

East Windsor Board of Finance
Budget Workshop
Draft Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 3, 2013
7:00pm
East Windsor Intermediate School Cafeteria

Members Present: Jason Bowsza, Joe Pellegrini, Danelle Godeck, Jerilyn Corso, Kathy Pippin, Sharon Tripp

Members Absent: Gilbert Hayes (personal), Paulette Broder

Others Present: Denise Menard (First Selectman), Alan Baker (Deputy First Selectman), Jim Richards and Dick Pippin (selectmen), Joe Sauerhoefer (Police Commissioner), Lenny Norton (Director of Public Works), Cathy Cabral (Treasurer), members of the public.

Meeting was called to order at 7:02pm

- I. Budget Review
 - a. Budget Line 7345 (Insurance and Benefits)
 - i. Ms. Menard explained what these budget lines encompassed and how they were negotiated. The Board of Finance opted for no changes.
 - b. Budget line 9445 (Capital Improvement Plan)
 - i. The philosophy of the Capital Improvement Committee was explained to the board. The intention is to have 3% of the total town budget be allocated to capital costs. This is to maintain a commitment to preservation of town infrastructure. As the overall budget increases, the capital budget increases. As the overall budget decreases, the capital budget decreases. By keeping the 3% commitment, the town can take steps towards maintaining a long term plan. Too often in the past, as budget cuts became required, those cuts would come from the CIP line because it was "low hanging fruit" without a constituency to advocate for it. Discussion followed.
 - ii. Board member Joe Pellegrini explained each capital project included in the plan, as well as the justifications expressed by the Capital Improvement Committee. Board members asked questions about the projects, and Mr. Pellegrini, Ms. Menard and Mr. Sauerhoefer addressed those questions.
 - c. Budget line 9447 (Capital Improvement Reserves)
 - i. The same 3% philosophy is applied to this account. Mr. Pellegrini explained these proposals, and addressed questions asked by board members. Discussion followed.
- II. Budget Adjustments
 - a. Budget line 1042 (Tax Relief)

- i. Mr. Bowsza explained the history of the establishment of the tax relief program for the elderly and the disabled, and stressed that under a budget that may have considerable increases and taking place in a year in which property revaluation occurs, this program may be particularly important. Ms. Corso suggested that, while the budget line may remain for now, if the first referendum should fail then it would be considered as a possible reduction or elimination.
- b. Budget line 1050-811 (local primary)
 - i. It was **moved** by Joe Pellegrini, seconded by Danelle Godeck, to reduce this line by \$4,990, leaving a total of \$10 in the line. Motion carried **unanimously**.
- c. Budget line 1055 (Probate Court)
 - i. Ms. Menard explained how the billing works among the three towns associated with the probate court. No changes were pursued.
- d. Budget line 3180-430 (Vehicle Maintenance)
 - i. Mr. Norton explained that the aging Public Works vehicle fleet has driven maintenance costs up considerably. He is out of money in the current fiscal year already. Expenditures in this line are driven by aging vehicles and based on the wear and tear required during inclement weather. No changes were pursued.
- e. Budget line 3183 (Road Maintenance)
 - i. Mr. Norton explained to the board the difference between “road maintenance,” “chip sealing,” and “road replacement.” He also elaborated on the difference between funding through Town Aid Road (state funding), budgeting for road maintenance in the budget, and potentially bonding for such projects. He also provided a detailed explanation as to the current state of roads in town. No changes were pursued.
- f. Budget line 5240 (Ambulance)
 - i. Ms. Godeck began the discussion by voicing her perspective about funding the ambulance, stating that she believes there to be a significant number of voters who would come out and support a budget that included an additional \$50,000 for funding for the non-profit East Windsor Ambulance Association. She equated the potential voter support as similar to those who may vote to support funding for local fire fighters or schools. Ms. Menard explained some of the history between the East Windsor Ambulance Association and the Town of East Windsor, and explained how the Board of Selectmen approached their decision.
 - ii. It was **moved** by Kathy Pippin, seconded by Joe Pellegrini, to eliminate the \$50,000 appropriation to the East Windsor Ambulance Association.
 - 1. Ms. Corso applied the same philosophy to this item as to others – while it may be included in the budget recommended by the Board of Finance at referendum, it would be a place to look for cuts/eliminations if the referendum wasn’t successful.

2. It was discussed that the agreement between the Town and the East Windsor Ambulance Association is to expire in 2014, and that all options would be available to craft a fair deal for both parties at that point.
 3. The motion was **defeated** (Pippin and Pellegrini in favor; Corso, Tripp and Godeck opposed).
- g. It was decided that board members would review the budget submission of the Board of Education and relay any questions through the chairman as soon as possible. The intention is for the Board of Finance to complete its review of the Board of Education budget as well as revenues and the total budget to be submitted for public hearing at the conclusion of the next workshop, which will be Monday, April 8th.
 - h. Next workshop is scheduled for Monday, April 8th at 7pm at East Windsor High School.
 - i. On a motion from Ms. Corso, seconded by Ms. Tripp, the meeting was **adjourned** at 8:50pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Bowsza
Chairman, East Windsor Board of Finance