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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

TOWN OF NEWTOWN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 22, 2017

NEWTOWN MUNICIPAL CENTER, NEWTOWN, CT

PRESENT: Phil Carroll, Chris Eide, Neil Chaudhary, Judit DeStefano, Ryan Knapp, Paul Lundquist, Mary Ann Jacob, Dan Amaral, Tony Filiato, Dan Wiedemann, Dan Honan.

ABSENT: George Ferguson.

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Pat Llodra, Finance Director Bob Tait, Police Captain Christopher Vanghele, Lieutenant Richard Robinson, District Director of Security Mark Pompano, Newtown School Superintendent Dr. Joseph Erardi, Newtown School Board Keith Alexander, Michelle Embree Ku, Andrew Clure, Newtown School District Director of Business Ron Bienkowski, Commission on Aging George Guidera, State Representative Mitch Bolinsky, 7 members of the public, 2 press.

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Jacob called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.

VOTER COMMENT: Ms. Jacob opened the floor to public comment regarding the 2017-18 Annual Budget of the Town of Newtown.

Karen Holden, 68 Berkshire Road, Sandy Hook – regarding the education budget, she observed a pattern over the years, when the council is not happy with the results of the school budget, they look at shared services, enrollment studies, transportation costs, then look to make cuts. There is a \$10 million dollar fund balance, understandably beneficial, but that should be considered instead of making cuts to the education budget as it represents tax payer money. She asked that the council not make cuts in the education budget, cuts hurt education and students.

Michelle Embree Ku, 28 Platts Hill Road – this budget season is unique because since the time that the Board of Ed has passed the budget there has been some developments that may affect state funding. She acknowledged the value of fund balance, but having a top-notch school district also adds value to the town. She requested that the council not overlook the value that an excellent school district provides. She recognized the tough decisions that lie ahead for the council, but cautioned the council on overreacting to the state budget until it is complete.

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Julia Conlin, Old Castle Drive, Newtown – she is in support of the Board of Education budget as presented to you from the Board of Finance with no additional reductions. She expressed concern if the council looks to cut the education budget after committees have spent so much time scrutinizing it, including areas that are typically addressed year after year. If the council is concerned about state cuts, consider the fund balance as an option.

Jason Zetoff, 16 Lakeview Terrace, Sandy Hook – he said to put trust into the Board of Ed and Superintendent and to support the education budget as is, put it forth and let the voters decide.

There being no further public participation, Ms. Jacob closed the public hearing at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

June Sgobbo
Clerk

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.