

Dan Wiedemann, Chair  
Dan Honan, Vice-Chair  
Phil Carroll  
Judit DeStefano  
Chris Eide  
George Ferguson



## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

The Legislative Council Municipal Operations Committee held a regular meeting on Monday, March 14, 2016, in the Meeting Room 1 in the Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Wiedemann called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

**PRESENT:** Dan Wiedemann, Dan Honan, Judit DeStefano, Chris Eide, George Ferguson, Phil Carroll

**ALSO PRESENT:** Ryan Knapp, Finance Director Bob Tait (9:05)

**VOTER COMMENT:** None

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MUNICIPAL BUDGET 2016-17:**

MR. WIEDEMANN MOTIONED TO REDUCE LINE ITEM FOR "TRUCK REPAIR" IN THE FIRE BUDGET FROM BOF RECOMMENDED \$105,000 TO \$90,000. SECOND BY PHIL CARROLL. Mr. Honan is concerned that it could be harmful to morale. Ms. DeStefano agrees. Mr. Eide is concerned that the Town might have to dip into contingency if maintenance costs exceed budgeted amount. Mr. Tait expressed contingency is slim this year. MOTION FAILED 4-2.

MR. WIEDEMANN MOTIONED TO REDUCE LINE ITEM FOR "ROAD IMPROVEMENTS" IN THE HIGHWAY BUDGET FROM BOF RECOMMENDED \$250,000 TO \$100,000. SECOND BY MS. DESTAFANO.

Ms. DeStefano commented that she doesn't seem to think the roads are terrible, but knows that it is important to town residents and wants to ensure town roads are well maintained. Mr. Wiedemann commented that at the end of the day, we are still making an increase in road improvements in the CIP and in the budget (\$2.6 million if this motion passes). Mr. Ferguson commented the town has a plan, had neglected roads for several years, and now the town needs to get back to where it was prior to cuts being made; in addition, weather conditions have taken a toll on the road above and beyond normal weather; this money is necessary to restore the roads. MOTION FAILED 3-3

MR. HONAN MOTIONED TO MOVE BOF RECOMMENDED TOWN BUDGET TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. DESTEFANO.

Mr. Honan commented there are few cuts to be made to budget. BOF and BOS have already made major cuts. Dan Wiedemann believes the budget would not pass in current form and cuts need to be made.

MOTION FAILED 5-1

MR. CARROLL MOTIONED TO REDUCE LINE ITEM FOR "REPAIR & MAINTENANCE SERVICES" IN HIGHWAY BUDGET FROM BOF RECOMMENDED \$497,750 TO \$477,750. SECOND BY MR. WIEDEMANN.

Mr. Carroll expressed that budget doesn't give specific reasons for increase other than "general increases in costs". MR. CARROLL WITHDREW HIS MOTION. MR. WIEDEMANN WITHDREW HIS SECOND.

MR. EIDE MOTIONED TO REDUCE LINE ITEM FOR "ROAD IMPROVEMENTS" IN HIGHWAY BUDGET FROM BOF RECOMMENDED \$1,750,000 TO \$1,625,000. SECOND BY MR. CARROLL.

Mr. Eide discussed questions regarding private roads. Mr. Carroll stated those roads are currently maintained by the town.

MR. EIDE AMENDED THE MOTION TO "RECOMMEND TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO REDUCE LINE ITEM FOR "ROAD IMPROVEMENTS" IN HIGHWAY BUDGET FROM BOF RECOMMENDED \$1,750,000 TO \$1,625,000".

MR. CARROLL ACCEPTED THE AMENDMENT. Mr. Wiedemann agrees that it's a cut; doesn't believe it's enough. MOTION PASSED 5-1 (Mr. Ferguson voted no)

MR. CARROLL MOTIONED TO RECOMMEND TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO REDUCE THE LINE ITEM "TRUCK REPAIR" IN THE FIRE BUDGET FROM \$105,000 TO \$100,000. SECOND BY MR. EIDE.

Mr. Carroll stated the number is more line with historical spending. MOTION PASSED 4-2.

MR. FERGUSON MOTIONED TO HAVE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REVIEW THE LINE ITEM FOR "SAN DISK REPLACEMENT" IN THE DEPARTMENT - TECHNOLOGY BUDGET. SECOND BY MR. EIDE.

ALL IN FAVOR.

MR. WIEDEMANN MOTIONED TO RECOMMEND TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO REDUCE THE LINE ITEM "SALARIES AND WAGES - SSO" IN THE POLICE BUDGET FROM \$287,616 TO \$223,716. SECOND BY MR. CARROLL.

Mr. Wiedemann comments that there are 2 SSOs, an SRO, and several security staff at the High School as well as 2 SSOs at Sandy Hook school. The Town is looking to move away from SSOs in the future. He would rather see reductions happen over time rather than all at one time.

Mr. Honan comments that the schools will tell the Town when they are ready to cut. It is collaboration between the Town and the schools and doesn't believe it is up to the Legislative Council to decide when the schools are done with security.

Mr. Ferguson commented to the history of SSOs; believes that the officers were instituted to increase security, but not in response to an increased threat. The cost of this security is high.

Mr. Eide comments that this motion leaves security in each school. MOTION APPROVED 4-2.

