

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
11 RYE STREET
EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06088**

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, March 22, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Members Present: Jason Bowsza, Joseph Pellegrini, Danelle E. Godeck, Jerilyn Corso, and Kathleen Pippin
Members Absent: Marie DeSousa
Alternates Present: Paulette Broder and Sharon Tripp
Alternate Absent: None
Others: Catherine Cabral, Denise Menard, Alan Baker, Dale Nelson, Richard Pippin, James Richards, Chris Mickey, Teresa Kane, Cathy Simonelli, William Schultz, William Raber, Nichole DeSousa, Kathy Bilodeau, Carol Madore, Chief Edward DeMarco, Joseph Sauerhoufer, Richard Morrison, and others
Press: Kate Carey-Trull (Patch.com)

I. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Bowsza called the Public Hearing to Order at 7:31 p.m., in the East Windsor Town Hall.

Chairman Jason Bowsza thanked everyone for attending the Public Hearing and reminded anyone who would like to address the Board after the presentations, a sign-up sheet was on the conference table and it was asked to write their name and address and limit their comments to three minutes.

II. Presentation of Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2012-2013

a. Board of Selectmen

Ms. Denise Menard, First Selectwoman, addressed the Board. She had copies of the Power Point presentation she would be referring to during her discussion, which is similar to the presentation she gave to the Board of Finance a week ago. This is the same format which has been used in the past several years when presenting the budget to the public. She indicated the overall increase for the town government is 3.25% increase. Those areas where some increases have been requested are related to emergency and retirement anticipation. The budget presented is a level services budget and no new employees have been added. The next slide in her presentation

showed the departments requests. She gave a brief description of each category and indicating the percentages of increase or decrease, which were as follows:

- Town Government -1.38%
- Public Safety 0.94%
- Public Works 4.78%
- Sanitation & Waste Removal 2.38%
- Conservation of Health -9.06%
- Recreation 0.10%
- Insurance & Benefits 42.52%
- Miscellaneous 30.05%
- Capital Improvement Plan 4.08%
- Debt Service 4.08%

She began discussion the request of the CIP Committee for the budget, which is \$20,000 less than originally submitted. The CIP is requesting funding for projects totaling \$631,620. She indicated that recently monies which were placed in CNR have been reviewed. Those monies are left over from projects which have been completed. After the review, monies which were remaining were reassigned to fund projects which were previously requested. The list of those projects and transfers were presented to the Board of Selectmen recently and approved. The next step in the process is going to the Board of Finance for their approval.

The last slide which was discussed is the total of the proposed budget. She indicated the total proposed is \$14,204,274 or an increase of \$469,059 or 3.42% increase.

b. Board of Education

Dr. Teresa Kane, Superintendent of Schools and Chairman Chris Mickey addressed the Board. They began their presentation by using a Power Point Presentation, copies of which were supplied to all Board Members and members of the audience. Mr. Mickey indicated the entire budget presentation for the Board of Education is available on the website.

In the beginning of the presentation, Mr. Mickey and Dr. Kane explained that the East Windsor School System is responsible for 1,285 students and 247 employees. A breakdown of the students and teachers per school, Board of Education Offices, full time personnel and part-time tutors, paraprofessionals, substitutes and others. The Board was reminded that there has been a new leadership team since July, 2011 which includes administrators at the high school and elementary school.

Dr. Kane explained what the East Windsor Public Schools have been implementing in 2011-2012. Those initiatives are:

- Started full-day kindergarten

- Eliminated the pre-kindergarten waiting list
- Started a breakfast program at Broad Brook Elementary
- Creating a parent portal
- Implementing a Point-of-Sales system for breakfast and lunch programs
- Started “turnaround work” for district improvement
- Providing counseling for student at no cost to the district
- Providing social/emotional/behavioral supports to students and teachers
- Redesigning the website
- Upgrading the network
- Started Community Newsletters
- Will update the EWPS Strategic Plan
- Created a new teacher evaluation system
- Realign the business functions of the district to support Strategic Plan
- Reviewing and updating the district safety procedures
- Adopted an online employment process

Chairman Chris Mickey began explaining the budget parameters from the Town. The Town has requested that the budget presented is a level service budget and the budget being presented reflects the needs and priorities of the district’s children. Mr. Mickey showed the next slide which was entitled “Budget Guidelines 2012-13 (FY 13), Town Parameters: Level Service, The Breakdown”. This slide showed the current budget breakdown, including utilities, personnel, and expenses. The Town funded 2011-2012 was in the amount of \$19,512,262, the Town fund request for 2012-2013 is in the amount of \$20,777,951 which is an increase of \$1,265,689 or 6.5%.

Dr. Kane gave details on what the district and each individual school plans to do in 2012-2013. She began discussing the district’s goals which were:

- Continue District Improvement Initiatives
- Provide support for integrating technology in classroom instruction
- Pilot the Common Core Curriculum Pre-K to 12 in Language Arts and Math
- Implement new Strategic Plan
- Implement new teacher evaluation system
- Create an internal accountability system
- Engage families and the community in supporting the instructional focus

She touched briefly on the goals of Broad Brook Elementary, East Windsor Middle School and East Windsor High School.

A brief discussion was held.

Chairman Bowsza indicated he has asked Board Member Joseph Pellegrini to explain the MBR requirements in relation to the Board of Education. Mr. Pellegrini indicated the 2010-2011 budgeted appropriation including supplemental

appropriations should be \$19,610,314. The SFSF funds included in the 2010-2011 budgeted appropriation was \$782,109, giving a total 2010-2011 budgeted appropriation less district SFSF funds is \$18,828,205. The amount of SFSF funds given to the Town is \$782,109. The 2011-2012 budgeted appropriation including supplemental appropriations is \$19,406,450, taking the maximum resident student deduction of \$98,052, total MBR for 2011-2012 is \$19,512,262. A shortage of \$105,812 is for the 2011-2012 MBR. explained the SFSF funds, which was stimulus money which represents 14% total of the ECS Grant which is \$782,000. The Town last year originally appropriated \$19,406,000. According to the State of Connecticut, the actual number should have been \$19,610,314, to be in MBR compliance.

Chairman Bowsza indicated the Boards have taken the appropriate actions and has complied with the State of Connecticut Board of Education requirements.

Chairman Bowsza began to discuss the town's revenues. He discussed the projected revenue for fiscal year 2012-2013. He indicated it is projected the Town will receive revenue from the state and local in the amount of \$6,736,835, and the amount which will be needed to be raised in taxes is \$28,245,390 which is an increase of \$1,863,512. Therefore, the proposed mill rate to support the proposed budgets would be 25.87 or an increase of 1.49.

At this point of the hearing, Chairman Bowsza indicated that if anyone from the public would like to comment on the proposals, they may do so.

Mr. Richard Morrison, 29 Willow Circle addressed the Board. He indicated that his home is assessed at a very high rate, which is approximately 35% to 45% higher than the value of the home presently. He has not been able to sell it due to the economic conditions. His taxes have increased 5.5% last year and 10% the year before and due to the poor economy do not understand how the taxes can keep increasing. Surrounding towns are not asking for such high increases and some towns are actually lowering taxes. He suggested everyone sharpens their pencils and give the tax payer a break.

No one else volunteered to speak.

III. Adjournment

The public hearing was closed at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary