

**Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing #2**  
**Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 7:30 pm**  
**Via Webex And In Person at the**  
**BOE Offices, Room 295 A/B**  
**501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, CT**

A recording of this meeting can be found here: [BOF Budget Hearing #2 3/13/2024.](#)

Backup documents for this meeting can be found here: [BOF Budget Hearing #2 Backup Packet.](#)

**DRAFT MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairwoman Lori Charlton, Vice Chair John Mitola, Secretary Craig Curley, Shane Pendley, Mary LeClerc, Amy Ruggiero, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman Bill Gerber, Interim CFO David Becker, Budget Director Frank Magneri, FPS Superintendent Mike Testani, FPS CFO Courtney LeBoribus, BOE Liaison Jeff Peterson, BOE Chairwoman Jenn Jacobsen, FairTV, members of the public.

- 1) Call to Order  
Chairwoman Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance  
Chairwoman Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3) Discussion on the Following Budget:

Board of Education – Fairfield Public Schools (FPS) Superintendent Mike Testani, FPS CFO Courtney LeBoribus, BOE Liaison Jeff Peterson, BOE Chairwoman Jenn Jacobsen

8010 Board of Education - Pages 245-246 - \$220,000,484 Town Budget Book

- Superintendent Testani presented his budget. The Fairfield Public Schools budget book is in the backup packet. At the conclusion of the presentation, the BOF members discussed the presentation.
- James Walsh started a discussion about FPS test scores as compared to other systems in the state. The test scores are shared at the end of the summer. Mr. Testani will send results from last November. Mr. Testani will also send links for the State Board of Ed website for the comparison portals for the CT Towns.
- Amy Ruggiero started a conversation about teacher salaries and the large increase in the new contract and how it compares to other districts.

Budget Drivers:

- Infrastructure costs with program expansions.
- Unfunded mandates – decrease in revenue and increase in mandates- educating students up to age 22.
- Enrollment is flat but costs continue to rise.

- There was a discussion about the tax collection rate being raised to restore \$200,000 that had been reduced. The collection rate is the highest it has been in years.

11030 Health and Welfare Services - Page 249 - \$146,618 Town Budget Book

- \$1,000 increase – partial FTE.

2531 Private School Bus Transportation – Page 97 - \$1,314,669 Town Budget Book

- 2% increase due to contractual increases
- Driver shortage means longer bus runs and because there aren't enough buses running, drivers working longer hours.
- First Student has the contract and is offering incentives to get drivers but still don't have enough.

The full discussions for these items can be heard in the meeting recording linked at the top of this document.

4) Adjourn

John Mitola made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Ruggiero seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien  
Recording Secretary