MS. DESTEFANO MOTIONED TO RECOMMEND TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO REDUCE THE LINE ITEM FOR "SALARIES & WAGES - FULL TIME" IN THE DEPARTMENT - TECHNOLOGY BUDGET FROM \$274,763 TO \$269,763. SECOND BY MR. CARROLL.

Ms. DeStefano believes the budget detail shows an increase in salary for the Technology Director is inconsistent with the 2% salary increases seen across the board for Town employees.

MOTION APPROVED 5-1.

**VOTER COMMENT:** None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Next Meeting 3/18; likely to be cancelled.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:15pm.

Dan Wiedemann  
Chairman

Attachment: Questions & Answers

### ADDENDUM 3 - Questions for BOS/Departments

\_\_\_\_\_ Council Members' questions listed in black; BOS/Department responses in teal.

#### P 44 - Fringe Benefits

Is this increase in claims due to a small number of claimants or does it represent an increase in service utilization by many claimants? If it is due to a small number of claimants, what options are available to the Town in terms of larger insurance pools that could help smooth out costs over time to avoid large jumps in single years from larger claim volumes?

*Employee Medical Benefits Board to come to LC meeting.*

#### P 68 - Postage

What are the outlooks on paperless initiatives in terms of Town communications? What options are offered to residents to avoid paper in their mailboxes from the Town and to receive communications electronically?

*By state statute bills still need to be delivered thru the US post office (actually state statute section 12-130 says the tax collector ".....shall mail or hand to....." the tax bill. As far as sending out paper checks to our vendors I think our next accounting system will handle electronic payments. Pay stubs are now sent out electronically.*

#### P 90 - Assessor's Office

What is the typical return on an audit in terms of additional dollars to the grand list?

*Hold on this for a later time.*

#### P 97 - Software/Hardware Maintenance Fees

Is the line item "Vaulting E-mails (E-mail storage)" being provided for by town hardware or being put out to the cloud?

*See IT attachment*

#### P 98 - P&R Maintenance Building (UPS + Secure Room)

Is this line item related to the desire to have all Town devices on same source infrastructure as mentioned on P 118? How would this being cut from the budget affect the Town's ability to consolidate network infrastructure within the town? Would this affect security or the ability of emergency personnel to respond to any issues at our parks/facilities?

*See IT attachment*

#### P 98 - SAN disk replacements

Are the disks being used conventional HDDs or SSDs? Are there SSD options available for the scale of storage you are looking for and how would using SSDs affect maintenance costs?

*See IT attachment*

#### P 103 - Measures & Indicators

Has there been a decrease in pot hole claims since the Town has begun work on repaving and instituted the new work-order system? Would this decrease in incidents be reflected in future premium payments?

*Too soon to discuss impact...will get more data later.*

#### P 119 - Equipment Rental

Are network services put out to bid? How do we end up going with the provider we do (Frontier, Nextel (Sprint?), etc...)?

*As far as cell phones are concerned I get the government rate (off state contract) for all equipment that is either purchased or rented. I check once a year on the rates and I contact all my service representatives to see if I can get any lower of a rate. Case in point is Sprint for the cell phones – we now have another reduced rate and removed some of the phones.*

#### P 120 - Capital

Are there plans to offset the costs of this with contributions to the Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditures fund? How could doing so affect debt service costs over the course of the bond?

*State/legislative level continues to focus on consolidation of PSAPs for municipalities that do not have a 40,000 population. (See bill #5544). We need to have a better understanding of the future of local dispatch before we commit significant resources for capital items.*

#### P 128 - Uniform Allowances

Are all officers given new uniforms each year or does this represent maintenance of owned uniforms?

*Mainly for cleaning and maintenance of uniforms.*

#### P 130 - Trade-in value of patrol cars

Is this number bid out or does it go through the same dealer that we purchase the cars from? Are there other purchasers that we could seek to get a higher price per trade in? Does this number accurately reflect actual trade-in value of the patrol cars?

*As discussed at the Finance Board meeting our police vehicles are being traded in to a vendor supplying our new police cars. Due to the high mileage, in excess of 100,000 miles, and high idle time, the vehicles have a significantly reduced value. It is estimated that the idle time doubles the mileage estimate on the vehicles. Past history and current trends indicate the amount obtained on our trade in is very competitive.*

#### P 142 - Verizon Service

Why are police phones on Nextel (Sprint) while fire service is Verizon? Could the Town benefit from buying service from one provider rather than going with different providers? Is there a reason we are currently using different providers?

*I do not pay for fire service cell phones and from the time I have gotten here FD was never a part of our phone service for cell phones. Separate entities.*

#### P 150 - Internet Service - NUSAR

Is NUSAR also using Frontier? Do the Town departments purchase collectively for internet services? Can NUSAR get on the Town network to share the Town WAN?

*None of the fire departments or EMS are on the Town of Newtown's internet service. Having the fire departments and EMS on the town's network is neither cost effective nor secure. IT can better explain – these agencies have never been a part of our network. Separate entities.*

P 208 The Contributions to outside agencies

Can you explain the reductions to Kevin's Community Center and increase to Newtown Parent Connection?

