

From: Robert Licata <rlicata1@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re:
Date: May 10, 2011 3:48:50 PM EDT
To: Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net>
Cc: Mary Ann Jacob <mjacob4404@charter.net>

Kathy thank you for the detailed response. I am glad to hear that the admin is actually two people which is fairly consistent with other admin salaries as a whole. As for the other expenses, I am sure that these are commendable charities, I am not so sure (at the expense of seeming to be insensitive), that in these difficult times that maintaining the level of funding is appropriate at the expense of tax payer dollars, particularly the level of funding for the Newtown Youth and Family Services as this represents a significant percentage of the overall budget.

In short I would expect the town to spend the money as if it were their own and ensure that every option is evaluated and validated prior to making any expenditure, regardless of size. As a senior leader in the private sector and responsible for large budgets, I understand the difficulties in having to allocate and stretch budget dollars and make difficult choices in prioritizing precious expense and capital items as well around staffing where resources are already over allocated.

I would honestly be happier with a flat budget and would challenge the town leaders to that goal.

Sincerely,

Robert Licata

From: Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net>
To: Robert Licata <rlicata1@yahoo.com>
Cc: Mary Ann Jacob <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Sent: Tue, May 10, 2011 12:38:16 PM
Subject: Re:

Robert,

First, I want to thank you for responding. We appreciate the input.

In reference to your questions:

1. Selectman Assistant: \$99,850.

This amount is for 2 salaries: an executive assistant @ \$43,200 and a human resources administrator @ \$56,650. This is the same amount as this current year (2010-11) and the year before (2009-10).

Donating to organizations. Just a brief note.... A few years ago, the Board of Finance asked the Board of Selectman to provide more detail and clarity as to why we donate to these organizations. Also, they asked that the organizations "open up their books" to ensure that the money was being put to good use. There is now an application process in which organizations must follow to request money from the town. It is a better system and provides accountability by the organization. As a result, some organizations have been dropped from our list in the past couple of years.

2. Women's Center of Danbury: \$10,000

This is the same amount of money donated since 2008-09 (I don't have the data from the prior years, but can get it if you are interested). The detailed explanation is on page 180 of the Board of Selectman budget book. In a nutshell, during the 2010 fiscal year, they provided services to 19,679 adults and children, including 1466 Newtown residents. They provide counseling sessions and respond to hotline calls. They provide shelter to women and children (98 this year). Their mission is to provide free & confidential services to prevent or lessen the trauma associated with domestic violence, sexual assault and other major life crises.

3. Danbury Regional Child Advocacy Center: \$2,500

This is the same amount of money donated since 2008-09 (I don't have the data from the prior years, but can get it if you are interested). The detailed explanation is on page 177 of the Board of Selectman budget book. Their mission is to provide prevention services to families at risk of child abuse and neglect. In the fiscal year 2010, they have helped 39 Newtown families.

4. Family Counseling Center: \$265,000

I think you are referring to Newtown Youth and Family Services - please let me know if I'm incorrect. Our donation is down a little since 2008-09 (I don't have the data from the prior years, but can get it if you are interested). The detailed explanation is on page 186 of the Board of Selectman budget book. They are a licensed, non-profit, mental health clinic and youth service bureau. This organization has been around for over 30 years and is one of two organizations in the State of Connecticut who is licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services as an Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic for Children and by the Department of Public Health as a Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic for

Adults.

Best Regards,

Kathy Fetchick
email: kfetchick@charter.net
phone: 203-270-9941
mobile: 203-545-8684

On May 10, 2011, at 9:36 AM, Robert Licata wrote:

Mary Ann & Kathy,

Dear Newtown Residents,

We are writing to ask for your help. There has been much debate over the budget and why the voter turnout was so low this year – 21.5% of voters came to the polls. The last time turnout was this low was in 2002. We are interested in your viewpoint.

1. Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote.
2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

First and foremost - thank you for your courage and interest in asking these questions. Both my wife and I did vote (and always do) as we feel that our votes have the most likely impact on the local political environment and feel it is critically important to voice our opinions through the voting process.

I was disappointed to see that while there was significant progress made in the revised budget, we are still faced with yet another increase, increasing the financial burden of all Newtown taxpayers. There were significant budgeted items in the original budget which were, to me possibly unnecessary and am suspect that we could eliminate over \$1MM of budget so quickly which bears the question - what else can we do without? Are there still areas outside of education that we can reduce/eliminate? Have we factored in possible increasing tax receipts as part of the improving economy which might preclude any tax increase?

Here are some line items in the budget that I am unclear of:

Selectman Assistant - \$99k (is this a salary for **one** person?)
Women's Center of Danbury - \$10k
Danbury Regional Child Advocacy Center - \$2.5k
Family Counseling Center - \$265k

Net-net, I am happy to see the revised budget and recognize the potential hardships that these and further budget cuts might bring, but in these challenging times, with so many local families doing without, should our government not tighten their belts as much as possible, maybe postpone or even do without and live within their means?

