

EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN
and
EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING OF JANUARY 16, 2010

Present: Board of Selectmen: Denise Menard, Mark Simmons, Richard Pippin, Jr., Gil Hayes

Board of Education: Tim Howes, John Pica-Sneedeen, Kathy Bilodeau, Bill Raber, Lynn Stanley, Bill Schultz, Cathy Simonelli

First Selectwoman Denise Menard reviewed expenditures and revenues for the 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and projected 2010-2011. A zero tax increase would represent reductions in programs, services, reduced subsidies to Town agencies, reduced staffing levels.

Superintendent of Schools Howes stated that a zero tax increase would represent no new programs or services for the schools. He reported that the Board of Education's priorities are to preserve and support existing academic programs, minimize class size, ensure a safe school environment and meet federal mandates and state mandates. He stated that the Board of Selectmen/Board of Finances request of no increase, if imposed, would require a cut of \$1,377,677 from the services maintained budget.

Beatrice Corrado of 1 Lindsey Lane, said that she would like to see no cuts to programs. Reinstate middle school sports and TAG programs. Cutting anymore programs would be detrimental.

Deb Brigada, 84 Ellington Road, stated that we cannot start with a zero this year. She also said that there was no reason to use color copies for the PowerPoint presentations. She asked that the public school budget not be cut anymore. Broad Brook needs to increase its scores.

Katheleen Parakilas, 12 Joseph Farm Road, said that we need proper funding to support teachers.

Lisa Madsen, 36 Barber Hill Road, said we are up for a difficult year. I would like to see no cuts in the staffing levels in education. And I don't want to see programs cut. Maybe parents could co-fund programs (possibly pay for participation). It is not realistic to think there will be no cuts, but I would like to suggest that parents could help fund items and programs we need. Maybe the schools could post a wish list on its website—staffing, programs, volunteers, etc. Raise taxes. Focus on core programs.

Ms. Menard asked if services on the town side should be cut or should taxes be raised.

Grace Balula, 20 Prospect Hill Drive: Raise the mil rate. In the end if you raise the mil rate your property values will go up. Suggested teachers and town workers not take a pay increase.

Jason Bowsza, 34 Rye Street: Encouraged people to contact all of the members of the Board of Finance.

Bea Corrado: Find the funding for Board of Education so that they don't have to take zero funding.

Bill Schultz, 9 Lindsey Lane: We have the lowest mil rate and the lowest taxes. It makes sense to raise taxes. Police, fire, garbage and schools are all essential services.

Lynn Stanley, 86 Rye Street: Who made the decision on behalf of the town to have no budget increases? I don't think our town can progress without the money that is needed. Our children need so much more. Class sizes are too large. We may have to look at raising taxes.

Jerilyn Corso, 23 Lindsay Lane: I think it is sad that there are only approximately 30 people here today. I hate to say raise taxes, but I don't want the town to go backwards. We are behind the eight-ball,

Bob Lyke, 80 Rye Street: Increase mil rate. Let's look at a long-term plan. Get Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Council involved.

Brian Cullinane, 6 Sunview Drive: Invite people to attend Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, Board of Education meetings. We have cut and we have cut. It is time to raise taxes or revenues. We need more businesses in town. Maybe the Board of Education can lower health care costs. This is the time to negotiate health insurance. I am ready to sacrifice—at least maintain what we have. What can the public do to help?

Jim Richards, 43 Rockville Road: I'm president of the Education Foundation and serve on the EDC. I don't know how we are going to solve the problems. Planning and Zoning is in the process of developing a business corridor on North Road. When the opportunity presents itself, we should take it. Federal government isn't going to give us what we used to get. We need to do things ourselves.

People were asked to go to www.eastwindsorschools.org to e-mail Board of Education members.

The hearing adjourned at 1:45 p.m.