

Board of Finance Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 4, 2014
Town Hall Meeting Room 1- 7:00 PM

Members Present: Chairman Rob Tarlov, Rob Esteve, Tom Kane, James McNair, John Ringo, Art Shilosky

Members Absent: None

Others Present: First Selectman Stan Soby; Selectmen Rosemary Coyle, William Curran, Denise Mizla, Kurt Frantzen (via telephone); Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove; Fire Chief Walter Cox, Deputy Fire Chief Don Lee; Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu; Board of Education: Chair Ron Goldstein, Don Kennedy, Chris Bennett; Tax Collector Don Phillips; Town Clerk Nancy Bray; Public Works Director Jim Paggioli; Registrar of Voters Dot Mrowka; Clerk Justin LaFountain; Other Citizens

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Tarlov called the meeting of the Board of Finance Meeting of Wednesday, June 4, 2014 to order at 7:00 PM.
2. **Additions to the Agenda- None.**
3. **Approval of Minutes:**
Motion by J. Ringo to approve the minutes of the Wednesday May 7, 2014 regular meeting and the Wednesday May 14, 2014 special meeting. Seconded by J. McNair. Unanimously approved.
MOTION CARRIED.
4. **Citizens' Comments:**
Russell Melmed, Sandy Clark, Meg Tartsinis, Vincent Rose, Lisa Hageman, and Dawn LePage expressed concerns over the cuts in the Board of Education budget, specifically regarding cutting sports, counselors and a floating nurse.
Michele Gilman suggested that citizens would be more inclined to support the budget if it were made clearer what the proposed budget means for the bottom line for the citizens, in terms of the mil rate increase.
5. **Department Reports**
 - a. **Finance Department-None.**
 - b. **Tax Collector-Reports and Discussion:**
Newly appointed Tax Collector Don Phillips introduced himself to the Board, and said that in the future he will be providing delinquent reports to the Board on a regular basis. He shared several ideas he would like to work on, including new ways to address collecting delinquent taxes. He stated he will keep the Board informed of progress.

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2014 JUN 10 AM 8:29
NANCY A. BRAY
TOWN CLERK
Nancy A. Bray

6. First Selectman's Report

a. Transfer Requests-None.

b. First Selectman's Update:

Newly appointed First Selectman Stan Soby stated that the Town staff has been working on the budget, and department heads have been very responsive in meeting targets.

7. Liaisons: Reports:

Chairman Tarlov stated that the Youth First Commission will be having their Family Palooza Tie Dye event on June 14th. They are also working on putting up lawn signs with anti-drug messages, and are trying to convince gas stations to stop selling drug paraphernalia. The Commission also conducted elections for their officers.

8. Budget-Discussion:

Board of Education Chairman R. Goldstein, Vice Chair D. Kennedy, and Superintendent of schools J. Mathieu presented the list of cuts that they are proposing to reach the bottom line amount specified by the Board of Finance (see attached). Chairman Goldstein stated this was a very difficult list of cuts to create, and Superintendent J. Mathieu stated that since January, \$739,443 has been cut from the budget. The Board of Education understands parents' concerns, especially regarding sports. They hope to reinstate the cut sports using excess money from employee health insurance coverage. Currently, the health insurance levels are potentially funded higher than necessary, and lowering the percentage may free up the money necessary to fund the cut sports.

First Selectman S. Soby and Chief Financial Officer M. Cosgrove answered several questions regarding the proposed Town budget. First Selectman S. Soby stated he was comfortable with the proposed cuts in the Program Fund and Facility Reservation software system. He also clarified that money was being put back into the Senior Center rent-funding, to help stabilize the situation and buy time to make sure the senior center purchase study is completed.

Chairman Tarlov stated that this proposed budget is now a .96% increase, which translates to a 29 cent increase in the mil rate (30.28 for the 2013-2014 fiscal year, proposed rate of 30.57 for the 2014-2015 fiscal year).

9. Citizens Comments:

Cindy Praisner stated she liked the idea of reinstating the sport programs through health insurance overages.

Vincent Rose stated concerns about the cuts being too high, and asked if the Board of Finance would consider altering the bottom line number so less would be cut. Sandy Clark echoed this concern.

