

**Town of Newtown Legislative Council Special Meeting
Wednesday, June 27, 2012
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

FY 2012 2013 Budget

PRESENT: Jeff Capeci, Mary Ann Jacob, George Ferguson, Joseph Girgasky, Paul Lundquist, Daniel Honan, Kathy Fetchick, Dan Amaral, Mitch Bolinsky, Phillip Carroll, Dan Wiedemann **ABSENT:** Bob Merola

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Pat Llodra, Selectman James Gaston, Finance Director Bob Tait, Schools Superintendent Janet Robinson, Schools Business Manager Ron Bienkowski, BOF Chairman John Kortze, BOF members Harry Waterbury, James Gaston Jr., BOE Chairman Debbie Leidlein, BOE member Laura Roche, approximately 30 members of public, Jan Andras (clerk), three members of press

Chairman Capeci called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. This meeting is being held after a fourth failed referendum.

VOTER COMMENT:

Fern Paes, Teachers Ridge – after the last referendum defeat, she spoke to the Council about measures she has had to take to save costs in her business. She almost voted YES this time but then read in newspaper that there is a proposal for the purchase of two new vehicles. She also feels it is inappropriate for the schools to send out notifications reminding parents to vote when the rest of the taxpayers do not have this service. She believes administrative costs can be reduced and still keep same services and same education. Ms. Llodra advised that the Town has a Code Red notification system that can only be used for emergencies. The schools have their own notification system and the municipal government has no access to that system.

Robert Hall, Nettleton Avenue – feels that the Council did the correct thing with the first reduction of \$1 million in education. He does not believe parents hoping for full day kindergarten outnumber those who want no increase in taxes. He urges the Council to propose a budget with no increase.

Michelle Ku, Platts Hill Road – was in favor of the first budget proposal but took it for granted that it would pass at referendum and did not get as involved as she has lately. Each subsequent referendum is hurting the town and schools. She pledges to get behind any reasonable budget in the future and campaign to get it passed. Compromise is needed between the groups wanting more funds in education and the groups who want no increase. Council members need to compromise and lead by example. She would like to see \$250,000 moved from the municipal budget to the schools budget, not changing the bottom line.

David Nelson, 2 Pebble Road – has lived here for 40 years and each year the schools budget increased, but the number of students was also increasing. This year the BOE

started out requiring an increase of \$1,384,000 – why? He understands that a 2007 law would allow us to decrease the education budget below the prior year level based on decreasing enrollment. We should do that now before we lose the opportunity. When do the taxpayers receive the benefit of 500 less students to educate? He believes that the \$240,000 added to the schools budget prior to the last referendum should go back to the municipal budget for emergencies.

David Taylor, Lakeview Terrace – believes more money could be “found” in the municipal budget to transfer over to the schools. Everyone needs to compromise. He understands the 0% increase point of view but it doesn't reflect the future of this town, which is in the schools.

Jim Greenwood, Elm Drive – the municipal budget is now at the 2008 level. Obviously sacrifices are being made there. Taxes go up every year. Taxpayers are making their sacrifice. It's time for the BOE to do the same. He thought that the school bus change was supposed to save money. The taxpayers didn't benefit, the owner-operators didn't benefit. It seems that only the school administration saw a benefit.

Chris Powers, 75 High Rock Road – believes that each person is here because they care about the town and want to do the right thing. The arbitrary reduction from the BOE is insurmountable. There is not enough money in the budget to adequately provide for the children in the school system. She looked through the proposed BOE reductions and objects to them.

Robin Fitzgerald, Old Farm Hill Road - is not sorry that the referendum failed by 19 votes. She encouraged everyone she knew to vote NO because the BOE budget is inadequate. This defeat gives the Council a chance to reprioritize. In order to pass, there needs to be adequate funds added back to the education budget.

Kevin Fitzgerald, Old Farm Hill Road – it is easy to look at the BOE budget and believe that there are extra funds. Significant things happen every year in the school district to save money. The original referendum failed by a large margin and the Council chose to reduce the education budget only. That was the largest reduction to date. People were not happy with that action so the following budgets failed.