*Changes in levels of funding between Kevin's CC and Parent Connection were made based on several criteria: 1) service volume to local community; 2) compliance with requirement to submit org. financials with Newtown Finance Director as part of the funding request process; 3) degree of alignment of org. programs/practices with community needs.*

P 230 "Not included in the proposal is an additional Maintainer Position"

(\$75K Treadwell locker room clean out is contracted (\$14,000) as is mowing of Fairfield Hills Campus. p.239-240 (\$41,500) If both of these were pulled in-house and some overtime was reduced (total \$56K) would we realize a break-even or cost reduction overall? Are other reductions to outsourcing a possibility?

*Outsourcing concept is worthy of a larger discussion – later. Can have applications to both budgets.*

*"Not included in the proposal is an additional Maintainer Position"*

*(\$75K Treadwell locker room clean out is contracted (\$14,000) as is mowing of Fairfield Hills Campus. p.239-240 (\$41,500) If both of these were pulled in-house and some overtime was reduced (total \$56K) would we realize a break-even or cost reduction overall? Are other reductions to outsourcing a possibility? To move the mowing of the Fairfield Hills campus in-house would currently require more than one employee for full time hire. All many hours of overtime and would also require more needed equipment. The contracted cleaning is also for the Teen Center along with the Pool House. Increasing overtime might help there but not for the mowing. We are currently planning on tracking this work and expenses very closely this year to determine if requesting the additional employee will be more cost beneficial in the future. We have been so very short staffed that we need this year with a full staff to make these true comparisons. It is important to note that the current level of outsourcing, and/or overtime would not be impacted by the additional maintainer. The cleaning at the Treadwell Pool House as well as much of the school mowing is contracted because we cannot complete these tasks during the bargaining units contracted work day. If we pulled these items "in-house" they would still require overtime due to pool use hours and school occupancy times.*

*We continually review, and have modified our mowing contract over the years to maximize the benefit to the Town. This contract was in excess of \$210,000 12 years ago. We now mow more acreage at the schools and FFH campus, but contract the areas we cannot get to during the normal work day.*

*The added maintainer is due to the fact that the Department responsibilities have grown over 80% since 2002, yet staffing levels have only increased 27%. We have reduced our level of maintenance at many fields and facilities in an effort to accomplish our minimum priorities, yet are no longer meeting the expectations of our users, or maximizing the life expectancy of infrastructure as it is lacking required maintenance.*

We normally collect more than the budgeted 99.0% in property taxes. Could we increase that to closer to the historical actual of 99.19% to raise projected revenue?

*99.0% tax collection rate is a reasonable assumption given that it has happened three times in the last ten years. It is conservative budgeting. You do not want to budget a % that would put the town in the position of falling short in tax collections in some years. This conservative budgeting (not taking risks) is why we get comments in our rating agency write ups like the following (from Standard & Poors):*

- Very strong management, with "strong" financial policies and practices under our Financial Management Assessment methodology;
- Strong budgetary performance, with balanced operating results in the general fund but a slight operating deficit at the total governmental fund level in fiscal 2015;
- Strong budgetary flexibility, with an available fund balance in fiscal 2015 of 9.5% of operating expenditures;
- Very strong liquidity, with total government available cash at 20.9% of total governmental fund expenditures and 2.6x governmental debt service, and access to external liquidity we consider strong;

Contingency has been increased by \$88,000. What is the justification for that?

*It appears that it has increased, but that is NOT the case. The contingency account is the only account that is treated differently. All other accounts have a budget amount and expenditures applied to them. The contingency account has no expenditures. Just budget transfers (to other accounts). So typically at year end the contingency account is close to -0- (amounts have been transferred to other accounts to cover union contract increases; above average winter maintenance expenditures; above average legal expenditures; emergency replacements, etc.).*

*When you analyze contingency you have to compare the current request with the prior year budget amount. In this instance the current request is \$200,000 and the prior year amount was \$350,000. So the 2016/17 request is \$150,000 less than the prior year. It is less because we have no contracts settling in 2016/17.*

P 49 says 101,884,980 net taxable assessment...taxes correct? Page 30 says 103,774?

*On page 49 the \$101,884,490 figure is the amount to be raised by taxation (current year taxes) taxes. To get the actual tax levy you divide this figure by the tax collection rate. The \$103,774,980 on page 30 comes from a schedule showing revenues by revenue type. The property taxes revenue type includes current taxes, prior year taxes, interest and liens, etc. This breakdown is shown on page 55 where you can see the current year tax amount of \$101,884,490 (which is part of the \$103,774,980 total).*

District contributions show \$18K for snow plowing. The BOE has also budgeted an additional \$20K for SHS snow removal...where is that revenue accounted for? If it's not then it should be reduced from the BOE as the town does the snow removal.

*Some apples and oranges here. The \$18K I believe pays for P&R overtime during snow removal operations where they work with BOE Maintenance personnel to remove the snow from the curb put there by janitorial staff and plow out the parking lots.*

*The \$20K listed for SHS snow removal was requested by the School Facilities Manager in consultation with Public Works to pay for the specialized contractual services that will be required to plow the new lots. We have very unique constraints on snow removal operations that we do not have at any other school. This is an outside expense item and not an internal revenues item.*

P 55 Please explain the reduction in the Ct School Building grants and state federal grants. Any update on the bond amortization schedule provided by the state?

