

Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

TOWN OF COLCHESTER
BOARD OF FINANCE – REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL
127 NORWICH AVENUE
Wednesday, July 18th, 2012 - 7:00pm

MINUTES

HANCY A. BRAY
TOWN CLERK

Hancy A. Bray

2012 JUL 23 PM 3:31

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman R. Tarlov, T. Kane, R. Esteve, A. Shilosky, J. Ringo
MEMBERS ABSENT: C. Pompei
OTHERS PRESENT: M. Cosgrove, J. McNair, R. Blessing, Deputy Chief D. Lee, C. Barnes, and other citizens.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tarlov called this Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

a. **June 28th, 2012 Special Meeting and Tri Board Meeting of June 27th, 2012**

J. Ringo made a motion to approve the minutes of both the June 28th, 2012 Special Meeting as well as the June 27th, 2012 Tri Board Meeting. Seconded by R. Esteve. T. Kane abstained from voting on the minutes of either meeting. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

J. McNair commented on breaking old habits with regard to the budget process.

4. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. **Finance Department**

M. Cosgrove gave report

b. **Tax Collector**

None

c. **Treasurer**

None

6. FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

a. **Selectman's Agenda**

i. Transfer Requests

None

ii. First Selectman's Update

G. Schuster gave report.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

2 Citizen Letters

8. LIASON REPORTS

R. Esteve reported on BOE, A. Shilosky relayed a request for direction from the Building Committee

9. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Contingency Policy - review of information received from other towns**
Nothing new.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Discussion of IGA - Town/Celtic Energy Meeting**
Another Tri Board Meeting is being planned.
- b. **Review of 2012 Budget Process**
Process was reviewed
- i. **Letter from Citizen**
 Letter from J. McNair was discussed previously during
 Citizen Comments
- a. **Update on Health Insurance Fund and Subcommittee Meetings**
No dates set yet for subcommittee
- b. **Review of Town Measurement Data (Senior Services, Youth Services,
Park and Rec)**
- i. **Letter from Citizen**
 D. Bouchard submit a letter
- c. **Target dates to meet with BOE to discuss capital planning**
No dates have been set
- d. **Direction for Building Committee**
Architectural work should continue. Informational Sessions should be held. No guidance of timeline.

11. CITIZENS COMMENTS

None

12. ADJOURNMENT

A. Shilosky made a motion to adjourn at 9:35p. Seconded by R. Estev. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED

To: Colchester Board of Finance
From: James McNair
Date: July 18, 2016
Re: Suggestions to improve Budget process

As an ex-elected official, I appreciate the long hours and hard work put into developing annual Budget recommendations. I can appreciate the frustrations when the voters fail to support Budget recommendations. I have a couple of suggestions for the Board of Finance's consideration to gain support for budget recommendations.

After years of observation, there are two areas the Board of Finance can address to reduce push back. The first is having all relevant information in one place for people to easily digest the information. The second is improving the clarity of data by labeling it better.

Looking at the attached information provided by the BoS, I submit improvements can be made in the following areas:

- For union contracts, compensation increases involve general wage increases, step increases and sometimes bonus increases. Stating just the wage increase is only part of the overall increase. The voter is better served knowing the wage increases including step. A case in point is the Police contract. With step, the annual increases are about 6%.
- Show department salaries and head counts for the proposed Budget and previous 4 years.
- State and label all staffing figures in FTE. This avoid the voter guessing is the data head count, FTE or full time staff only.
- Show proposed spending for Town Hall Ops, debt and capital transfers versus projected actual spending for current fiscal year and actual spending versus prior 4 years.

For the BoE, I suggest they develop a summary sheet similar to the BoS.

- Show enrollment for the last five years and projections from the New England School Development Council. The public should know that enrollment is projected to decline by 25% over the next 10 years.
- Show FTE staffing for the proposed Budget and 4 previous years for administrators, certified teachers, other certified staff, paraprofessionals and all other staff. The district annually has to provide this information to the state so Colchester voters should see this too.
- Show the impact of step for the Budget. The BoE did not give the whole picture about teacher contracts this year. From a FOI request, information exists stating the number of certified staff at each step level. The voter would be better served knowing the percentage of certified staff getting no increase, 1-3% increase, 4-7% increases, et. Al.