Michelle Assante, Wendover Road – enrollment may be down but we have more special needs students. There is a contingency fund in the municipal budget but not on the BOE side. She performed a brief poll and e-mailed the results to the Council members. Of 248 respondents, 197 said they would vote YES if \$250,000 was returned to the BOE.

Charles Hepp, Winter Ridge – distributed rankings of CT towns (attached). He would like to see money added back to the BOE budget. He does not see this as “same services”. All of the proposed BOE reductions have a negative effect on education.

Kinga Walsh, Horseshoe Ridge – the Town is at an impasse. We are divided by split points of view on what we need to get the budget passed. Town officials ran last

November on platforms that they would "find" money. No one has shown "wastefulness" in the schools budget. Leaders need to find out how to bridge the gap and get a budget passed that we can all accept. We need to put more money into education and the budget will pass. We need to investigate the apathy of the voters.

George Schmitt, Old Castle Drive – there has been a lot of speculation about why people rejected the budget. The truth is no one knows. Cut the increase to -0- in proportion to both sides of the budget. There are two opposing camps and both are voting NO.

Donna Monteleone Randle, Erin Lane – the budget failed for many reasons and you have heard many of them. Some people don't want any tax increase. Some feel there is not enough in the schools budget to provide same services. She asked the First Selectman to pull the different factions together.

A brief recess was called at 9:00 pm and the meeting returned to order at 9:10 pm.

Debbie Leidlein, BOE Chair, distributed copies of *Board of Education Potential Budget Adjustments*, and *Board of Education Same Services Budget Recap* (with and without full day kindergarten), which are attached to these minutes. Some members of the public tonight spoke against the reduction of the remaining transportation coordinator. Ms. Leidlein has been assured by Dr. Robinson and Mr. Bienkowski that this position is a redundancy with the new bus company and can be eliminated. In addition, the Sandy Hook Asst. Principal to the Lead Teacher is not necessary due to reduced enrollment in the elementary schools. Ms. Fetchick distributed copies of *Grade One through Four Staffing Analysis for 2012-2013* (attached), indicating that class sizes are well below the current guidelines.

Ms. Jacob asked if the schools have an unassigned repair account? Mr. Bienkowski responded that there is \$200,000 budgeted for unforeseen repairs in the 7 schools. This current year, that budget will be overspent by \$5,000 to \$10,000. In the past, the contingency in the municipal budget has been used for large unforeseen expenses, such as the oil spill at Reed School and replacement of the Hawley School boiler.

Regarding an earlier voter comment about the town purchasing two new vehicles, Ms. Llodra advised that we are bidding this to see how much it will cost. There is no commitment. The town car used by the Building Official was totaled during the recent storm and a vehicle is necessary for the job. Funds would be used from the contingency account if the purchase is made.

Mr. Lundquist asked where money would come from if a new student with special needs moved to the district? Mr. Bienkowski answered that has happened in the past and there is no undesignated contingency for that situation. There may be other accounts with positive balances that could be transferred late in the year to cover those situations. Also, that would be eligible for ECS funds to help offset the costs.

Ms. Leidlein stated that what we have currently available would not be sufficient to implement full-day kindergarten without affecting other services. We would need another \$290,000. The school principals have all advocated very strongly for full day kindergarten and believe it to be a real benefit.

Ms. Jacob moved to reduce the Fund Balance by \$200,000. Motion seconded. Ms. Jacob stated that with what was heard tonight, that the BOE can provide same services. Whether to provide full day kindergarten and reduce services is a decision to be made by the BOE once a budget is passed. She does not like to reduce the fund balance contribution but we are in a position we did not expect to be in and this is another way to compromise, with a 0.69% increase in the budget. Mr. Lundquist feels comfortable with the BOE budget as it stands, if full day kindergarten is no longer on the table. If it is, he does not feel like it is the right thing to be limiting the funds and having a trade-off that takes things below same services.