Dawn LePage questioned the cost of AP testing. Superintendent J. Mathieu stated the cost is roughly \$90 per student per test. This cost was formerly covered through a grant.

Michele Gilman questioned the unified sports cuts, and the Board of Education responded that the cuts will not limit the participants. She asked if fees could be increased for building use to recoup the losses. First Selectman S. Soby said this is being looked into, but it essentially raises the fees on the townspeople themselves anyway. Michele Gilman also asked the Board of Finance to decrease the number of cuts, stating that the parents can get the budget passed this time.

Jim Kelly expressed concerns regarding a decreasing school enrollment, and asked what plans are in place for that. Chairman Tarlov and Chairman Goldstein responded that plans are in effect for that. Jim Kelly then stated that this budget needs to get approved; otherwise the cuts will be drastic. He encouraged everyone to vote yes.

Meg Tartsinis stated that we need new business in town to increase the tax base. First Selectman S. Soby and Selectman W. Curran stated that the Town is doing a lot to encourage business growth and development.

First Selectman S. Soby stated that the proposed dates of the Town Budget Meeting and Referendum are Tuesday, June 17 and Tuesday, June 24 respectively.

Don Lee questioned the impacts of the budget on the Town side, noting that most citizens in attendance were concerned with the Board of Education side. Chairman Tarlov responded that so far, roughly a half a million dollars have been cut from the proposed Town budget. Another budget failure could mean fewer shifts in places like the library, or snow plowing only during business hours during snow emergencies.

10. Budget-Discussion and Possible Action

Chairman Tarlov stated that the first referendum was a huge discrepancy between yes and no votes, and the second shrank the margin but added more no votes to the total. He stated concerns regarding the cost of holding referendums, and the fact that if it doesn't pass before July 1 it would be bad for tax collection purposes.

J. McNair stated his belief that if this budget goes down, it will have to be a zero percent increase next time. He did not want to add any more money back in. He is seeing voting trends that show the areas of town where people typically vote are having low voter turnout this year. T. Kane agreed, saying the original survey about the budget is not matching the current results, in that the percent increase that people said they would support is not being supported. He stated he is not happy with the proposed budget, but fears it will be worse if it fails.

R. Esteve thanked the citizens for their comments. He also stated his concerns with the budget, but believes the original proposed number should be kept.

Chairman Tarlov agreed, stating that putting any money back into the budget is a gamble. He agreed that if it gets voted down again, it will be a zero percent increase.

Motion by J. Ringo to send the proposed Town Budget in the amount of \$13,334,082 to Town Meeting to be set by the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by A. Shilosky. Unanimously approved.
MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by T. Kane to send the proposed Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$39,661,795 to Town Meeting to be set by the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by J. Ringo. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

11. Adjournment

Motion by J. Ringo, seconded by R. Esteve to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Justin LaFountain
Clerk

Attachments: Town Budget List of Potential Cuts
Board of Education Budget Reductions

DRAFT - FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

Town of Colchester
 FY 2014-2015 Proposed Budget
 Town Budget - List of Potential Reductions - BOF Meeting 6-4-14

<u>Department</u>	<u>Line Item</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reduction</u>	<u>Mill Rate Reduction</u>
Emergency Management	Other Purchased Supplies	Replace plotter - availability of grant funding	1,500	0.001
Emergency Management	Emergency Medical Supplies	Reduction in supplies	500	0.000
Highway	Road Improvements	Road Improvements	23,435	0.019
Grounds Maintenance	Contractual Temp Payroll	Eliminate Temporary Seasonal payroll	20,000	0.017
Grounds Maintenance	FICA & Retirement	Eliminate Temporary Seasonal payroll	1,530	0.001
Youth & Social Services	Regular Payroll	Eliminate increase in hours for P/T Social Services Coordinator	4,478	0.004
Youth & Social Services	FICA & Retirement	Eliminate increase in hours for P/T Social Services Coordinator	342	0.000
Human Resources	Contract Settlements	Eliminate increase in hours for P/T Social Services Coordinator	861	0.001
Cragin Library	Library Media Supplies	Reduction in supplies	1,000	0.001
Cragin Library	Programs	Reduction in children's programs supplies	250	0.000
Human Resources	Contract Settlements	Eliminate funding for Non union merit increases	12,082	0.010
Transfers & Capital	WJIMS Project	Eliminate funding for pre referendum costs	30,000	0.025
Transfers & Capital	System Virtualization	Multi-year funding plan	20,000	0.017
Senior Center	Building rental	Increase funding for annual rental of Senior Center building	(16,000)	(0.013)
Recreation	Service contracts	Activenet/Facility Reservation software fees (partial funding from Program Fund)	4,500	0.004
Contingency	Contingency	Impact of reductions	522	0.000
Total			105,000	0.087