In closing, I suggest Colchester's voters will be better served by adding these two executive summaries to the Budget packets. It will reduce push back from those feeling information is being intentionally downplayed or omitted to mislead the voter. It will also give people ample information to understand exactly what is in the Budget to make up their own minds.

Town of Colchester
 FY 2012-2013
 First Selectman's Proposed Budget

PERSONNEL SUMMARY

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE HISTORY

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
General Government	103	100	103	105	106	105
Board of Education	436	442	450	450	442	443
Total	539	542	553	555	548	548

EMPLOYEE BARGAINING ORGANIZATIONS

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Bargaining Unit</u>	<u>Contract Expiration Date</u>	<u>FY 2012-13 Wage Increase</u>
Public Works	Municipal Employees Union Independent, Local 506, SEIU, AFL-CIO, CLC	06/30/13	3.00%
Town Clerical	Local 1303-254, Council #4, AFSCME, AFL-CIO	06/30/13	3.25%
Fire/Ambulance	Colchester Firefighters Union, UPPFA, IAFF, Local 3831	06/30/12	Neg. ¹
Town Administrators	Municipal Employees Union Independent, Local 506 SEIU, AFL-CIO, CLC	06/30/11	Neg. ¹
Police	Colchester Police Local 2693T, AFSCME, Council #15	06/30/15	3.00%
Library Employees	Local 1303-448 CT Council #4, AFSCME, AFL-CIO	06/30/13	3.00%

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

<u>Employees</u>	<u>No. of Employees^{1,3}</u>	<u>Salaries & Wages²</u>
Public Works	20	\$870,733
Town Clerical	14	\$571,796
Fire/Ambulance	6	\$291,223
Administrators	11	\$771,337
Police	11	\$695,493
Library	6	\$219,591
Non-Union	12	\$577,865
Elected	3	\$199,029
TOTAL	83	\$4,157,067

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
Health Insurance Cost	\$729,106	\$714,526	\$782,570	\$1,016,477	\$1,045,629	\$1,054,890

¹ Contracts currently in negotiations

² Proposed Budget

³ Represents full-time employees included in proposed budget

Budget Impact of Teacher Contract

Final Year of Contract -Key Provisions

- For **four consecutive years**, steps #1-11 have been **frozen** at 2009 levels.
i.e. A first year teacher in 2012-13 will earn the same salary as a first year teacher did in 2009-10= \$41,764
- Teachers on steps #1-11 make step movement only, **no** General Wage Increase
- Teachers at top step #12 receive **1.5%** General Wage Increase
- 13 FTE teachers (5 % of all teachers) moving from Step 11 to Step12 receive an average increase of \$11,388
- In 2012-13, health insurance premium share increases to 17.5%

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

and

THE COLCHESTER FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
Local #1827

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

AFT-CONNECTICUT

AFL-CIO

July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013

step level	Years in district	Total Teachers	% teachers	average step increase	2012-2013 school year
1	1	0.00	0.0%		
2	2	1.00	0.4%	0.5%	step 1 to 2
3	3	1.00	0.4%	1.9%	step 2 to 3
4	4	2.00	0.8%	2.2%	step 3 to 4
5	5	3.40	1.3%	2.4%	step 4 to 5
6	6	10.00	3.8%	3.3%	step 5 to 6
7	7	9.60	3.7%	3.5%	step 6 to 7
8	8	12.16	4.7%	7.5%	step 7 to 8
9	9	15.80	6.1%	6.8%	step 8 to 9
10	10	9.00	3.5%	7.6%	step 9 to 10
11	11	10.70	4.1%	6.5%	step 10 to 11
12	12	13.00	5.0%	15.7%	step 11 to 12
12	13 and over	166.90	64.1%	1.5%	maxed out
		254.56		3.43%	

2012-2013 summary	
% teachers	average step increase
10.4%	3.0%
18.3%	7.1%
5.0%	15.7%
64.1%	1.5%



Colchester Public Schools

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 202
Colchester, CT 06415

Karen Loïselle Goodwin
Superintendent of Schools

Phone (860) 537-7208
Fax (860) 537-1252

March 5, 2012

Mr. James McNair
19 Esther Lane
Colchester, CT 06415

Dear Mr. McNair:

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and your email request dated February 25, 2012, I enclose the following responses to your request.

There are thirteen (13) teachers who are at step 11 this year who will be at step 12 for the 2012-13 school year.

