

Litchfield Board of Finance
Annual Town Budget Hearing Minutes
April 23, 2014

Call to Order: Board of Finance Chairman David Geiger called the Annual Town Budget Hearing to order in the LIS Auditorium at 7pm. Board of Finance members in attendance were Ed Gadomski, Ed Weik, Mitchell Fishman, Sky Post and Brenda Barnes.

Overview of the Proposed Budget for the Town of Litchfield for 2014-2015

Chairman David Geiger opened the hearing by noting that the proposed budget includes \$16,600,641 for the BOE, \$8,640,731 for the BOS and \$3,352,250 for debt payment and capital improvements. Leo Paul spoke about the BOS budget, which represents a 2.88% overall increase compared to last year and Deborah Wheeler made a presentation for the BOE budget, which represents a 4.68% proposed percentage increase over last year's budget.

Chairman Geiger then opened the hearing for questions and comments from the audience. Eighteen members of the audience raised issues including residents leaving Litchfield and Connecticut due to high taxes, the importance of maintaining high-quality education, addressing the pre-K gap and ratio of students to school staff, priorities for school security and the need for a social worker, progress on school regionalization, school bonding, projects in the BOS annual budgets that are not completed that year, revenue from recording fees and dog licenses, the town's level of debt, inclusion of \$264,000 in BANS for Apparatus Sinking Fund for a new fire truck not yet purchased, the criticality of blended learning with new technology, decline in the Grand List due to re-evaluations, etc.

After everyone wishing to speak had the opportunity to do so, Chairman Geiger said the Board of Finance would be meeting the following evening, April 24, 2014, to discuss the total proposed town budget of \$28,593,622 with the intention of reaching consensus to present at the May 7, 2014 Town Budget Meeting. He then concluded the Hearing at 9pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Jaacks
Recording Secretary