TOWN OF NEWTOWN					
OLD SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS - PAYMENT SCHEDULE					
<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Cash</u>	<u>FY Total</u>	<u>Cummulative Principal</u>
2007-2008	768,249.22	227,721.53	40,094.00	1,036,064.75	6,088,897.14
2008-2009	754,790.77	199,344.16	40,094.00	994,228.93	5,320,647.92
2009-2010	728,145.23	170,208.56	40,094.00	938,447.79	4,565,857.15
2010-2011	721,639.40	141,872.63	-	863,512.03	3,837,711.92
2011-2012	708,714.95	110,921.33	-	819,636.28	3,116,072.52
2012-2013	542,605.97	88,082.36	-	630,688.33	2,407,357.57
2013-2014	511,378.02	68,364.04	-	579,742.06	1,864,751.60
2014-2015	506,173.36	49,763.56	-	555,936.92	1,353,373.58
2015-2016	502,269.87	31,334.82	-	533,604.69	847,200.22
2016-2017	79,391.34	13,030.50	-	92,421.84	344,930.35
2017-2018	79,391.34	10,082.84	-	89,474.18	265,539.01
2018-2019	78,090.18	7,135.20	-	85,225.38	186,147.67
2019-2020	76,788.92	4,217.31	-	81,006.23	108,057.49
2020-2021	15,634.27	1,329.36	-	16,963.63	31,268.57
2021-2022	15,634.30	664.69	-	16,298.99	15,634.30

*These school construction payments from the state are the “old” payments reflecting how towns used to get reimbursed for school construction projects. We used to get reimbursed as a percent of our debt service payments relating to the project. Now we get reimbursed, currently, as a reduction in the project cost. So now we bond the net amount after state reimbursement. As you can see from the schedule above the old reimbursements are winding down.*

P 65 Why the increase in legal of \$15K?

*The increase in legal reflects past experience. 2015/16 will most likely be \$200,000 (will be requesting a transfer.....did not know this when budget was created). Look at actuals 2014/15 & 2013/14. Adding the \$15,000 is another reason we are confident in reducing the contingency account by \$150,000.*

P 68 Why the big increase for postage and meeting clerks?

*Meeting clerks. Increases in this account are based on recent experience. Our government bodies are increasing using subcommittees/appointed committees, commissions, task-forces for special tasks. Examples: permanent memorial, community center, municipal building strategic planning, charter...and more. These special assignments are ‘temporary’ but need to be compensated at the standard rate for the duration of that appointed committee.*



P 71 Why the big bump for the AV tech.

*This number better reflects that actual cost for the work of the AV tech. The position is an hourly contract. The tech videos and uploads meetings of major Boards (BoS, BoF,BoE, LC), and some special commission meetings, when/if there is an important matter being discussed which should be captured in film. AV tech gets \$85 a meeting. We have paid the AV tech \$4,335 for the six months ending 12/31/2015. BOE meetings are included in this amount (and paid thru this account)*

Justify the addition of a field technician in the assessor's office.

*2010-11 Assessors staffing had four full time positions and one half time position for a total of \$210,162 in wages.*

2010 - 2011 Requested Budget		
Requested		Budget
Positions	Salary Step	Request
1	n/a	67,500
1	n/a	50,535
1	n/a	34,508
1	n/a	31,119
1	n/a	23,000
	n/a	3,500
		142,662

*The 2016/17 request is asking for three full time positions and two half time positions for a total of \$208,603 in wages (six years later). This department was reduced in the downturn and has been struggling to keep up with its original workload.*

Justify the capital equipment requests in technology. Where can we put off some costs?

See IT attachment

Discuss OPEB contributions in general. Where are we this year in earnings?

*Data can be provided but worthy of a larger discussion? Doesn't mean much as a stand-alone data point.*

P 119 emergency communications equipment rental....labeled wrong? Where is 16-17? What is the request...if it's mislabeled, why is the front increase so big?

*Typo corrected. Frontier meets our needs - and they are the only ones that deal with wire lines which is needed - still all state contract.*

SSOs...two at SHS and one at every other school? Where is the 9th? What about SROs? Is there an opportunity to combine some duties?

*We have two SSOs at SHS and two at NHS, one SSO at each of the other schools. There are two SROs – one at NMS and one at NHS. The duties of the SSOs and SROs are very different and cannot be combined. We should look to reduce the overall police footprint in our schools in 2017-2018. (once SHS is back on-line.)*

P 129 Please provide more detail on the Police request for an additional 12,500 in training supplies.

*The Newtown Police Department recently entered into a mutual aid agreement with the Danbury Police Department Emergency Services Unit, (SWAT TEAM). We have 6 officer assigned to this unit, as discussed at the Board of Finance meeting, the initial outfitting and training of these officers is ongoing. It is anticipated that this cost will decrease in the next budget cycle as those goals are met. I agree with former Chief Kehoe's decision to join the team, the resources which are made available to this agency, manpower and equipment, provide this agency a resource that was not present prior to this time. An affiliation with this team allows us to provide for a level of public safety that this town requires, particularly being cognizant of current trends in law enforcement.*

P 138 Fire budget has many large increases... Other employee benefits, Hydrants, truck repair, insurance, Contributions to fire. Where can we save, provide lots more details,

*Maybe invite the BoFC to a meeting... or we can discuss the budget in detail with you.*

P 140 Fire - Why should we use the 78K to improve response time, what is the issue?