Also enclosed is the Teachers Contract Salary Analysis Summary as requested. Please be aware that this analysis does not include any of the position reductions proposed in the FY 2012/2013 budget, but some of the positions identified as MA 6 represent unknown replacements for retiring teachers. Please know that this is the same basis that CFO Cosgrove used for preparing the analysis for the current school year.

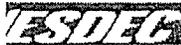
Cordially,

Karen Loïselle Goodwin

Cc: Ron Goldstein, Chair, Board of Education
N. Maggie Cosgrove, CFO
FOI file

Teachers Contract - Salary Analysis - Summary
FY 2012-2013

BA	BA +15	MA	MA +15	6th Year	6th Yr +15	PhD	Total
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1.00
0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1.00
0.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		2.00
0.20	0.20	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		3.40
1.00	2.00	7.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		10.00
1.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	0.60	0.00		9.60
1.60	0.50	8.86	0.00	0.60	0.60		12.16
1.00	0.00	9.00	3.00	2.80	0.00		15.80
0.00	0.00	7.00	1.00	1.00	0.00		9.00
1.00	0.70	7.00	0.00	2.00	0.00		10.70
2.00	2.00	130.90	13.00	24.00	6.00	2.00	179.90
7.80	6.40	181.76	19.00	31.00	6.60	2.00	254.56



Colchester, CT Projected Enrollment

District: Colchester, CT

12/12/2011

Enrollment Projections By Grade*

Births	School Year	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	UNGR	K-12	PK-12
168	2011-12	80	180	197	222	204	214	236	234	224	242	228	246	249	259	0	2935	3015
147	2012-13	80	160	180	189	223	203	214	234	236	225	227	228	248	262	0	2829	2909
144	2013-14	81	157	160	172	190	222	203	212	236	237	211	227	230	261	0	2718	2799
161	2014-15	81	175	157	153	173	189	222	201	214	237	222	211	229	242	0	2625	2706
162 (est.)	2015-16	82	177	175	150	154	173	189	220	203	215	222	222	212	241	0	2553	2635
156 (est.)	2016-17	82	170	177	168	151	154	173	187	222	204	201	222	224	223	0	2476	2558
154 (est.)	2017-18	83	168	170	170	169	151	154	171	189	223	191	201	224	236	0	2417	2500
155 (est.)	2018-19	83	169	188	183	171	169	151	153	173	190	209	191	202	236	0	2345	2428
158 (est.)	2019-20	84	172	189	181	164	171	169	150	155	174	178	209	192	213	0	2277	2361
157 (est.)	2020-21	84	171	172	162	162	164	171	168	152	156	163	178	210	202	0	2231	2315
156 (est.)	2021-22	85	170	171	165	163	162	164	170	170	153	146	163	179	221	0	2197	2282

Births should be updated on an annual basis. Based on an estimate of births

Based on children already born

Based on students already enrolled

Projected Enrollment in Grade Combinations*

	PK-2	K-5	K-2	K-8	J-5	6-8	7-8	7-12	9-12
2	679	1253	599	1953	654	700	466	1448	982
3	609	1169	529	1864	640	695	461	1426	965
4	570	1104	489	1789	615	685	473	1402	929
5	566	1069	485	1721	584	652	451	1355	904
6	584	1018	502	1656	516	638	418	1315	897
7	597	993	515	1606	478	613	426	1296	870
8	591	982	508	1565	474	583	412	1264	852
9	583	991	500	1507	491	516	363	1201	838
0	586	1006	502	1485	504	479	329	1121	792
1	589	1002	505	1478	497	476	308	1061	753
2	591	995	506	1488	489	493	323	1032	709

Projected Percentage Changes

Years	K-12	Diff.	%
2011-12	2935	0	0.0%
2012-13	2829	-106	-3.6%
2013-14	2718	-111	-3.9%
2014-15	2625	-93	-3.4%
2015-16	2553	-72	-2.7%
2016-17	2476	-77	-3.0%
2017-18	2417	-59	-2.4%
2018-19	2345	-72	-3.0%
2019-20	2277	-68	-2.9%
2020-21	2231	-46	-2.0%
2021-22	2197	-34	-1.5%
K-12 Change		-738	-25.1%

*Reliability of Enrollment Projections section of accompanying letter. Projections are more reliable for Years 1-5 in the future than for Years 6 and beyond.