Mr. Lundquist moved to amend by transferring the \$200,000 to the Board of Education contingent upon their implementation of full-day kindergarten. Motion seconded and failed: 10 NO – 1 YES (Lundquist) *(It was later noted that the Council cannot decide where BOE funds are spent).*

MAIN MOTION FAILED: 6 NO (Ferguson, Fetchick, Wiedemann, Amaral, Capeci, Carroll) – 5 YES (Lundquist, Girgasky, Honan, Jacob, Bolinsky)

Ms. Fetchick moved to reduce the Board of Education budget by \$200,000 and to reduce the Board of Selectmen budget by \$50,000. Motion seconded. Ms. Fetchick stated that we need to reduce operating expenses and this would represent an 80/20 split in operating expenses.

Mr. Wiedemann moved to amend by reducing the Board of Education budget by \$300,000 and reducing the Fund Balance by \$50,000. Motion seconded and failed: 10 NO – 1 YES (Wiedemann)

MAIN MOTION FAILED: 9 NO – 2 YES (Fetchick, Wiedemann)

The meeting recessed at 10:15 pm and returned to order at 10:30 pm.

Mr. Carroll moved to take \$100,000 from the Fund Balance and \$100,000 from Contingency in the Board of Selectmen budget. Motion seconded.

Mr. Bolinsky moved to amend by taking \$200,000 from Contingency. Motion seconded and failed: 6 NO – 5 YES (Girgasky, Jacob, Fetchick, Bolinsky, Carroll)

MAIN MOTION CARRIED: 8 YES – 3 NO (Ferguson, Fetchick, Wiedemann)

Ms. Jacob moved to send the FY 2012-2013 Budget Expenditures in the amount of \$106,146,838 and Revenue in the amount of \$106,246,838 to the voters. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Jacob moved that the Legislative Council charge the Board of Selectmen with setting the date/time of the Town Meeting required by Charter for action on the budget after a fourth failed referendum. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Jacob moved that if the Board of Selectmen decides to send the budget vote to a referendum, the hours for voting be set as 6:00 am to 8:00 pm. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Llodra advised that the Fund Balance can cover expenses for 5.5 weeks, after that, short term borrowing will be necessary until tax revenue starts to come in, and there will be associated borrowing costs. Mr. Tait explained that he will need authority to spend money after June 30, 2012 when the fiscal year ends, as per State Statute.

Ms. Jacob moved to give the Purchasing Authority the authority to spend within the limits of appropriations specified in budgetary line items for the previous fiscal year. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

John Kortze, BOF Chairman, stated that action taken tonight alters BOF adopted policies for the Fund Balance. He asked that in the future, the Council consider asking the Board of Finance to weigh in before such a decision is made.

VOTER COMMENT:

Michelle Assante, Wendover Road – feels there is a disconnect with the Council members. The people in tonight's audience did not feel that anything discussed tonight represented compromise in their minds. A compromise would have been to put some of the money back into education. Education supporters will vote against this budget again.

Chris Powers, High Rock Road – feels that no one here understands the education supporters' pain and that they are being made an example of which is an inappropriate way to show respect.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm.

Jan Andras
Recording Secretary

Attachments

These are draft minutes and as such are subject to correction by the Legislative Council at the next regular meeting. All corrections will be determined in minutes of the meeting at which they were corrected.

CHARLES HEPP HANDOUT

NCEP Rank	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
AVON	83	92	87	84	114	109	119	138	147	147	137
BROOKFIELD	155	153	122	124	124	123	120	120	149	153	141
CHESHIRE	88	77	85	98	115	129	135	137	138	143	130
FAIRFIELD	20	22	26	23	24	20	24	26	33	42	57
FARMINGTON	124	106	113	106	121	121	99	90	116	106	105
GLASTONBURY	139	144	150	147	147	140	134	128	135	134	132
GRANBY	113	130	118	122	127	125	127	131	129	142	146
GREENWICH	1	1	2	1	2	4	2	3	9	11	12
GUILFORD	79	93	99	93	89	85	93	83	79	78	84
MADISON	148	132	152	152	145	150	161	157	128	115	114
NEW FAIRFIELD	118	141	149	156	129	144	148	144	157	145	127
NEWTOWN	158	148	143	139	139	137	136	140	134	133	148
ORANGE	49	60	65	80	73	70	68	72	60	68	65
SIMSBURY	125	100	107	101	94	104	103	95	104	97	110
SOUTH WINDSOR	145	136	130	137	140	124	130	127	109	102	74
TRUMBULL	112	112	111	110	84	98	95	107	112	107	121
WEST HARTFORD	60	77	88	82	82	80	85	84	99	116	120
WOODBIDGE	51	47	48	49	42	44	41	39	34	38	43