*The Response Improvement Program began 10 years ago (or more). That account provides a small stipend for volunteers that respond to a fire call. According to those who were involved at the origin of the program, the stipend is intended to be a small gratuity for being a volunteer and for leaving one's work or home to respond to a call. It pays for gas and wear and tear on private vehicles. Just for information: last year we had 1,700 calls for service (fire). We have about 190 volunteers in five fire stations. Per call reimbursements for firefighters are \$5.*

P 164 Roads Can we save more on gasoline? Justify the 30K for repairs....discuss contributions to road improvements.

*Gasoline is contracted a year in advance. The current contract runs out 12/31/16. We have no idea what prices will look like next December. However, that specific line includes diesel which is going to be reduced even further as will be noted in #6*

*Inflation for parts and outside service by themselves will rise 2-3% (\$10,000). In addition we two critical overhauls that are not typical repairs to critical pieces of equipment. Brake job for the 938 loader because it is an over the road machine, not trailered to and stationary on a work site. (\$8,000). We have to rebuild the water booster pump on the vac-al truck used for pipe, manhole and sewer cleaning. (\$15-18,000).*

*I'm not sure what contributions to road improvements means so I won't speculate.*

P 173 Reduce winter maintenance estimate possibly?

*The dollar numbers listed are not estimates. They are the average of "actual" cost over 5 years. By using the average, in a bad year, it minimizes how much money you have to come up with after the fact. You can reduce the average dollar figure but then you better raise the dollar amount in the contingency account. Climate change is more about the lack of predictability and wide swings in weather and for Public Works it is a real problem*

P 177 What is the reduction of 100K. Historical? How can that be if it's 100K less than last year...ask questions about that.

*If you look at 2014/15 & 2013/14 actual they were both under \$1,100,000. They estimated column in 2015/16 should be changed to \$1,100,000 (did not know at time of budget preparation.)*

P 185 Public building and maintenance...Natural gas savings? Reduce capital expenses possibly?

Justification?

*Natural gas is not continuing to go down. It has hit historic lows over the past year but that trends have begun to reverse itself for reasons that are too lengthy for this answer. I can tell you this. We are still using the rate from Eversource. However, our purchasing group, CROG (Capital Region Council of Governments Purchasing Council) has asked me if I am still interested in serving on the buying committee. They expect to reconvene this group because sometime next year they expect to be able to find supply that will be lower than Eversource. That's not really good news because it means that they expect the overall cost to rise. In order of listing in the budget:*

- 1) The standby generator is for the public works garage that must be able to operate in blizzards and hurricanes even if 100% of power is out in Newtown (\$10,000). The original generator was installed in 1978.*
- 2) The electric charging stations are not just for public use but so that we can begin the shift to electric vehicles in the Town fleet under the various grant programs that reduce our cost below market. (\$5,000)*
- 3) The current fuel control system is less than two years away from not having any tech support available. This system controls fuel for police, fire, ambulance, highway, P&R, school buses, general fleet vehicles and school maintenance vehicles. There is no alternative other than replacement. (\$15,000)*

*4)The Emergency Operations Center which houses major server, backup and switching facilities for our computers and communications has a leaky roof. It was original to the building before our use and has passed its useful life. (\$25,000*

*5) We have two original doors that no longer function properly or close securely. (\$10,000)*

P 188 How much of a grant from VOCA are we expecting that is not listed in the budget? Perhaps we can compromise at a total of 3 people instead of 4?

*The VOCA grant, if we are successful, will provide funding for 2 care navigators to join the two positions partially funded through the budget. There is very little in the VOCA grant that has any application to budget requests. Maybe a tiny, slim chance that some of the operational costs for the location (Engineer's House) could be absorbed by the VOCA and maybe some supplies. That number would be quite small. We will have a better sense of our personnel needs (care navigation and social work) over the next year. The current R&R staff (DoJ funded) is 4.2 FTE... The combination of Praxair, NSHCF grants, town operating budget, and VOCA*

*(if successful) provides 4.0 FTE. The VOCA grant is 3 years in duration. The Praxair and NSHCF grants are annual. The current R&R program – to be continued through these new personnel – has more than 700 case files.*

NYFS - How is 2016 tracking to date on service requests compared to 2015. What was the monthly breakdown of 2015 requests, which way is it trending?

*The requests for service at NYFS has grown by 191% since Dec 2012. NYFS is very active in seeking grants to help offset the growth in demand. Town budget support for NYFS has not increased commensurate with the services it is called upon to provide. The organization has received funds through DoJ. Those funds are coming to an end and will have to be replaced by other grants or program elimination.*

P 208. Discuss the changes in funding of Kevin's Community Center and Newtown Parent Connection.