Sincerely,

Robert Licata

From: "Bruce Walczak" <bw.reloconsult@snet.net>
Subject: Comments
Date: May 10, 2011 9:39:20 AM EDT
To: <mjacob4404@charter.net>, <kfetchick@charter.net>

Great that you are reaching out. My sense is that what is needed now is the RTC and fellow republican to get behind the budget and get it passed by the voters. Since the BOF and LC both endorsed the last budget, a concerted effort to get it passed would seem to be appropriate.

Thanks bruce

Dear Newtown Residents,

We are writing to ask for your help. There has been much debate over the budget and why the voter turnout was so low this year – 21.5% of voters came to the polls. The last time turnout was this low was in 2002. We are interested in your viewpoint.

1. Please tell us why you or your family member... voted or did not vote.
2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

We anticipate sharing your thoughts with the rest of the Legislative Council. Please let us know if you wish your thoughts to be anonymous.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Jacob, Legislative Council Member, District 2
Contact: mjacob4404@charter.net
203-426-4404

Kathy Fetchick, Legislative Council Member, District 2
Contact: kfetchick@charter.net
203-270-9941 [Kathy Fetchick](#) Dear Newtown Residents,

Bruce Walczak
12 Glover Ave.
Newtown CT 06470
203-270-9520
bw.reloconsult@snet.net

From: "Garner, Larry F - (MIL)" <l Garner@tcco.com>
Subject: **Town Budget Comments**
Date: May 10, 2011 9:43:57 AM EDT
To: "mjacob4404@charter.net" <mjacob4404@charter.net>, "kfetchick@charter.net" <kfetchick@charter.net>
Cc: "Garner, Sarah E - (MIL)" <sgarner@tcco.com>

In response to the request for budget comments I offer mine below. I tend to cut to the chase.

- 1) Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote. Yes, My wife & I both voted.
- 2) I do not think it was a serious attempt at keeping increases to a minimum.
 - a. Why did we have to hire three new police officers. It is not uncommon for cities to lay off police in times financial difficulty. Patterson, NJ which is like dodge city cut 1/3 of their force. This time we did not even have to lay off, just not hire. I am not aware of the crime spree in Newtown with the exception of the multiple speed traps. No. I did not get a ticket.
 - b. The school superintendent has no intention of streamlining the schools and being efficient. Ms Robinson and the Mr. Hart have not solved one real problem but have hired consultants to do their jobs, been found responsible for a FOI violation, and have an accounting system that has been determined to be in violation of state law by our auditor. I have no faith in their plans.
 - c. Last year we hired a new asst principle at one of the schools with savings money from the year before. This year we hire a 4th asst principle at the high school but layoff teaching assistants. Why don't we just get administrators that are up to the task.
- 3) The town is naïve if they think everything is about money. If I trusted the town government then I might believe the heart wrenching stories over the budget cuts.

Sorry – Had to vent but - you did ask.

Larry Garner
Sandy Hook

From: Mary Ann Jacob <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Subject: Fwd: Newtown Budget Vote - Opinion
Date: May 10, 2011 10:19:42 AM EDT
To: Kathy and Jeff Fetchick and Family <kfetchick@charter.net>

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Thill, Gary {PBC}" <Gary.Thill@pepsico.com>
Date: May 10, 2011 9:37:38 AM EDT
To: "mjacob4404@charter.net" <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Cc: Angela Thill <aithill@charter.net>
Subject: Newtown Budget Vote - Opinion

Mary Ann,

Our community leader asked that we provide you with feedback pertaining to the referendum vote turnout.

This was the first vote that I've missed - I was out of town overnight and neglected to file an absentee ballot.

I would have voted yes reluctantly, but reluctantly because the budget in my opinion is underfunded. We moved to Newtown three years ago in large part, due to the reputation of the schools. We're satisfied with the education our girls are receiving - in fact we're very pleased with many of their teachers and have told them so. But I feel that quality will be sacrificed if we keep cutting and cutting. We should be aspiring as a community to the return of Blue Ribbon status and I don't think that's possible if we're simultaneously cutting school funding.

I would support a modest tax increase to compensate for the reduced revenue stream Newtown is realizing due to our soft economy. It would be contingent on the Town's commitment to a potential tax cut if and when the economy turns and the revenue increases. What I would like to see is an illustration of the numbers as I think most Newtown residents are too caught up in emotion and are less understanding of the math. If every resident were to pay an additional say \$500.00, and if that total amount was directed exclusively to the schools, what could that mean in terms of education enhancements. Again I believe the perceived quality of a community's school system is an extremely important qualifier to families contemplating a move to the area.

I'd also like a better understanding of how Newtown's total spending compares to competing, surrounding and best in class communities....On a per resident or per student basis, what's our tax revenue spending on the town and school side vs. those other communities.