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FY 2012-2013

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2	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1.00
3	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1.00
4	0.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		2.00
5	0.20	0.20	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		3.40
6	1.00	2.00	7.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		10.00
7	1.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	0.60	0.00		9.60
8	1.60	0.50	8.86	0.00	0.60	0.60		12.16
9	1.00	0.00	9.00	3.00	2.80	0.00		15.80
10	0.00	0.00	7.00	1.00	1.00	0.00		9.00
11	1.00	0.70	7.00	0.00	2.00	0.00		10.70
12	2.00	2.00	130.90	13.00	24.00	6.00	2.00	179.90
	7.80	6.40	181.76	19.00	31.00	6.60	2.00	254.56

From: James McNair
Sent: Monday, July 09, 2012 6:00 AM
To: 'Rob Tarlov'; 'Gregg Schuster'; 'Ron Goldstein'
Subject: RE: Next steps for Passing a Budget

Rob,

I hope Gregg and Ron agree with you. Here are my suggestions.

If you can get a consensus from Gregg and Ron, pick a range of dates for the meeting and let me know as soon as possible. People would like to know which month this would be.

I will reach out to those I am sure would be interested to know this to see what kind of buy in is there. Specifically, what the framework and agenda items they would like to see. Give me a week or two to get back to you on this. As I said, I speak for no one and need to get feedback.

If this goes according to my expectations, the various "groups" can focus on working together to get people to the forum. It won't be hard to get this to be a big event.

Thanks,

James

From: Rob Tarlov
Sent: Monday, July 09, 2012 5:32 AM
To: James McNair; 'Gregg Schuster'; 'Ron Goldstein'
Subject: re: Next steps for Passing a Budget

James,

A forum is an excellent idea! As you may recall we had this item on the BOF agenda last summer. Bruce had inaccurately called it "how to market the budget" which prompted you to attend our meeting, concerned that taxpayer dollars might be used.

Leading up to and during this past budget season, BOF had public discussions as part of our meetings. We did them both before our regular meetings and as the first item on the agenda of the meeting. With the exception of fire apparatus/road maintenance bonding discussion, they were attended by 0 to 3 people. The bonding meeting had about 10, but 6 of these people were from the Land Trust who thought this was an open discussion on bonding and wanted to discuss bonding for future properties not yet identified. (This was before any of us knew of the Slembeck property and had already been discussed at the budget info meeting). We asked them to stay and bring this up during the citizens comment section of our regular meeting which was to follow.

I would be willing to do this again, soon. Any ideas on how to communicate the meeting to bring people out?

Although not open forums, BOE has budget review on their agenda for 7/10 and we have it on ours for July 18. As for BOF, this will be just the start of an ongoing discussion. I will also present your original e-mail at our 7/18 meeting. You might want to come and address it either in the opening or closing citizen comments agenda items at that meeting.

The information you presented on the shift in revenues to local taxes is something we are aware of, but it always helps to have it presented in a different way. This trend has been part of the presentations at the 3 Public Hearings since I've been on BOF. Can't speak for before.

As your analysis points out, capital expenditures is where the Town has compensated for this falling non local tax revenue and increased expenditures. As you are aware, cutting capital does not cut expenses, it just delays these costs of maintenance and replacement to a future year, and often at substantially increased cost.

Much of the increase in expenditures, particularly on the BOE side, is the result of "unfunded mandates". Although some are of questionable value and intent, many are well meaning, but fail to recognize the taxpayers ability or desire to fund through personal taxes and fail to recognize the negative impact on the education of the majority of students.

Although the Town sponsored a meeting with legislators to discuss the ruinous impact of these mandates, it is going to take a widespread grassroots effort across the state to put pressure on federal and state legislators to make changes. This is what they react to. Even then this will be an uphill battle as legislators are reluctant to tackle difficult issues, no matter how critical. This is where real change needs to occur.

Thanks for your ideas and feedback. It is in the "off budget" months that meaningful discussion and change must take place.

Rob

-----Original Message-----

From: James McNair
Sent: Sunday, July 08, 2012 10:35 AM
To: 'Gregg Schuster'; 'Ron Goldstein'; 'Rob Tarlov'
Subject: Next steps for Passing a Budget

Gentlemen,

I hope all is well. I am writing to offer my two cents in reply to Gregg's comments in the latest Colchester Bulletin. I need to make this clear. I have been in conversation with many people that supported the budget, Town Hall employees and those opposing the budget. Yet, I speak for no one. I am just a citizen with a greater than average interest in the numbers and voter behavior patterns.

