

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
11 RYE STREET
BROAD BROOK, CONNECTICUT 06016**

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, April 3, 2014, 6:00 p.m., East Windsor High School

DRAFT DOCUMENT – These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting

Members Present: Joseph Pellegrini (Chairman), Jerilyn Corso, Cindy Herms, Robert Little, Robert Maynard, and Sharon Tripp.
Members Absent: All members were present.
Alternate Present:
Alternate Absent: Paulette Broder and Gilbert Hayes
Others: **Town Treasurer:** Kim Lord; **First Selectman:** Denise Menard; **Selectmen:** Jim Richards; **Board of Education:** Chris Mickey, Chairman; Cathy Simonelli, Secretary.

Press: Gail Montany, Journal Inquirer.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Pellegrini called the Meeting to Order at 6:04 p.m.

II. Time and Place of Meeting:

East Windsor High School Cafeteria, 76 South Main Street (Route 5), East Windsor, CT.

III. Appointment of Alternates:

Chairman Pellegrini noted all members are present this evening.

IV. Public Participation:

Chairman Pellegrini requested anyone wishing to speak at the Public Hearing please sign up on the pad provided at the table.

Chairman Pellegrini opened discussion by thanking everyone for attending this Public Hearing. He reported the purposed of this Public Hearing is to get ideas from the public regarding the proposed budget – if it should stay as proposed, or if should be adjusted. Chairman Pellegrini noted the Board of Finance has not yet touched any of the proposed budgets; they will take public input under consideration when working through the Budget Workshops which will begin on Monday, April 7th.

Chairman Pellegrini clarified that the Budget proposals under discussion tonight are budget requests for the Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015, which begins July 1, 2014 and runs through June 30, 2015.

Chairman Pellegrini opened discussion to the public.

Sal Saitta, 17 Old Barn Road, Coleman Farms Condominiums, representing East Windsor Condominium Association (EWCA): Mr. Saitta and his assistants provided the Board with the following documents:

- EWCA presentation, East Windsor Public Hearing 2014-2015 Budget Development (prepared February 12, 2014)
- EWCA Position Paper
- Mr. Saitta's written comments, Board of Finance Presentation, April 3, 2014 – Points of Emphasis

Mr. Saitta's comments addressed the EWCA's request that the Town of East Windsor reimburse the condominium owners for the cost of the maintenance of fire hydrants and street lights located within each condominium complex. Mr. Saitta felt the same services are provided for other residents, and that the condominium owners pay taxes at the same rate as other residents. Mr. Saitta then ran through a summary of meetings at which the condo association and elected officials discussed the requests.

Cathy Simonelli, 71 Depot Street: Mrs. Simonelli noted the Board of Education (BOE) is requesting a budget increase of 3.97%, which is actually a 2.7% increase – the remaining increase is due to the decrease in funding from the State. Mrs. Simonelli also clarified that the BOE budget also includes funding for a School Resources Officer.

Mrs. Simonelli noted the school is starting to see improved results in test grades; the BOE has done a lot of work changing programs to achieve those improvements. She suggested it would be a shame to cut the programs and lose the success already achieved. Mrs. Simonelli suggested if the BOE doesn't receive that budget the doors of the school won't shut but cuts would have to be made. She urged the Board of Finance to be cautious with cuts.

John Simonelli, 71 Depot Street: Mr. Simonelli suggested the Town has been stuck in a rut of 2% budget increases after referendums for eight or nine years. The Town is no different than a house; from one year to the next the cost of things goes up. The question is: is the proposed budget enough? If this budget goes back to a 2% increase the Town breaks even; there is nothing new provided. If the operating cost goes up more than 2% then the BOE is screwed. Mr. Simonelli suggested the Town can't pass 2% budgets forever; this 5.2% increase is fair after the belt-tightening over the past years. Mr. Simonelli suggested we really need to start spending money on the Town.

An unidentified resident requested that updated/current Budget Workshop information be added to the Town website; he referenced incorrect information is currently shown under the Financial Information – Proposed Budget Timeline.

Lois Noble, 81 Wells Road: Ms. Noble referenced the condominium association members request for reimbursement of the cost of street lights and fire hydrant maintenance, she questioned what would have to be cut from the budget to pay for that cost? She suggested the condos wouldn't have been built in Town without a variance; we all pay taxes and the condominium owners knew what they were buying. Ms. Noble reiterated she would like to know what would be cut from the budget to reimburse the condominium owners; she also questioned the budget amount for this reimbursement. First Selectman Menard reported she recalled a figure of approximately \$20,000. Ms. Noble calculated that that figure spread over the number of condos in East Windsor would be \$3/condo owner/month.

Chairman Pellegrini noted there were no other names on the list; he queried if there were any other people who would like to speak? No one responded.

Chairman Pellegrini again thanked everyone for attending the Public Hearing, and he thanked those offering comments.

VI. Adjournment:

MOTION: To **ADJOURN** this Meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Little moved/Corso seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted: _____
Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Finance