Respectfully,

Gary Thill
50 Cobblers Mill Road
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

From: BBloom4388@aol.com
Subject: **vote**
Date: May 10, 2011 10:29:52 AM EDT
To: kfetchick@charter.net, mjacob4404@charter.net

I voted because I care what happens in my community and want to be involved in the process.

I thought the budget was too high , but I voted YES because I feel that the BOE is finally starting to understand the challenges we are facing and is willing to start working for the community as a whole.

Barbara

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: **Budget Challenge**
Date: May 10, 2011 11:24:07 AM EDT
To: Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net>

Anonymous

Hi guys,

Speaking for my family, I voted as did 5 other family members.
We voted because it is our right and responsibility to do so.

The budget number represents an improvement but will be a challenge because of a stagnant economy, declining home prices, historic State taxes increases, and the prospect of additional cuts in State reimbursement.

The economy is bad but further complicating matters is the IPN, who in their lust for power, are advocating for a budget defeat thus using Newtown's children as their political pawns.

If the budget is defeated, the IPN will blame it on the Republican controlled Legislative Council, arguing that it was not high enough.

Anonymous

On May 10, 2011, at 8:14 AM, Kathy Fetchick wrote:

Please forward as you see appropriate.....

<Request for Opinion.pdf>

Best Regards,

Kathy Fetchick
email: kfetchick@charter.net
phone: 203-270-9941
mobile: 203-545-8684

From: Warren Hoppmeyer <whoppmeyer@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: Budget Feedback
Date: May 10, 2011 11:42:14 AM EDT
To: mjacob4404@charter.net, kfetchick@charter.net

Ms. Jacob and Fetchick,

Thanks for requesting comments on the last budget vote. I will enclose below my emails to both the First Selectman and Jeff Capecis following the last budget vote.

My wife and I have seen our property taxes go up every year, sometimes more than double the rate of inflation or the rate salaries have increased. We feel our public representatives keep putting more costs on the backs of the citizens with no concerns for the ultimate impact on us.

My wife and I have lived here since 1983 and we have had no children in the school system since 2000. We are both approaching retirement and on a fixed income will not be able to afford to continue to live here if my property tax doubles every eight years as it has since 1983. Today we pay just under \$1,000 a month. This would be my entire monthly Social Security check.

It is simply ridiculous.

I think one big opportunity would be if people like you would support changes like allowing Costco to locate at Exit 9 for example. We need more commercial or business opportunities. But instead we thumb our noses at them.

Thanks,

Warren and Kaye Hoppmeyer

No tax increase

From: Warren Hoppmeyer <whoppmeyer@sbcglobal.net>
[View Contact](#)
To: first.selectman@newtown-ct.gov

Dear Pat,

I feel I need to comment on the referendum failure. I read that you told *The Bee* you had some ideas, but unless taxpayers expect the town to cut services by affecting staff reductions, "it's a matter of finding nickels and dimes," versus dollars to shave from the failed town-side request of \$37,922,648.

We cannot accept any tax increases. The state is talking of increasing our taxes by the largest amount ever and all we hear from Washington is that they want to raise taxes too. My wife and I will strongly resist any tax increases, anywhere. My company has given no raises for the past three years. We cannot pay any additional taxes and this is on top of costs of all items from food to gasoline has gone up tremendously. We are having to make some very tough decisions.

With all due respect there are other ways to increase revenue besides increasing taxes and this is by letting businesses into town.

My wife and I really like the work you are doing but we cannot pay more in taxes.

Sincerely,
Warren and Kaye Hoppmeyer

No Tax Increases

From: Warren Hoppmeyer <whoppmeyer@sbcglobal.net>
[View Contact](#)
To: Jeff@theCapecis.com

Jeff,

Due to travel out of town I will not be able to attend tomorrow night but want you to know my wife and I will not vote for any increase in a budget that raises our taxes. I have not had a pay increase in three years. We had to let several people go from our

company recently. The state is threatening us with additional tax increases. On top of which we are being told the federal government wants more taxes. We really don't care that Mr. Hart says "the failed request represented an spending increase primarily driven by driven by "immovable objects," primarily contractually negotiated salary and fuel increases." We are facing the same increases in food, fuel and other costs but I can tell you what most employers are saying about salaries. "If you don't like your pay go elsewhere." We can't sell our house today and move (but would if I could). My advise to all public officials do not accept contracts that we can't afford. None of you would do that if this was your company and public officials need to start acting like that. There is so much waste in the public arena.

I encourage the council to look for a way to cut spending from last year. There are any number of towns around us that have done this. Southbury/Middlebury just approved a [Zero budget](#) after a less that inflation last year. Why can't we do better?

Warren and Kaye Hoppmeyer

From: Sarah Roman <rahfam5@mac.com>
Subject: LC Feedback
Date: May 10, 2011 12:51:19 PM EDT
To: kfetchick@charter.net

Hi Kathy,

Laura passed this on to me... Tim and I did vote, early. I wondered at the time whether it being so close to school vacation would have an impact...families still traveling, forgetting the day after returning from a week away, etc. I hope you figure it out!

The low voter turnout is a disappointment. And so is the \$1mm reduction for the next referendum!

Sarah

Dear Newtown Residents,

We are writing to ask for your help. There has been much debate over the budget and why the voter turnout was so low this year – 21.5% of voters came to the polls. The last time turnout was this low was in 2002. We are interested in your viewpoint.

1. Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote. 2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

We anticipate sharing your thoughts with the rest of the Legislative Council. Please let us know if you wish your thoughts to be anonymous.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Jacob, Legislative Council Member, District 2 Contact: mjacob4404@charter.net
203-426-4404

Kathy Fetchick, Legislative Council Member, District 2 Contact: kfetchick@charter.net
203-270-9941

From: "Kortze, Cary" <cary.kortze@wellsfargoadvisors.com>
Subject: **RE: Request for Town Budget Information**
Date: May 10, 2011 2:55:06 PM EDT
To: "Kathy Fetchick" <kfetchick@charter.net>, "lkortze@yahoo.com" <lkortze@yahoo.com>
Cc: "mjacob4404@charter.net" <mjacob4404@charter.net>

Kathy and Mary Ann,

First and foremost, I am a staunch education supporter, but it must be an efficient education program K thru 12th grade. With that said, I personally voted no for the budget. I feel the amount requested was and is too high - and still is. My opinion about the budget stems from a few different concerns:

I do not think enough effort to find efficiencies or cost savings are put into either town or board of ed (boe) when coming up with a budget and I do not care how much collaboration went into it. For example, instead of a gold plated pension plan has anyone considered moving all school and town employees to a 403b plan where they are responsible for the funding and their own retirement - not the taxpayer. I also do not agree with current methods of incremental budgeting where as they either spend it or lose it. The system needs to be moved to incorporate more characteristics of a zero based budgeting system where as there is more accountability with a focus on cost savings and efficiencies.

I have been following Newtown budget issues for the better part of 10 years or so and every year taxpayers are asked to spend more and more, and for what? The current issue of declining enrollment while asking for more administrators? reductions in town services? no full day or even extended day kindergarten? and a high school that has lost status as a premier high school for education in the state of CT? At what point do you say the current system is not working to the best of its ability and something needs to change. We are in one of the worst economic environments' 99% of the people alive have ever seen. I would bet almost every person in Newtown has had to adjust and/or cut back. At what point to does the town/ BOE budgets start to reflect this reality?

I want to see a reduction and spend less from last years approved budgeted amount - no need for an advisory questions here.

Cary L. Kortze
Vice President - Investments
Kortze Private Investment Management Group
of Wells Fargo Advisors

93 Lake Avenue
Danbury CT 06810

(203) 744-6000
(800) 535 0888
Fax: (203) 797-1224

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

From: Kathy Fetchick [mailto:kfetchick@charter.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2011 8:17 AM
Subject: Request for Town Budget Information

Please forward to anyone who may be interested.....

From: "Suzanne Zimmerman" <sjzimmerman@charter.net>
Subject: **Budget Request**
Date: May 10, 2011 3:16:25 PM EDT
To: <mjacob4404@charter.net>, <kfetchick@charter.net>

Maryann & Kathy,

Both my husband (via absentee ballot) and I voted in the first referendum and we voted yes. We however, most likely will be voting NO in the next referendum, because the LC made too drastic of cuts to the Education side of the budget. There is no way those cuts should have been handed down on a 70/30 split. I will also be asking my neighbors to do the same.

These cuts will drastically change the education system in Newtown. The possibility of no EA's in the elementary schools will forever change the way the teachers have to teach. Unfortunately, the kids that will be most impacted by these changes are the goal hugger students. I've never seen Janet fight so hard as she has for the principal position at NHS. In my opinion, this means that she truly feels that she needs that position.

LC had the chance to change the way we do business in this town w/ defeated referendums. In fact based on the cooperation among all parties when the budget was determined I was hopeful. Then it resorted back to business as usual with Education paying the price. I feel for the people that will lose their jobs on the town side, but what services are going to be cut? Will people feel any change in the services they receive from our town. NO (yes Maryann...that is my opinion). Will the students feel the cuts to education. Most definitely. They will experience much more down time/independent reading time as the teacher tries to manage to read with 4+ groups each day instead of the 2-3 they have to meet with now. We only get one chance to provide students with a quality education. We can skip a road project for a year and the consequences won't be permanent, but the consequences to students can be.

I wish members of the LC would have taken the time to get this information prior to the cuts they handed down.

Sue Zimmerman

From: JG <jgctusa@yahoo.com>
Subject: **budget vote**
Date: May 10, 2011 4:52:43 PM EDT
To: kfetchick@charter.net, mjacob4404@charter.net

Of course, we voted. We understand the (negotiation) process is not simple. We don't support any increases. Our BOE, as any other, sets it's wishes sky high and ultimately receives more than it needs.
Joe Girgasky

From: Mary Ann Jacob <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Subject: Fwd:
Date: May 10, 2011 6:04:28 PM EDT
To: Kathy and Jeff Fetchick and Family <kfetchick@charter.net>
▶ 1 Attachment, 41.3 KB

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mark Kuligowski <Mark@CMSMAILING.COM>
Date: May 10, 2011 5:41:16 PM EDT
To: "mjacob4404@charter.net" <mjacob4404@charter.net>

Hello MaryAnn,

I may be biased, but we've sent out a "Get out and vote" post card on behalf of the PTA for the last 4 years, maybe people need that tangible reminder...?

My wife and I voted because we know that a "No" vote will inevitably have a detrimental effect on the quality of education our children receive. We know that the "No" voters will have the date circled on their calendars and typically have more time and determination to get down to NMS to cast their votes. On the other hand we know that allot of the "Yes" voters may not have had time to circle it on their calendars or more than likely - their was no room to write it in on the calendar. My guess is that our "Yes" voters either forgot, were too busy or figured their 1 vote wouldn't make a difference!

Regards,

Mark & Tracy Kuligowski

Dear Newtown Residents,

We are writing to ask for your help. There has been much debate over the budget and why the voter turnout was so low this year – 21.5% of voters came to the polls. The last time turnout was this low was in 2002. We are interested in your viewpoint.

1. Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote.
2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

We anticipate sharing your thoughts with the rest of the Legislative Council. Please let us know if you wish your thoughts to be anonymous.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Jacob, Legislative Council Member, District 2
Contact: mjacob4404@charter.net
203-426-4404

Kathy Fetchick, Legislative Council Member, District 2
Contact: kfetchick@charter.net
203-270-9941

From: "Gary Doski" <gary3dhomes@earthlink.net>
Subject: **Vote**
Date: May 10, 2011 7:22:31 PM EDT
To: <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Cc: <kfetchick@charter.net>
▶ 1 Attachment, 8.2 KB

1. Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote.

We voted yes for the budget.

2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

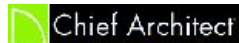
My opinion is that when a budget fails, the LC assumes that it was too high and makes cuts until it passes. Logical assumption
Since most people want to lower taxes. So I expect this budget will be cut as it has been in the past, thus lowering our schools status yet again.
This cycle happens every year for the past 17 year I have been In Newtown.

The town, like any large corporation waste more percentage wise than we are saving anyway "the slush fund". It is the same old story, cut programs, cut services, cut school sports. Increase taxes, charge more for services, etc.

You just need to look around at the successful towns and how they do it. Great schools, all services, fair taxes, and a surplus to boot! It is happening all over the US. Plug the leaks and it can happen here too!

Thank You,

Gary Doski



Chief Architect

CERTIFIED TRAINER

Building Official, CT

office 203-270-0646 fax 203-304-2101

www.3dhomesdesign.com

From: JG <jgctusa@yahoo.com>
Subject: **Re: budget vote**
Date: May 10, 2011 7:42:52 PM EDT
To: kfetchick@charter.net, mjacob4404@charter.net

I'm sorry I didn't respond to the "why" we voted.

We vote because it's our responsibility and have a sense that our vote counts.

While viewing one ridiculous response after another on the TV news this evening regarding the Malloy nonsense ... one individual obviously feeling helpless, responded "you can't fight city hall". That has to be the most pathetic cliché response I could imagine. There must be so many more just like him !!

We don't do a good job of inviting, welcoming, attracting voters so that they feel involved or important.

Joe.

From: JG <jgctusa@yahoo.com>
To: kfetchick@charter.net; mjacob4404@charter.net
Sent: Tue, May 10, 2011 4:52:43 PM
Subject: budget vote

Of course, we voted. We understand the (negotiation) process is not simple. We don't support any increases.

Our BOE, as any other, sets its wishes sky high and ultimately receives more than it needs.

Joe Girgasky

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: **voter turnout**
Date: May 10, 2011 8:18:40 PM EDT
To: <mjacob4404@charter.net>, <kfetchick@charter.net>

Questions:

1. Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote.
2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

Answers:

1. I voted because I was running out to Big Y to pick up a few things and I noticed the big banner over the road. If it wasn't for that I would have forgotten, even with the emails and phone messages. My spouse did not vote because "I didn't know and I don't feel like making the trip out now." I saw a coworker at the polls who also forgot until he was coming home from work and saw the banner.

My (senior citizen) mother who lives in the same district, did not vote because "why bother, I can't afford the taxes as they are now so up or down a couple of hundred dollars won't matter". She has a very limited income, is a widow, and can't afford heating oil. She keeps her house at 55 degrees in the winter to save \$. We help her out by buying some oil as a Christmas gift.

2. The latest budget request seemed reasonable to me, but most people want a 0% increase. It's the principle of the matter; people are struggling and have to cut back a lot, so they don't want even \$1 more in taxes. No matter what.

Please keep me anonymous, but feel free to use my information.

From: Wes Thompson <wbt@prodigy.net>
Subject: **Re: Request for Town Budget Information**
Date: May 10, 2011 9:29:22 PM EDT
To: Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net>

Kathy, thanks for forwarding the note below and asking for feedback.

As for your voting attendance question I can only guess and maybe make my own personal excuse for missing some elections. Before retiring I'd usually leave for work by 6:30am and rarely get home before 8pm. I'd get so involved with work that I'd shamefully forget about the time and not vote. I'd probably remember if there was a roadside sandwich sign reminder but my route to work didn't have any. I believe that the town needs to do more to "advertise". The same kind of energy we see during elections. These days we have a revamped town website, but no reminder to vote on the main page. The location(s) have to be convenient. We need banners and sandwich sign reminders all over the territory for at least 2 weeks before the vote. It has to say where to go to vote so people don't have to look it up. As much as some folks hate these types of signs it's important enough to allow an exception and plaster the neighborhood, all schools, all town buildings, all major shopping centers. It should be on the main web page of the chamber. In other words we need to think of it like a campaign. People have to be reminded repetitively. On the other hand, if they have long commutes and work long hours they may not take the time. Somehow we need to find a way to make it more visible and easier. From friends I've also heard that some people have given up. For example, they don't like the combined town/education budget. They feel like the active voting block is better organized and will always get what they want. Some believe that it's intended to hide details and lacks commitment to line item budget management. Unfortunately most of the evening budget meetings also fall into that evening work time that so many people endure today. Sorry I don't have any more solid suggestions but I can't believe that 79% of our town voters don't care, there has to be some "inconvenience" or "forgetfulness" factor that over rides civic duty.Wes

Wes Thompson, PO Box 189, Sandy Hook, CT 06482

--- On Tue, 5/10/11, Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net> wrote:

From: Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net>
Subject: Request for Town Budget Information
To:
Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2011, 8:14 AM

Please forward as you see appropriate.....

Best Regards,

Kathy Fetchick
email: kfetchick@charter.net
phone: 203-270-9941
mobile: 203-545-8684

From: Chris & Sue Karpenko <rocketeer928@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: Budget Opinion Given
Date: May 10, 2011 9:46:34 PM EDT
To: mjacob4404@charter.net, kfetchick@charter.net
▶ 1 Attachment, 41.3 KB

Dear Ms. Jacob and Ms. Fetchick,

Thank you for taking the time to perform this survey and for serving the Town of Newtown. We hope your service is gratifying to you, and please know it is appreciated.

My wife and I unfortunately simply forgot to vote in April. However, if we had then we both would have voted NO, and plan to do the same on May 17. Year after year, the budget increases higher than the rate of inflation and/or our yearly pay increases, especially the educational side of the budget. We often support the town side of the budget, but find many aspects of the educational budget to be wasteful and over-and-beyond what was needed when we were students. Basically, we feel that Newtown and surrounding towns try to provide a private-type education using public funds, and it's unreasonable. Therefore, we consistently vote NO, and will continue to do so until our town leaders and BOE wise up to the fact that such increases are unsustainable.

We are not retirees, but rather fully employed middle-aged folk. We are sick of the non-stop increases every year.

Respectfully,
Christopher Karpenko
6 Hattertown Road

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carey Schierloh <cschierloh@gmail.com>
Date: May 10, 2011 8:59:09 PM EDT
To: Carey Schierloh <cschierloh@gmail.com>
Bcc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Budget Opinions Requested

Attached is a request from two Legislative Council (LC) members who are gathering town feedback regarding the budget. Please share your opinions, if you have any.

There has been much debate on why the budget has failed and what will happen at the next town vote. This is a chance to speak to two of your public representatives directly, who then will share the information with the entire LC Board, anonymously if preferred.

Please forward to anyone else you feel may be interested.

Dear Newtown Residents,

We are writing to ask for your help. There has been much debate over the budget and why the voter turnout was so low this year – 21.5% of voters came to the polls. The last time turnout was this low was in 2002. We are interested in your viewpoint.

1. Please tell us why you or your family members voted or did not vote.
2. What is your opinion on the latest requested budget amount?

We anticipate sharing your thoughts with the rest of the Legislative Council. Please let us know if you wish your thoughts to be anonymous.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Jacob, Legislative Council Member, District 2
Contact: mjacob4404@charter.net
203-426-4404

Kathy Fetchick, Legislative Council Member, District 2
Contact: kfetchick@charter.net
203-270-9941

From: Shannonmulligan <shannonmulligan@aol.com>
Subject: Budget questions
Date: May 10, 2011 10:10:51 PM EDT
To: mjacob4404@charter.net, kfetchick@charter.net

Dear Legislative Council Members,

Thank you for asking for my opinion on the budget vote and the current budget amount. My husband and I did vote April 26th. We feel all referendums are important and we feel strongly about the budget vote. I was very disappointed that the budget did not pass. I felt it was a fair budget. The Board of Education and Board of Selectman worked very hard to come up with a fair budget to service the students and the community.

The current requested budget amount cuts too much into the Board of Education budget. I feel the 70/30split should have been 60/40. The current cuts will affect the students directly. The schools lose more and more every year. I have a son in the Reed Intermediate School which has been affected by the cuts of last years budget. He is not getting the same education or services my older son received 3 years ago at Reed. I moved to this town because of the school system. If I were looking at school systems today I don't think I would choose Newtown. The cuts are too deep and directly affect students academically.

I wish the amounts could be amended to give more back to our students.

Best reegards,
Shannon Mulligan

From: "B. Jane Brymer" <brymerbj@gmail.com>
Subject: **Re: Request for Town Budget Information**
Date: May 10, 2011 10:16:36 PM EDT
To: Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net>

Dear Kathy,

Both Roy and I voted on the last proposed Budget and we will vote again on May 17th. We are retired and on a fixed income. It is difficult for us to endorse an increase in our taxes right now with the high price of fuel driving up the prices of all the other items we purchase. We already know that we will have to keep our thermostat a little higher this summer and a little lower next winter to compensate for the higher cost of heating oil. Sacrifices we are making now is eating out a lot less often. I believe that these comments probably mirror those of our other Retiree Friends who live here in Newtown. Many of us are in that sandwich generation and are taking care of elderly Relatives and/or have adult Children who have moved back home to live with us. I doubt any of these comments provide you any information that you do not know already.
Regards, Jane

On Tue, May 10, 2011 at 8:14 AM, Kathy Fetchick <kfetchick@charter.net> wrote:
Please forward as you see appropriate.....

Best Regards,

Kathy Fetchick
email: kfetchick@charter.net
phone: [203-270-9941](tel:203-270-9941)
mobile: [203-545-8684](tel:203-545-8684)

From: "Test scan" <ckormanik@hotmail.com>
Subject: **the town budget does not show shared sacrifice**
Date: May 10, 2011 11:22:04 PM EDT
To: <kfetchick@charter.net>

Where is the "shared sacrifice"? Increasing spending is not sharing the sacrifice that taxpayers have had to endure the last four years.

We sent a long letter to the other person on the request about the budget. I also sent a letter to the Bee for this Friday.

These are not normal time and maintaining the status quo is not acceptable. Most people are 'Bankrupt' or close to it and we are still increasing spending.

But as a manager who worked for five Fortune 100 companies and dealt with million dollar budgets, I know there is at least 5% of waste in any \$100 million dollar budget. But you are not cutting current spending thus you are not anything real. so stop whining.

Proposed budgets are just that proposed... They are not yours until the town taxpayers approve them. So stop debating what the people mean. No means No, and Yes means Yes, if you can't understand that maybe we were wrong to elect you?

Over the last four years town and state spending both increased about 12% but most taxpayers saw a zero % increase in wages if they are lucky enough to still have a job.

Maybe you should read the front page of the New York Times today May 10th lower left.

About all the towns seeing an increase of about 3000 people up from say 500 protesting their taxes and forcing tax rebates due to the overvaluation of their houses. And Newtown is no different regarding overvaluation because our \$990,000 house of which we had some \$400,000 in equity is not selling for even \$590,000.

Look every town, and state overbuilt and overgrew government from 2000 through 2007, The makets housing and real estate crashed in 2008, but governments kept right on increasing spending. There was no correction on their part for the real overspending and overgrowth of those years 2000 –2007, now all this burden and more is ending up on the backs of taxpayers. And the people just can not afford all of the collective tax increases.

Daniel and Christel Kormanik
85 Great Ring Rd.
Sandy Hook, CT. 06482

From: "Test scan" <ckormanik@hotmail.com>
Subject: **the budget**
Date: May 10, 2011 11:39:03 PM EDT
To: <kfetchick@charter.net>

Incase there is any doubt from my previous letter. We all voted No, that includes all four members of my family. And we will continue to vote No.... until we see no spending increase. I am darn tired of politicians talking about "Shared sacrifice" when they are still increasing spending.

Sincerely,

Daniel Kormanik
85 Great Ring Rd.
Sandy Hook, CT.

From: George Ferguson <george-ferguson@earthlink.net>
Subject: **Re: Request for Town Budget Information**
Date: May 11, 2011 12:01:49 PM EDT
To: Kathy Fetchick <KFetchick@charter.net>, Mary Ann Jacob <mjacob4404@charter.net>

Hi Kathy and Mary Ann,

The Ferguson's voted.

We try to exercise our right to vote.

I think the present budget number has a better chance of passing and believe the vote will be closer. I will not guess at an outcome.