I'd like to suggest having a forum to address "what can we do to improve communications about the Budget?"

Before you assess this suggestion, please let me offer my professional experience by stating "knowing the problem is half the solution." Let me offer what I see are serious challenges that you probably already know.

1.) The share of revenues from local taxation should continue to rise. Federal and state aid increases will not likely keep pace with operations spending. The following data came from the 2000 FY audit and 2013 FY mill rate calc schedule. A good recent example is losing the \$1.9 million federal grants from a couple of years ago. The burden to fund that spending dramatically shifted to local taxes.

	2000 FY actual (millions)	2013 FY adopted (millions)	2013 vs. 2000 change	
Taxes, interest etc.		\$17.9	\$33.6	87.7%
all other rev	\$12.3	\$16.7		35.8%
total rev	\$30.2	\$50.3		66.6%
Town Hall Ops	\$5.6	\$10.1		80.4%
Education	\$19.4	\$37.6		93.8%
Capital Outlays	\$0.8	\$0.5		-37.5%
Debt service	\$4.3	\$2.1		-51.2%
Total expenditures		\$30.1	\$50.3	67.1%

2.) I can not mention the number of time I have heard this person won't listen, that Board will not listen or that group will not listen. This surprisingly came from people that voted yes but had issues with how the budget was put together and those that did not support the Budget. People will not openly communicate if they feel they will not be taken seriously or even feel welcome.

3.) There are a significant number of people that want to see information presented differently so they can make up their own minds. I have passed on those suggestions to Rob and Don Kennedy as private citizens. Hopefully, the Boards will be made aware of those suggestions.

In closing, I am open to continuing a dialog with all of you about this. Next year stands to be even worst than this year. With the law changed about "groups" having to register and state their donors, I see an escalation in money flowing into our elections to pass "the right budget in Colchester's best interest."

Thanks for your time and consideration.

James

From: Rob Tarlov
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 5:35 PM
To: deee bouchard
Subject: FW: re[2]: Colchester Budget - Town Hall Department Measurement Data

Below are the answers to your questions. The text in BLUE is from Cheryl at Park and Rec.

Something I think we need to look at. I think we should be consistent between programs in how we count the numbers we serve.

With the Park and Rec programs, it would appear if I register for a program that is multi sessions, I am counted every time I show up. So if you and I register for basketball, and I come three times and you register and come 8 times, you are counted as 8 and me 3, even though we pay the same fee.

I think we need to look at this, don't think it accurately measures who we are serving.

Maybe they are looking at it another way, maybe they're trying to weight programs with more sessions against those with less. We need to review.

Also should see if we can be consistent across all programs (youth, senior, P & R).

The Park and Rec is a program fund. The program fund, through fees, pays for the programs plus some of the administration staffing. The Town currently subsidizes for 40,000/year. Up to several years ago the staff positions were paid in full as a budget line. Now we are partially paying through the subsidy. We looked at reducing the 40K this year as the trend has improved under the new manager, but too short a period to be sure and not sure if the trend will continue to improve or level off. We will look to see if we can reduce the subsidy next year and perhaps eventually eliminate as the programs continue to be managed with improved results.

Thanks for bringing this to my attention, I'll keep you posted as we review throughout the year. Hopefully this info is what you were looking for and that I interpreted your reasons for asking correctly. If not let me know.

Rob Tarlov

From: Rob Tarlov
Sent: Saturday, June 16, 2012 11:23 AM
To: 'deee bouchard'
Subject: RE: Colchester Budget - Town Hall Department Measurement Data

Deanna,

Thanks for forwarding me the information.

Unfortunately it came in after I left for Thursday's meeting.

I will review and also see if I can get you some answers from Park and Rec to your questions below and get back to you. Will also confirm that the info on youth services is correct as you believe.

Rob

From: deee bouchard
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2012 6:28 PM
To: [Rob Tarlov](#)
Subject: Colchester Budget - Town Hall Department Measurement Data

Dear Chairman Tarlov,

I was unable to attend the BOF meeting last night; however I did listen to the audio version and thought the following information could be a valuable resource to the board when looking at the number of residents served by each department in Town Hall.

