 138

CFO Jared Schmitt said there were a lot of moving parts and it was not predictable. He said federal credits have helped pay unemployment when COVID started. He said some have expired. He said the original proposal was \$350,000, but after reviewing it, the Board of Selectmen reduced the amount by \$100,000 so now the proposed amount is \$250,000.

2010 Contingency page 79

Mr. Schmitt said the account was adjusted upward by the Board of Selectmen by \$120,000. He said this will be discussed in Executive Session.

Public comment, 2 minutes per comment

There was no public comment.

4. Executive Session – Discuss Personnel Matters and Contracts with the Town Attorney and CFO Pertaining to 2023 Contingency

Mr. Testani made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:17 pm. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Chair Lori Charlton made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 11:11 pm. Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

No votes were taken.

5. Adjourn

John Mitola made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 pm. Craig Curley seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

BOARD OF FINANCE PUBLIC BUDGET COMMENT SESSION

Saturday, March 26, 2022

9:30 a.m.

Fairfield Ludlowe High School Auditorium

785 Unquowa Road

Fairfield, CT 06824

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SraSIETlpjo>.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: FairTV, members of the public

I. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair John Mitola led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Public Budget Comment Session

Chair Charlton told the public that the Board was there to listen to the public's feedback on the budget process. Chair Charlton told the public to please keep comments to three minutes or less and to sign in with names and addresses.

- Bud Morton - 95 Field Point Drive – He said the BOE budget is two-thirds of spending that is elapsing all public services. He said the BOE budget is up and enrollment is down. He said there's an increase in faculty and labor costs. He said there will be long-term consequences for rapid growth in BOE spending.
- William Lenahan - 42 Alma Drive – He said he supports Human Services' requests for full-time staff. He said Seniors account for 25% of Fairfield's head of households. He said socialization is critical to maintaining quality of life and investing in the Senior community will result in a great rate of return for the Town.
- Melinda Gremse -68 Oxbow Road- She said elementary school teachers are in support of the STEAM program (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math) and the level of engagement in class is amazing and fosters problem solving. She said the vision of a graduate would change with cuts proposed to the BOE. She said the pandemic has been traumatic.
- Jennifer Vilenski -1822 Stratfield Road – She said to restore BOE funding. She said she is a middle school teacher and education funding costs cause a gap in education. She said counseling staff is stretched thin. She said 12 teaching jobs are on the list to cut.
- Lauren Kinsley -212 Buena Vista Road – She said she has been a teacher for 17 years. She said she supports the STEAM program. She said with cuts, class size will increase, and paras will decrease. She said it will cause a struggle to learn because teachers will be overloaded.

- Sharon Meyers -25 Lawrence Road- She said she has lived her whole life in Fairfield and is now a math teacher at FLHS. She said Fairfield is considered a good school system, but it is only good because of good teachers. She said Paras are needed for the children and the well-being and effectiveness of the teachers.
- Laura Karson -187 Buena Vista Road – She said to restore the BOE budget. She said she doesn't have kids in the school system, but she has no problem paying more as a resident. She said schools are the #1 asset in Town and we owe it to the kids.
- Randi Cohen -200 Lloyd Drive- He said he has two kids in schools. He said the Math Academy from the 3rd grade up is an incredible program. He said it doesn't make sense to make cuts after the pandemic.
- Owen Guernsey - 241 Brookside Drive – He said he's a student and his principal sits outside the boys bathroom to control chaos. He said he would be upset to see teachers leave.
- Matt McKinnis -301 Sasco Hill Road – He said he is a student. He asked to reinstate the BOE budget. He said we are coming out of bad times, teachers are stressed, students are not learning how they should be and students are turning to drugs and crime because they feel like they can't catch up. He said this is not a partisan issue.
- Heather Dyer -240 Mayfair Road- She said she is a sixth grade teacher at RLMS and a graduate of the FPS. She said proposed cuts would eliminate significant people and programs. She said she will lose her job along with 56 others.
- Urb Leimkuhler -83 Spruce Street – He said he is a member of the Fairfield Senior Advocates and Affordable Housing Committee. He said keeping Seniors in Town is good for everyone. He said there must be programs that support the most vulnerable residents. He said he supports the full-time positions in Human Services and he supports the Seniors who will benefit from the programs.
- Paula Healey -1882 North Benson Road- She said she has been a Kindergarten teacher at North Stratfield for 28 years. She said young kids have spent half of their lives in the pandemic in a socially-distant world of masks. She said these kids are lacking a normal preschool experience and had trouble transitioning. She said a teacher has 20 kids and learning is impacted.
- Cindy Wapnitsky -41 Valley View Place – She said she is a retired teacher with an autistic child who is 33 years old who went through the FPS. She said her child functions independently because of teachers and paras. She said early intervention is the key to success. She said budget cuts will affect the middle class who can't afford to pull kids out and put them in private schools.
- Kate Schallau - 1135 Jennings Road – She said she is a Kindergarten teacher and paras in the classroom help kids who need help with writing, bathrooms and reading. She said to allow for 1-1 teacher assessments. She said Paras don't cost much, but provide plenty of help.
- Judy Salemmme - 11 Morehouse Drive – She said she is an Elementary Library Media Specialist. She said in the Library/Media Center, paras help students with independent reading. She said they allow for the circulation of and access to reading materials. She said she supports the school with arrival/dismissal, lunch, recess and PPT meetings.
- Sharon Pistilli -107 Lota Drive – She said she is on the RTM, but she is speaking as a resident. She said to restore the BOE budget. She said the community realizes the negative impact of the pandemic on the kids. She said this year more than ever, money is needed and to treat parents with respect.

- Nicole Stanton -1041 Burroughs Road – She said we are picking up pieces from the pandemic and children will continue to work to regain what was lost. She said to support the bipartisan approval of the BOE budget.
- Gordon Mackenzie -11 Palmer Bridge- He said he is a volunteer and member of Fairfield Senior Advocates. He said he supports the full-time addition to Human and Social Services at the Bigelow Center. He said the Center supports Seniors with tax filing, computer scams, games, hobbies, physical training and more. He said it is important to support the Bigelow Center in any way possible.
- Jessica Keane -112 Taunton Road – She said she is a teacher at McKinley. She said she has children in the FPS. She said she is an ESL teacher and bilingual teachers are invaluable. She parent/teachers provide translators by utilizing bilingual paras.
- Marta Mwambulukutu -399 Jackman Avenue – She said she is an Elementary World Language teacher. She said students from all backgrounds have their own language and heritage validated in school. She said this gives students a positive sense of self and community and losing EWL would hurt these students. She said specialists and paras are the only way some kids feel connected.
- Reini Knorr -83 Alberta Street – She said she is a volunteer focused on prevention. She said she is a parent of four adults who navigated their lives during the pandemic. She said it's tougher to have a child with addiction and tougher to bury a child because of mental health issues from pandemic.
- Kathleen Rupert -180 Warwick Avenue – She said she is a Math teacher. She said Paras are invaluable to students and teachers. She said they work for little money and are integral in all parts of school. She said the library para is a specialized position and provides tech support. She said the STEAM para provides students with the opportunity to apply this program to learning skills and teaches them to solve problems with different solutions.
- Sherry Miro -196 Stevenson Road – She said she is a Para and VP of the BOE Para union. She said Paras are the lowest paid bargaining unit, but the first to get cut. She said cutting 30 paras will be a huge mistake. She said without paras, classrooms cannot be covered the way they need to be.
- Aimee Guerrero -39 Lisbon Drive – She said she was a North Stratfield teacher from 2001-2003 and is a school Library Media Specialist in a neighboring town. She said students and teachers are suffering. She said during the lockdown, her two kids who are string players, taught themselves guitar. She said her older son suffers from depression and music helps immensely and schools need music programs. She said to support the public library budget as it supports the youngest and oldest citizens of the community.
- Katie Flynn -204 Grandview Road - She said the BOE passed the budget unanimously. She said educators pivot and persevere. She said there is a need for security and technology, SPED, and there are unfunded State requirements. She said the decrease in enrollment is eclipsed by the needs in SPED.
- Steve Baker - 634 Beach Road – He said he wants the Board to stop saying, “Not cutting BOE budget, only cutting the increase to budget.” He said he grew up in Town, graduated from Fairfield’s schools and the Town can afford a \$71.00 increase per household. He said people voted for people who supported the education budget and the body has changed.