That said however, the climate surrounding this next referendum is more turbulent as the Governor is using the labor negotiations to distract the voters from the Democrats recent \$1.8 billion in tax hikes, including a retroactive income tax hike.

The uncertainty around the labor issues and the massive tax increases, adds to a climate weighing on informed taxpayers' minds and makes it less likely they will fund the budget drivers of wage and benefit increases for employees (concentrated on school side), new staff, (school side) and correction of our budgetary practices (overall).

Republicans and Democrats I've spoken with are both not happy with the multiple levels of tax increases.

Some others I've spoken with stayed home because they said they did not think they could make an informed decision.

George

On May 10, 2011, at 8:14 AM, Kathy Fetchick wrote:

[Please forward as you see appropriate.....](#)

[<Request for Opinion.pdf>](#)

Best Regards,

Kathy Fetchick
email: kfetchick@charter.net
phone: 203-270-9941
mobile: 203-545-8684

From: Laura Main <lmain@charter.net>
Subject: **Answers to questions**
Date: May 11, 2011 12:25:27 PM EDT
To: "mjacob4404@charter.net" <mjacob4404@charter.net>, "kfetchick@charter.net" <kfetchick@charter.net>

I am writing to answer your questions on Accountability in Newtown.

1. We did not vote because we are completely frustrated with the overspending on non-educational items in special education and the lack of oversight and accountability. There was a statement made that the sped budget is (I'm approximating) about 7% of the total budget and the state reports it as 17%. when asked about the discrepancy the sped director said, "I don't know."

When asked at a June 2010 meeting by a group of outraged Sped parents (Kathy, you were there- at least for part of the mtg), the superintendent stated when asked who supervises the SPed director that she does not nor doe the Board of Ed. What is going on!? This is the tail wagging he dog! When I have asked repeatedly for assistance and oversight I have been blatantly ignored. I can not trust that this budget is appropriate when I seethe way money is spent by the district. We need a full accounting of object code 300 in Sped and pupil services. The audit cited Sped grant money but this has completely been pushed underthe rug. So disillusioned.

2. My opinion on this latest budget (adding an AP at the high school and cutting EAs) is ludicrous and speaks exactly to my point about beige concerned about HoW money is being spent and the lack of oversight and accountability. How could an AP prevent expulsions?! Don't the EAs do this work!? I don't think I will be able to vote again (because I can't bring myself to vote no either as a parent) unless something drastically changes.

Laura Main

From: Daniel Kormanik <dakorman44@yahoo.com>
Subject: like Greece our spending is out of control.
Date: May 11, 2011 2:27:57 PM EDT
To: mjacob4404@charter.net, Jan Andras <janandras@yahoo.com>, kfetckick@charter.net
▶ 1 Attachment, 9.6 KB

Please disregard the muttering about spending.
Ask yourself: How much has tax revenue dropped?
How much more is it going to drop?
What happens when the Feds stop printing money and bailing out our bankrupt states?

Do we have to get as bad as Greece or go Bankrupt before you elected officials behave in a fiscally prudent way?

Most taxpayers are ready to give up, Im , I am willing to fight city hall. More spending for education is stupid. Money is not the problem.

We are the problem because we have not insisted that they improve academic proficiency, teach real Americann history and the Constitution, or measure how many students who go to college.... graduate in four years, nor have we insisted that they stop the drugs at the high school and in all of our schools. But we are willing to build Taj Mahals to the BOE's ego.

While I applaud the job that Pat Llodra has done on this years budget. These are not normal times and it is not enough.

How can we hope to fix our country if we can not fix our town ? One town at a time we need to return to fiscal sanity.

Shame on all of you who vote with the spenders. Some day you too will retire and find out that you can no longer afford to live here.

Stop the spending increases.

Dan and Christel Kormanik



From: Mary Ann Jacob <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Subject: Fwd: budget vote questions
Date: May 11, 2011 9:08:35 PM EDT
To: Kathy and Jeff Fetchick and Family <kfetchick@charter.net>

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Miranda Pacchiana" <miranda@pacchiana.com>
Date: May 11, 2011 9:03:28 PM EDT
To: <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Subject: budget vote questions

Hi MaryAnn,

My husband and I both voted for the budget. While times are tight, the schools seem to be operating with a very tight belt and we got the impression that the amount submitted was conservative.

Miranda Pacchiana

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: **per your request - feedback on the budget**
Date: May 12, 2011 6:41:03 AM EDT
To: <mjacob4404@charter.net>
Cc: "Kathy Fetchick" <kfetchick@charter.net>

Yes I voted, and I voted to pass the budget. I am thinking about voting "no" on this budget. I do not understand the double standard with respect to the continued excess and increasing spending at the high school (another assistant principal) versus losing the funding for 20 EAs – who actually have direct contact with the students and a direct influence on the educational process. I also think we spend much too much on our police department, but we never seem to question it.

I wish my thoughts to be anonymous.

Best Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]