I received the information from the First Selectman's office in regards to my inquiry concerning department measurement data.

Please note that I questioned whether Park & Rec numbers were accurate - Were the numbers of individuals served? THIS IS HOW THE NUMBERS HAVE BEEN REPORTED FOR NUMEROUS YEARS.

EXAMPLE: IN A MONTH- APRIL. WE RUN MENS BASKETBALL. IT MEETS 1X PER WEEK AND HAS 80 PARTICIPANTS EACH NIGHT IT MEETS. IT MEETS 4X A MONTH THEREFORE IT HAS 320 PARTICIPANTS PER MONTH IN THAT PROGRAM. WE COUNT EACH PERSON 1X EACH NIGHT AND WE DO THIS WITH ALL OF THE PROGRAMS THAT WE RUN IN A MONTH. BASKETBALL STARTS IN FEB AND ENDS IN JUNE SO THEY PLAY OVER SEVERAL MONTHS

FYI: THE PARTICIPANT NUMBER INCLUDES ONLY PROGRAMS. IT DOES NOT INCLUDE SPECIAL EVENT PARTICIPANTS SUCH AS THOSE ATTENDING HOLIDAY HOMECOMING, SPRING CLEAN UP ETC.

Were people counted more than once if they attended more than one activity?(duplicated count). THIS COULD BE THE CASE IF THEY ARE SIGNED UP FOR BASKETBALL AND ALSO ZUMBA THEY WILL BE COUNTED EACH TIME THEY SHOW UP THAT MONTH. THEY PAY 1X FOR A PROGRAM BEFORE IT STARTS AND THAT PROGRAM LASTS OVER SEVERAL MONTHS. WE ARE REALLY COUNTING "PARTICIPATIONS" ON THIS FORM. ONE PARTICIPANT COMES AND PARTICIPATES IN OUR PROGRAM 4X IN A MONTH.

Did they include parents in the count of children's activities - when parents are not active participants? NO. UNLESS THE CLASS IS A PARENT/CHILD CLASS BUT THAT IS RARE.

Derrick did not know how the method of data collection used by Parks & Rec. I believe that Youth and Social Services counted individuals served and families served and notated their data appropriately. I HAVE USED THIS METHOD IN THE PAST. IN GROTON, WHEN I WORKED PARK AND REC THERE WE COUNTED INDIVIDUALS SERVED PER SEASON OR PER PROGRAM- (SO BASKETBALL SERVED 80 PEOPLE) AND IT ALSO WORKS. FOR SOME REASON, WE WERE ASKED TO DO IT THIS WAY AS GREGG WANTS THE INFORMATION MONTHLY. THE ISSUE ON INDIVIDUALS SERVED IS THAT WE LOOK AT EVERYTHING BY THE SEASON AND GREGG WANTS IT MONTHLY AND OUR PROGRAMS CROSS MONTHS.

WE ARE OPEN TO GIVE THE DATA IN ANY FORMAT REQUESTED YET CHANGING NOW WILL MEAN WE CANNOT COMPARE TO PAST YEARS AS EASILY.

I hope this information can be of service.

Thank you,

Deanna Bouchard
860-537-5119

From: Derrick Kennedy
Subject: RE: Colchester Median Income 2012
To: "deee bouchard"
Date: Thursday, May 31, 2012, 8:44 AM
Dee,

Please find attached the latest Town Hall measurement data.

Best,

Derrick M. Kennedy
Executive Assistant to the First Selectman
Town of Colchester

127 Norwich Avenue
P: (860) 537-7220
F: (860) 537-0547

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: James McNair
To: Rob Tarlov
Date: Tue, 26 Jun 2012 12:29:48 +0000 (UTC)
Subject: Re: a letter of introduction

Rob,

Will do. By the way speaking of perceptions, I found this to be interesting. I am hearing some people mistakenly think that the Town bought the full page ad in the Bulletin with taxpayer dollars. I have tried to let them know that is not the case.

Look forward to chatting with you later.

James

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Rob Tarlov
To: James McNair
Date: Tue, 26 Jun 2012 06:22:43 -0400
Subject: re: a letter of introduction

James,

Thanks for the feedback.

Communicating the budget in a way people understand and through media that reaches people is a real challenge.

When you spend so many hours working on the budget, one forgets that others don't have the same information, knowledge or perspective.