- Kelly McWhinnie -947 Church Hill Road – She said kids went back to in-person learning in August of 2020. She said staff has been amazing. She said the budget says do more, but if the BOS cuts go through, kids will feel it. She asked to also please take care of the Town's Seniors.
- Suzanne Miska -123 Ryegate Road – She said the budget is concerning. She said the town-side budget is not efficient in scale. She said the BOE cut the budget before presenting it. She said there are conflicting budgets - spend money on Gould Manor, but not on education, conservation or DPW. She said there's an increase in the PD budget when crime has not increased. She said health care on the rise. She said to invest in the education we have to offer.
- Jill Vergara -271 Old Post Road – She said she is an RTM member and hasn't attended a public meeting in two years. She is urging other Boards and Commissions to go back to meeting in person. She said the community is breaking down on Webex. She said the eloquence of the speakers who have been through public education is proof of the need for funding the BOE budget.
- Jennifer Kennelly -117 Edgewood Place – She said she is a BOE member. She referenced Mr. Morton and said this is not the time to speak negatively about the BOE. She said the reality is that students need more. She cautioned the BOF not to fall back on the repeated phrase, "BOF does not determine the items." She asked if \$3 million could be cut and have it not impact children?
- Jennifer Giudice -59 Cedar Woods Lane- She said she's in her 25th year of teaching high school. She said her daughter is volunteering at farm for kids with special needs as a result of the impact of her teachers and Paras. She said more kids are in crisis and need smaller classroom sizes. She said investing in students now is an investment for years to come.

Chair Lori Charlton thanked the members of the public for attending and speaking. Chair Charlton then gave the Board members the opportunity to speak.

Chris DeWitt: He said he is thankful to have two kids graduate from the FPS. He said it is not surprising to have support for the youngest and oldest in Fairfield. He said we need to think about all Fairfielders and what they want. He said the BOE budget is a \$7.5 million increase from last year. He said the BOF has to keep Fairfield affordable and will look at all parts of the budget.

James Walsh: He said his favorite BOF budget meeting is to hear from residents in person. He said the budget is a balancing act and the Superintendent's list is scary because of the reasons heard today. He said it is shocking to see what Paras are paid and that needs to be looked at and they need a living wage. He said the BOE budget has no changes in CO and it has added positions. He said cutting the communications person would save six paras. He said there are no structural changes. He said the BOE wants to spend \$50 million to renovate Dwight and the building is at less than capacity. He said on the Town-side, adding police officers is needed because there is an increase in crime. He said there would be more money for air conditioning if there weren't expenses from the last administration regarding the fill pile. He said the Town will have to learn from and pay for that.

Jack Testani: He said the BOE budget is evaluated seriously. He said he has two kids who went through the FPS. He said there are other areas of the Town in the budget.

He said Gould Manor and Penfield need work. He said he will consider the increase and where the Town can benefit most. He said he heard what everyone had to say.

John Mitola: He said he has been serving on the BOF for 7-8 years and was also on the BOE as Chair and Vice Chair and on the RTM too. He said he looks at the Town budget to see where the Town can save and minimize increases on the Town-side and the effect of the BOE. He said some of the BOE budget can be restored without much impact. He said there is work to do.

Kevin Starke: He said 35% of residents have kids in school. He said it costs \$19,000 per pupil per year which is \$500,000. He said the average tax bill per household is \$12,000 and it would take 42 years to pay it back. He said there are two private schools with tuition increases. He said if the budget goes through, the taxes will increase 1.3%. He said there are SPED increases from the pandemic and social media and wellness. He said he thinks there would be a bipartisan agreement to increase the BOE budget to include an efficiency study.

Sheila Marmion: She said it's a hard role and there are tough choices on both the Town-side and the BOE side. She said she heard from constituents that they need to invest and not cut. She said she is thankful as a parent and a taxpayer to have had three kids go through the school system in Fairfield. she said she is supportive of the original BOE budget. She said she is supportive of the Health and Human Services budget. She said town-side services will be looked at closely as well.

Craig Curley: He said he was moved by the passion of the speakers. He said he is glad he ran for the BOF so he can give back. He said the budget can't be approved without going through the process and the color of the commentary helped fill in the blanks. He said he is in favor of fully restoring the BOE budget. He said the Town and BOE did a great job presenting their budgets and with detail.

Lori Charlton: She said this is the first time this meeting has happened since 2019. She said the world has changed and effected everyone. She said in the 2018-2019 budget approval, the BOF looked at families moving, declining property values, reduced State aid and budget increases. She said now, there is an influx of families, property values are up and there is a flood of State and federal funding. She said we are also approaching historic levels of inflation. She wants to focus on the long term and not over correct. She said to invest in education and create an education budget that is adequate and not fund with surplus money. She said she appreciates her colleagues who have put in the work. Ms. Charlton thanked the First Selectwoman and her team for putting together a budget that is thoughtful. She said she will be advocating for changes in it. She urged everyone to stay engaged in the process as the budget goes to the RTM.

IV. Adjourn

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:54 am. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary