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Colchester Public Schools

FY 2014-2015 Proposed Budget

Proposed Budget Reductions for BOE Review 6/3/2014

Item	Location	Amount	Impact on Learning
Freshman Sports	BA	16,362	Eliminate freshman sports
Stipends - Wrestling/Football Study Hall	BA	1,811	Eliminate study hall for Wrestling & Football programs
Stipend - Fencing	BA	3,067	Eliminate fencing stipend
Stipend - Technical Student Assoc.	BA	2,300	TSA Club
Laptop - Science	BA	1,000	Teacher tools eliminated
Laptops - English	BA	2,000	Teacher tools eliminated
AP Testing	BA	12,357	Students will pay 100% for test, not required to take test
English - 0.2 FTE	BA	9,702	Increase class size
Renewal Discovery Ed	CES	1,570	Building level cut
Enrichment - 0.5 FTE	JJIS	24,339	Only identification of enrichment students
Unified Sports	JJIS	1,014	Only one coach
School Nurse	JJIS/CES	52,664	No float nurse, 1 nurse per building
Band & Chorus Supplies	WJJMS	2,000	Reduce cost for new music
Band & Chorus Travel	WJJMS	1,800	Students pay for trips
Stipends - All	WJJMS	33,792	No teacher leaders or afterschool clubs
Guidance - 0.5 FTE	WJJMS	24,255	1:320 Ratio of Counselor to Students
Design & Engineering - 0.55 FTE	WJJMS	26,765	Increase class size
SRBI Reading Para - reduce to 1/2 time	WJJMS	12,182	Fewer students receiving help
RM Frameworks	WJJMS	900	No Smartboard software support
Installation of Projectors & Ceiling Mounts	WJJMS	1,550	Fewer projectors and none on ceiling mounts
Capital Reduction	District-wide	40,570	
TOTAL		272,000	

CERTIFIED FTE REDUCTIONS 6/3/14: 1.75 FTE

GRAND TOTAL CERTIFIED FTE REDUCTIONS FOR 2014-2015: 9.55 FTE

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Colchester Public Schools

FY 2014-2015 Proposed Budget

Next Tier Budget Reductions 6/3/14

Item	Location	Amount	Impact on Learning
Next Tier			
1.0 FTE Band	JJIS	48,596	Elimination of Program
.6 FTE World Language - half year	WJJMS	29,191	Longer specials
.5 FTE Math	CES	24,254	No math support
.6 FTE Physical Ed	BA	29,191	Reduce graduation requirements
.4 FTE AP Math	BA	19,405	Eliminate option - every other year
Golf and Indoor Track - Boys and Girls	BA	18,321	Limits sport options
PSAT	BA	2,800	No testing offered by the school
Stipends - Clubs	BA	8,552	Various clubs not offered
Estimated increase in unemployment		(20,000)	
Total Next Tier		160,310	
Grand Total		432,310	

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Colchester Public Schools

FY 2014-2015 Proposed Capital Budget

Items Remaining *after* Budget Reductions for BOE Review 6/3/2014

	Remaining in Budget
BACON ACADEMY	
Roof Repairs – Multiple Locations	20,000
Boiler #2 – Replace Leaking Sections	15,000
HVAC Repairs	34,930
Install Grease Trap Interceptor in Academy Café	7,500
TOTAL	77,430
WILLIAM J. JOHNSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL	
Phone / Intercom System Replacement	78,000
HVAC Repairs	20,000
Exterior Window Blind Replacement / Door Shades	50,000
Window Repairs	22,000
TOTAL	170,000
JACK JACKTER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	
Zone Valves Replacements - Heating System	12,000
TOTAL	12,000
Grand Total: Remaining Capital Budget Items	259,430