I appreciate your offer to help. We need feedback and input, not just in the two weeks leading up to the referendum. If we had involvement during the budget process, and before, it would be of major help.

We have tried to add things to improve community involvement. We've added citizen comments to the end of our meetings as well as the beginning, (something I began many years ago on Sewer and Water), we added citizen comments to all of the budget workshops, we added informal public budget discussions before several of our regular meetings leading up to the budget period. On important votes, such as approving budget cuts we now ask for citizen comments between the Board discussion and the Board vote. New ideas would be welcomed.

Transparency has been a real issue for me. I've been able to change some things in the process, still much more work to go.

Please circle back with me once we have a passed budget.

Rob

From: James McNair
Sent: Friday, June 22, 2012 8:21 AM

To: [Rob Tarlov](#)
Subject: a letter of introduction

Rob,

I just wanted to follow up with my comments at yesterday's Town Meeting. You and I have not had a chance to formally chat with one another. I am an advocate of open dialog. This is why I've had the privilege to be in conversation with so many citizens inside and outside of the political circles here. It gives me a rather unique perspective on things here.

By trade, given my background in Finance, I work for a small private equity firm. Besides running their acquisitions, I analyze companies for valuation. Ripping apart the books is second nature to me. I've learned to place as much importance on what was not said and what is buried in the detail.

By nature, I was raised in the Midwest with a healthy sense of "believe none of what you hear and half of what you see." I firmly believe people should look it up themselves.

By politics, I find myself in a small minority. I sincerely do not care about the outcome of elections as long as the playing field is seen as level by the voter. Honestly, there are many in this Town that focus on winning and don't care about being fair. I can cite many times of tea pots calling the kettles black.

It is no secret I have great issue with the process associated with the Budget. It also should be no secret my voice is listened to by many. Rather than going into a lengthy debate now, let me get to the point.

My phone has been ringing off the hook with people asking me for information that they feel is not presented. Sometimes it is because it is buried in the detail and they do not know where to look. Other times it is because the data is not presented at all. The reason why they come to me is they do not have faith in the Boards to get that information. Again, I do not want to get into a debate right now if their feelings are of merit. In fact, if the Boards choose to seriously consider this suggestion, that argument would be moot.

Page 35 of the Budget presentation (see attached) was a great first step. Here are some suggestions I want to pass on:

Have two executive summary pages for Board presentations to the public; preferably within the first 3 pages of the presentations. Again, this places a lot of data in one place and up front so people can quickly assess information and make up their own minds.

BoS presentation:

- Employee Bargaining Organizations: a good piece of data; people think however, there should be some additional information about the step impact. The BoE generated the attached schedule

under my FOI request. I am hearing people would like to know how many town employees are at which step and the average increase for each step.

- Employee compensation by department: Again a good piece of data, yet people would like to see a historical perspective. Please consider showing (FTE (full time and part time staffing) and salaries for the previous four years plus the proposed Budget.
- Employee benefits: This is great and should be continued.
- Town spending: a simple chart that shows Town Hall operating spending, debt service, capital transfer for adopted Budget, previous 4 years (it would also be helpful to include previous adopted Budget and projected actual spending)

BoE presentation:

- Enrollment for the proposed Budget and for the previous 4 years
- Employee Bargaining Organizations: They should show that same data as the Town did. Also, the BoE generated the attached schedule under my FOI request. I am hearing people would like to know how many BoE employees are at which step and the average increase for each step. The BoE approached this in their presentations but was selective. They should take their chart and add average increase for each step.
- Employee compensation: Again they should follow the Town's lead and show the data. Please consider showing (FTE (full time and part time staffing) and salaries and for the previous four years plus the proposed Budget. It would be very helpful to show by line, certified teachers, other certified staff, administrators, other staff.
- Employee benefits: This should be in the same format presented by the town.
- BoE spending: a simple chart that shows BoE spending, staffing, building upkeep, textbooks and educational supplies, other for previous 4 years (it would also be helpful to include previous adopted Budget and projected actual spending).

Feel free to share this with whomever. This year's Budget season is close to an end. I hope for next year these suggestions are implemented. I fear with the new change in law a lot of money will flood in through groups no longer require to register who they are or who contributes money to push agendas and cherry picking data. When will be a good time to circle back to understand the process to assess and implement these comprehensive suggestions.

Sincerely,

James McNair

Ex- BoE member and concerned private citizen