See question #14

P 234 Justify the 31K in capital requested from Newtown Park and Rec. *Park & Recreation capital spending has been drastically cut over the past ten years. As the attached graph shows, the capital budget in the proposed budget is less than 50% of the amount budgeted in 2007-2008, dropping from \$404,383 to 202,000 in the current plan. While our responsibilities have grown, our equipment has grown older and more unreliable. We cannot continue to defer projects and equipment purchases as we have done over the last ten years – this is an unsustainable trend.*

*In an effort to preserve capital, we are now leasing several mowers and vehicles, which together represent yearly capital spending of \$72,500. Of the remaining \$129,500 we are making our 3<sup>rd</sup> request to replace a four-wheel drive pickup with plow attachment (\$40,000). We are also requesting replacement of a field grooming machine purchased in 1999 which, after two engines, is at the end of its useful life (\$17,500). We are also requesting funds to continue our installation of lightning detection warning equipment at town facilities (\$18,000), slurry various hard court surfaces to extend surface life by 7-8 years (\$18,000) and continue installation of modern access controls at recreational facilities (\$23,000).*

*In short, we are embarking on a very slow process to replace aging equipment, modernize our facilities, address deferred projects and more efficiently respond to our increased responsibilities, despite a significant lack of capital spending which results in a backlog of over \$345,000 in capital expenditures.*

P 242 Churchill sidewalk winter maintenance? Was this in the estimate when we approved this capital improvement? Why is Park and Rec doing this instead of abutting property owners? \$2000.... Businesses in Sandy Hook Center are responsible for their sidewalks.

*This was not a Parks and Recreation Project in the CIP it was a Land Use Project. In the Sidewalk Easement agreement the Town was assigned to maintain the sidewalks. Parks and Recreation was then assigned by Town Administration the task of storm cleanup for the Church Hill Sidewalks. Due to the amount of storm cleanup already tasked to P&R contracting this was the current budgetary decision.*

*The State of Ct required that the Town 'take' additional property along the sidewalk area on Churchill Road in order to establish a snow 'buffer'. So, additional private property was 'taken' and in that negotiation, the town agreed to clean the sidewalks of snow.*

ETH has continually been thwarted at attracting new business because of the Borough ordinance saying they can't have for profit businesses...which eliminates things like lawyers etc....how can they possibly ever get to the point where they are supporting more of their expenses with that model? 70K more? Perhaps the borough should contribute :)

*We agree wholeheartedly that we are constrained by Borough zoning regulations. We plan to explore what can be done to allow uses which are not objectionable, but which can generate additional revenue.*

P 254 Why the significant decrease in library funding and Hawley trust? What efforts are being made to replace that revenue stream?

*Confused by this question...is reference to their investment returns re Hawley Trust. Perhaps an LC conversation with CHB Library Board? In general terms, the Library has consistently increased their efforts to fund-raise. The Turkey Trot, the annual fund-raising celebration, the appeal letter...and more. Their budget shows an expectation to increase their fund raising outcomes. By 3.7%*

*The Hawley Trust fund is managed by JP Morgan and the income received varies based on market conditions. Given that these are public funds, they are invested conservatively, but we cannot force the Trustee to change its investment philosophy. The Board of Managers has embarked on a visioning process and development of a business plan to help us generate additional revenue.*

Conversely, a significant increase in investments in technology and Economic Development ahead of the results of a survey to understand what they need?

**Not sure of the context for this question...referred back to Dan**

P 266 Please discuss the costs for revaluation in the capital nonrecurring fund as listed. We will spend \$415K overall doing the reval?

*We have already bid this out. We go four responses. This represents the lowest bid. Every other revaluation we do a full/complete revaluation (by state statute). This is that revaluation. Every door is knocked on and we go inside if we are able to.*

P 268 Town Hall Board of Managers projected increase of \$45k. What are we doing to support their quest for outside revenue? I understand the borough zoning will not allow them to rent space to businesses that are for profit. How can they ever support themselves in that scenario?

*We agree that it is difficult for the Board of Managers to generate additional revenue under current regulations. We hope to be able to work to address these constraints in a way that is not objectionable.*

P 69 Why was the \$750 for Registrars removed?

*The \$750 referred to was in the 15-16 budget and was not requested for the budget we are working on now. That money was used during this fiscal year to perform maintenance/upgrades on voting machines.*

P 81 Are 3 Asst Town clerks needed? Can work be distributed during peak Times?

*There is no shortage of work to be done for a town of our population and statutory responsibilities. The work is appropriately distributed and the deadlines imposed by State and Local Municipalities are met. When we have high volumes of traffic such as dog licensing, recording tax liens and elections, we prioritize all our daily tasks and strive for customer satisfaction.*