BOARD OF EDUCATIONS POTENTIAL BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

OTHER REDUCTIONS	<u>POTENTIAL</u>	<u>ADJUSTMENT</u>	<u>REQUIRED FUNDS</u>
<u>BOE Specific Budget Cuts - Non-Instructional</u>			
25 Transportation Coordinator & Extra Work	(\$44,879)	(\$44,879)	\$472,989
26 Magnet School Bus Aide	(\$12,060)	(\$12,060)	\$460,929
27 Pre-school Program Bus Aides	(\$51,000)	(\$51,000)	\$109,929
28 H.S. Pay to Participate for Athletic Trips	(\$21,500)	(\$21,500)	\$388,429
29 H.S. Textbooks - Lost Book Funds in Activity Funds	(\$22,761)	(\$22,761)	\$365,668
30 Transportation Bond	(\$16,500)	(\$16,500)	\$349,168
31		\$0	\$319,168
32		\$0	\$319,168
Total	(\$168,700)	(\$168,700)	
<u>BOE Specific Budget Cuts - Non-Instructional</u>			
33 All Schools - Instructional Supplies	(\$51,760)	(\$51,760)	\$297,408
34 H.S. Program Reduction	(\$30,700)	(\$30,700)	\$266,708
35		\$0	\$266,708
36		\$0	\$266,708
Total	(\$82,460)	(\$82,460)	
<u>BOE Specific Budget Cuts - Instructional Staff</u>			
37 S.H. Asst. Principal to Lead Teacher	(\$75,245)	(\$75,245)	\$191,163
38 S.H. Music Teacher	0.2 (\$21,264)	0.2 (\$21,264)	\$170,199
39 Elementary Teachers	1 (\$57,256)	1 (\$57,256)	\$112,943
40		\$0	\$112,943
41		\$0	\$112,943
Total	(\$153,765)	(\$153,765)	
<u>BOE Specific Budget Cuts - Other</u>			
42 M.S. Moving Up Ceremony	(\$4,200)	(\$4,200)	\$108,743
43 Unemployment	(\$20,000)	(\$20,000)	\$88,743
44 Non-act. Salary Adj. - Turnover Savings	(\$15,000)	(\$15,000)	\$73,743
45 Non-act. Extra Work - District	(\$20,000)	(\$20,000)	\$53,743
46 Professional Services - B. & G.	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	\$48,743
47 B. & G. Contracted Services	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	\$43,743
48 Postage - H.S.	(\$2,000)	(\$2,000)	\$41,743
49		\$0	\$41,743
50 Benefits Adjustment, FICA, SS, life, disab. etc	(\$15,000)	(\$15,000)	\$26,743
51		\$0	\$26,743
52		\$0	\$26,743
53		\$0	\$26,743
54		\$0	\$26,743
55		\$0	\$26,743
Total	(\$86,200)	(\$86,200)	

BOARD OF EDUCATION SAME SERVICES BUDGET RECAP

		<u>BUDGET DIFFERENCE WITHOUT ALL DAY KINDERGARTEN</u>	<u>BUDGET DIFFERENCE WITH ALL DAY KINDERGARTEN</u>
BOE Proposed Budget	1/31/12	2,084,367	2,084,367
A Adjustments to Same Services Budget included	1/31/12	(547,371)	(547,371)
BOE Same Services Budget Increase	1/31/12	1,536,996	1,536,996
B Additions due to need since proposed budget	6/5/12	290,288	290,288
Professional Services - Transitional (in proposed budget)	1/31/12	25,000	25,000
C BOF Partially Identified Reductions (part of 700,000)	3/14/12	(374,857)	(374,857)
D Technical Adjustments Identified	6/5/12	(548,462)	(548,462)
STARR program technical adjustment (in proposed budget)	1/31/12	(16,797)	(16,797)
E Adjustments to Kindergarten	5/8/12	(107,563)	290,128
F Other Staffing adjustments	1/31/12	(100,061)	(100,061)
Adjusted Same Services Budget Increase		704,544	1,102,235
LC Proposed Budget Increase (After 1,700,000 reduction)	4/25/12	384,367	384,367
Same Services Budget Shortfall		(320,177)	(717,868)
LC Action Capital Items	6/6/12	200,000	200,000
Adjusted Same Services Budget Shortfall		(120,177)	(517,868)

BOARD OF EDUCATION SAME SERVICES BUDGET RECAP

Without All Day Kindergarten

With All Day Kindergarten

	Budget	Increase/(Shortfall)	Budget adj.	Budget	Increase/(Shortfall)	Budget adj.
BOE Proposed Budget	70,055,794			70,055,794		
A Included the following adjustments to same services:		2,084,367			2,084,367	
<i>Middle Gate</i>						
1.00 First grade teacher	(57,256)			(57,256)		
<i>Special Education</i>						
.50 Hearing Impaired teacher	28,628			28,628		
.40 ELL teacher (replaces ESL tutor)	22,902			22,902		
-.57 ESL tutor	(23,028)			(23,028)		
Full Day Kindergarten	456,662			456,662		
Professional Services	25,000			25,000		
Staff and Program Development	57,277			57,277		
Professional Ed. Services	14,200			14,200		
Wireless High School A Wing	23,369			23,369		
MS Guidance Counselor	59,093			59,093		
Transportation coordinator	(42,679)			(42,679)		
STARR program technical adjustment	(16,797)			(16,797)		
Total	547,371			547,371		
BOE Same Services	69,508,423	1,536,996	(547,371)	69,508,423	1,536,996	(547,371)
B Additions due to need since proposed budget						
Magnet School Tuition	12,845			12,845		
Out of district tuition	173,872			173,872		
Out of district transportation	50,044			50,044		
HOM nurse - special needs	53,527			53,527		
Total	290,288			290,288		
Professional Services - Transitional (in proposed budget)	25,000			25,000		
C BOE Agreed Upon Adjustments (part of 700,000)						
Medical Insurance	(195,689)			(195,689)		
OPEB Funding	(100,000)			(100,000)		
Diesel Fuel	(39,168)			(39,168)		
Electricity	(40,000)			(40,000)		
Total	(374,857)			(374,857)		
D Technical Adjustments Identified						
Natural Gas	(40,000)			(40,000)		
Professional and Liability Insurance	(3,773)			(3,773)		
Dental Benefits	(79,080)			(79,080)		
Copy Machine Contract	(6,346)			(6,346)		
Transportation	(199,588)			(199,588)		
Transportation rate reduction (Mid-day K)	(56,610)			(56,610)		
Athletic trip contract	(13,065)			(13,065)		
Additional Teacher turnover	(150,000)			(150,000)		
Total	(548,462)			(548,462)		
STARR program technical adjustment (in proposed budget)	(16,797)			(16,797)		
E Adjustments to Kindergarten						
Without All Day Kindergarten						
1.5 less Kindergarten teachers	(85,886)					
1.28 less educational assistants	(21,677)					
Total	(107,563)					
With All Day Kindergarten						
Add 5.5 Kindergarten teachers				338,927		
Add 4.72 educational assistants				79,483		
Classroom furniture				9,840		
Technology Equipment - Smartboard				3,547		
Transportation - No Mid-day Kindergarten				(141,669)		
Total				290,128		
F Other Staffing adjustments						
-1.00 First grade teacher at Middle Gate	(57,256)			(57,256)		
.40 ELL teacher (replaces ESL tutor)	22,902			22,902		
-.57 ESL tutor	(23,028)			(23,028)		
Eliminate a Transportation coordinator	(42,679)			(42,679)		
Total	(100,061)			(100,061)		
Adjusted Same Services Budget	68,675,971	704,544	(1,379,823)	69,073,662	1,102,235	(982,132)
LC Proposed Budget Increase (After 1,700,000 reduction)	68,355,794	384,367	(1,700,000)	68,355,794	384,367	(1,700,000)
Same Services Budget Shortfall		(320,177)			(717,868)	
LC Action Capital Items		200,000			200,000	
Adjusted Same Services Budget Shortfall		(120,177)			(517,868)	