*The following are just some of the tasks that we are responsible for throughout the course of the day. There are over 200 types of documents that can be recorded in this office. These documents are received daily via mail, internet and in person. Substantial amounts of information are entered into the computer from these documents. They are then proofread, corrected, scanned and printed for permanent retention. Multiple times per year individual liens and releases from our Tax Office and Borough Tax Office arrive which can range from 300 to 500 individual liens in one filing. It is required by statute that you be a Town clerk or Assistant Town Clerk to process these documents. Survey maps are also filed here. To keep up with the latest technology it is essential to have the maps available online and incorporated in our land records. In doing so, we need to enter descriptions of all maps. Over 8,300 maps are currently on file and we are working on inputting all of them into the system. This is a very time consuming project. In order to record marriage, birth, and death certificates, cremation, and burial permits it is mandatory to be a Registrar of Vital Statistics. Marriages occurring in Newtown must apply in this office. This entails the couple oath is given prior to releasing the information to the couple. The process in its entirety can take a total of 30 minutes. Bookkeeping: Daily, weekly, monthly, yearly register reconciliations are required. Monthly reporting to: IRS, CT Department of Revenue Service, State Library for Community Investment Preservations-State Grants-Historic Preservations, Dept. of Public Health, Secretary of the State, Elections Enforcement Commission, Department of Treasury, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and CT Dept. of Transportation. Maintaining website information on home page and assist other departments to maintain their web pages. Printing and posting agendas and minutes on the website for over 50 boards and commissions. Postings become greater during budget season. Minutes are permanent records and need to be created into books, then scanned and sent for microfilming. Recording all appointments and resignations in Town journal is also required for permanent retention. During election season I create all Official and Absentee Ballots for Referendums, Primaries, as well as State, Municipal and Federal elections and compiling multiple reports to the Secretary of the State's office. Next budget season there will be at least one referendum, a Presidential Preference Primary, Primary for State-District office-Probate and Presidential Election. In less than 30 days Absentee ballots issued for past Presidential elections have totaled over 1,800. June is dog licensing month. We issue over 1,800 tags in the small time span of 22 days. Residents frequently arrive without taking the necessary steps to acquire rabies verification. We assist them in this task and often call the vet for the customer.*

#### **P 96 IT Director 7.45% increase?**

*The IT Director was significantly undercompensated given the role and scope of responsibility. Historically, we have had difficulty attracting (took us nearly a year to fill the position) and retaining persons for this position who possess the necessary skills and dispositions to meet the demands of the extraordinary diversity in municipal technological applications and hardware. (The BoE director of technology has an annual compensation in excess of \$125,000. The Town position is \$27,000 less than that.) This increase in compensation places our director of IT near the average for municipalities of our size.*

#### **P 123 SSO's, can we subcontract?**

**What is the cost all in (insurance / SSI / any other bene's)**

*Subcontracting security services (armed personnel) for our schools was discussed at the onset of the program and was rejected. All persons in the discussion (BoE, superintendent, Police Chief, security committee...) felt strongly that armed persons in our schools should be under the direct control (hiring, supervising, evaluating...) of our police chief and superintendent. Further, the SSO legislation mandates that SSOs have been sworn personnel in CT or state police positions. Firms with which we would subcontract did not provide sufficient local control or meet the SSO legislative requirements.*

P 164 Road improvements up 250,000 will we be able to get enough contractors to do the work?

*Yes, our PW dept can manage the 2.75 million we have budgeted (includes bonding of 1 million) for capital road work. This question originated with a selectman suggestion that maybe more than \$1 million should be bonded each year till we 'catch up' with road improvements. Mr. Hurley responded that there is an upper limit to what can be accomplished in one season. His reference was to the idea of several more millions coming available – not to the addition of the relatively small new money of \$250,000.*

P 169 fuel gas 2.33 diesel 2.25 What are the true prices?

*Reductions taken already at BoF level. See budget document.*

P 170 Are we responsible for private roads?

*We have a public safety responsibility to private roads. For the most part, it is that core responsibility that directs our budget requests for these roads. However, the issue of private roads is complex and needs to be discussed at a larger level, perhaps a full LC meeting? The money requested for private roads is designed to address significant issues on two such roads: Lakeview and Edgelake. In the first instance, that road has had chronic and significant issues – some of which caused real concerns with access for public safety vehicles. School busses have had a difficult challenge navigating the road; public works dedicates a lot of time and equipment to managing surface conditions and run-off that endangers structures. It is in our best interest to upgrade this road and bring it into the town road system. The other road, Edgelake, is failing. The road bed has deteriorated such that it is unstable and could soon be declared unsafe.*

P 232 P&R What is the income?

Does that go into their budget or back into the general fund?

*\$210,000 in revenue estimates are in the general fund (this budget) for parks & recreation programs that are not self-supporting.*

*About another \$650,000 in revenues go into fund 175 (parks & recreation special revenue) which is offset by \$650,000 in program expenses. This fund accounts for the self-supported programs (supported by user fees). Any excess funds go into the general fund.*

P 254 Library increase of 70,195 or 5.83% why?

*The annual revenue from the Hawley Trust is based upon a formula applied by the trustee, J.P. Morgan. More specifically, the trustee applies a factor to the prior year-end balance which is then further discounted to arrive at the annual revenue figure. Refer to the e-mail correspondence pasted below between Bill McCarthy, Board Treasurer of the Library, and Carter Haynes, Relationship Manager for J.P. Morgan.*

*Bill,*

*I am following up on our conversation regarding the letter that I sent to Brenda on November 20. I informed you that we are distributing 70% of the annual, required minimum distribution and that is how we arrived at the \$3,124.87 in the letter. After the private foundation tax return is prepared, we may find that we did not distribute enough and there may be an additional distribution required. If that is the case, I will notify the library of the additional payment that will have to be made before October 31, 2016.*

*As an exception, our management has agreed to increase the distribution percentage to 75% for this fiscal year. My letter indicated the December 15, 2015 payment will be \$3,124.87, but at 75%, the amount will be \$3,379.87. Again, the reason why we don't do 100% of the calculated RMD is because we don't want to distribute too much*

*and erode the purchasing value of the trust. We went over what was required during the last fiscal year by a small amount and we don't want to continue that practice.*

*I would be happy to discuss this with you if you find there are more questions from your board. Please call or email me directly.*

*Carter*

New Milford is the largest town in CT with about the same population as Newtown. Why does Newtown Budget for their police budget about 1.5 million more than New Milford?