BOARD OF EDUCATION SAME SERVICES BUDGET RECAP

Without All Day Kindergarten

		<u>Increase/(Shortfall)</u>
BOE Same Services Increase		1,536,996
Previously Identified Adjustments to Same Services (Included in BOE Budget)		<u>(91,858)</u>
Subtotal		1,445,138
BOE Approved Adjustments 6/19/12		
Additions due to need since proposed budget	290,288	
BOF Adjustments Agreed Upon	(374,857)	
Technical Adjustments Identified	<u>(491,852)</u>	
Total		<u>(576,421)</u>
Subtotal		868,717
Adjustments to Kindergarten Without All Day Kindergarten		
Staffing	(107,563)	
Transportation rate reduction (Mid-day K)	<u>(56,610)</u>	
Total		<u>(164,173)</u>
Adjusted Same Services Budget Increase		704,544
Legislative Council Funding		
Proposed Budget Increase (After 1,700,000 reduction)	384,367	
From Non-recurring Capital Funds	<u>200,000</u>	
Total		<u>584,367</u>
Adjusted Same Services Budget Shortfall		(120,177)

Other Necessary/Available Adjustments

.50 Hearing impaired teacher (Included in BOE Budget)	28,628
Workers Comp.	(17,638)
Unemployment	(20,000)
Second Transportation Coordinator & Extra Work	(44,879)
Sandy Hook Assistant Principal to Lead Teacher	<u>(75,245)</u>
Total	<u>(129,134)</u>
Excess Reductions	8,957

Grade One through Four Staffing Analysis for 2012-2013

Hawley School

11-12 teachers in grade	4	4	4	4	4	Grade 4
Current year sections/students	4/60	4/81	4/69	4/87	4/87	
12-13 projected students	74	82	75	89	89	35
12-13 teachers	4	4	4	4	4	3
Ave. 12-13 class size	18.5	20.5	18.75	22.25	22.25	18.3333333
Included Students	2 included	5 included	7 included	4 included	4 included	5 included
Recommendation: do nothing						

Sandy Hook School

11-12 year teachers in grade	5	6	5	6	6	Grade K
Current year sections/students	5/81	5/90	6/112	5/99	5/99	
12-13 projected students	80	92	112	95	95	72
12-13 teachers	5	5	5	4	4	4
Ave. 12-13 class size	16	18.4	18.6666667	23.75	23.75	18
Included Students	6 included	4 included	12 included	7 included	7 included	8 included
Recommendation: reduce 1 grade two teacher, add one grade three teacher and reduce 2 grade four teachers						

Middle Gate School

11-12 teachers in grade	6	5	4	4	4	Grade K
Current year sections/students	5/77	6/101	5/96	4/97	4/97	
12-13 projected students	82	103	95	93	93	79
12-13 teachers	5	6	4	4	4	4
Ave. 12-13 class size	16.4	17.166667	23.75	23.25	23.25	19.75
SRBI	8 included	13 included	11 included	4 included	4 included	10 included
Recommendation: reduce 1 grade one teacher and add 1 grade two teacher						

Head O Meadow School

11-12 teachers in grade	4	3	4	4	4	Grade K
Current year sections/students	3/53	4/61	3/54	4/86	4/86	
12-13 projected students	68	66	56	91	91	62
12-13 teachers	4	4	3	4	4	3
Ave. 12-13 class size	17	16.5	18.6666667	22.75	22.75	20.6666667
Included Students	6 included	4 included	8 included	7 included	7 included	12 included
Recommendation: add 1 grade two teacher and reduce 1 grade three teacher						