*Although New Milford has approximately the same population, contractual obligations are less in New Milford, ex. Newtown's Top Step Patrolman Salary is almost \$5,500.00 more than theirs. Additionally, the Newtown Police Budget has shared school security cost (SSOs), equipment cost, and shared security cost for the Fairfield Hills Complex. These total shared costs equate to a combined amount of \$344,000. In conclusion a complete analysis of the comparisons cannot be completed without having intimate knowledge of New Milford PD's pension and medical cost, these cost considerably impact Newtown PD's budget, reflected in this year's increases. Lastly, New Milford is part of Litchfield County, which has historically lagged behind Fairfield County's labor cost for town and municipal employees.*

*The Chief has his own answer but I (Fred) would add the following: New Milford is only slightly larger geographically than Newtown, but Newtown has almost 100 miles more to patrol than New Milford (275 miles v. 175 Miles).*

*Also, New Milford has 1 SRO, we have 2. That equates to a difference of about \$100,000*

The town used to hold an auction at the public works facility for excess or used town owned property. Is that still practiced? If so why are the used police cars included in this?

*As discussed at the Finance Board meeting our police vehicles are being traded in to a vendor supplying our new police cars. Due to the high mileage, in excess of 100,000 miles, and high idle time, the vehicles have a significantly reduced value. It is estimated that the idle time doubles the mileage estimate on the vehicles.*

*Past history and current trends indicate the amount obtained on our trade in is very competitive.*

*(Fred) We do not auction any vehicles anymore at the Town Garage to avoid any question of impropriety. Doing trade-ins takes the Town entirely out of the process of who gets our used vehicles. Years ago we were accused of fixing up a vehicle and then letting it go cheap in an auction. We are out of the auction business.*

Why do we still contract for private security at FFH @ \$56,000.per. yr?

*Private security at Fairfield Hills has steadily decreased over the past few years. And we anticipate more reductions in man-hours this coming year as well as more use of cameras and other technology. That plan has not been fully developed by the Chief yet, but is in progress. The demo of Canaan combined with the newly awarded STEAP grant with improved street lighting on Trades Lane further reduce the need for a physical presence of security personnel. I cannot yet put a number to the changes that will be made over the next 6 months or so.*

Given the state of the state's budget, just about guaranteeing a huge loss in revenue to all towns and cities in CT, and with the loss of GE, and possible loss soon of Duracell, and Aetna insurance, are there any large projects in the Park and Rec budget or capital that can be put off for one or two years until we get factual information on what we will receive from the state?



Why the increase in overtime for emergency communications? Are we under staffed?

*Under staffed by one full time position*

There are services that will, for no upfront cost, look at utilities bills and verify we are getting the appropriate rates and reductions as a municipality in exchange for a portion of the savings. Savings are found more often than you would think as providers are not always informed or upfront about eligibility. Has Newtown used such a service?

*We are currently looking at several buildings for possible rate changes that may prove beneficial. These rate notifications did come from Eversource. The Sustainable Energy Commission will have this review done on every building in Town including the schools. We are also in the process of a complete review of street lights both for the Town and the Borough for a switch to LEDs and future savings. We have proposals coming from a CCM vendor and Eversource.*

*(Bob) We have used a company to look at our phone bills. They did find savings.*

Police OT has significant increases. Is this a negotiated item? If not, then why the increases?

*Current contractual costs have increased our overtime expense. Also having a significant impact on our overtime cost is prisoner watches. Contractual changes in the last Dispatchers agreement shift the responsibility of prisoner watches to sworn officers. Although our supervisors attempt to mitigate this expense by releasing prisoners on bond or written promises to appear, and the use of extra personnel, staffing at time predicates the need to staff the watch on an overtime basis. These two items significantly contributed to the increase in that accounts line.*

Page 130 lists "on-going" ESU training, but it shows up as a new line item. What is this training and where is the past cost captured?

*ESU training is essentially training on SWAT team protocols and strategies. We partner with Brookfield in a Danbury-led program. The costs are mostly start-up and reflect a mix of materials, equipment, and training. The costs should reduce by half next year.*

Fire has a part time purchasing agent (pg 139). What is the scope of this position? Do the savings of having a part time purchasing agent offset the line item? Would a town purchasing agent absorb this cost?

*This position does all the purchasing for the five different firehouses...including writing specs, soliciting vendors, negotiating purchases and contracts, etc... There is a very broad scope of materials and equipment that is purchased – everything from firehose to firetrucks... The purchasing agent position was added to the BOFC structure many years ago as a cost-savings strategy. Prior to that, each fire department bought its own stuff- no consistency across fire stations, no economy of scale, no collaboration...*

*The Fire Departments are all volunteer agencies, all 501c3 organizations. They are not departments under the Board of Selectmen – but are considered 'agencies' that we fund (in part) for their service to the community. Each fire station generates additional funds to purchase items (including engines and tankers) through fund raisers and community solicitation.*

*I do not know whether a municipal purchasing agent would take on the role of purchasing for the fire stations. That would have to be carefully evaluated – so as to not move too quickly into an area that might suggest a paid Fire Department (fully under the BOS budget).*