



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Board of Finance
BOE - Budget Workshop Minutes
April 9, 2018 – Town Hall – 7:00

Members Present: R. Tarlov, R. Lepore, T. Kane, M. Egan, A. Migliaccio and A. Bisbikos
Board of Education Present: B. Bernier, R. Besaw, M. Tomasi and M. Bylone
Others Present: First Selectman A. Shilosky, CFO M. Cosgrove, BOS D. Mizla, Superintendent Conway, Tax Collector M. Wyatt, Citizens who spoke: M. Hayes, L. Dimock, clerk J. Campbell and other citizens

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COLCHESTER, CT
2018 APR 11 AM 10:14
M. Hayes

1. Call to Order

R. Tarlov opened the workshop at 7:00 pm.

2. Schools Budget – Review and Discussion

R. Tarlov stated that the increase in mill rate would be 3.65% if budgets are accepted as is. R. Tarlov is trying to justify decide the revenue that will be used to estimate the mill rate. He would like the BOE members to be involved in the discussion. B. Bernier feels that at this point revenue cannot be justified at this point. M. Egan agreed with B. Bernier, we don't know what the State will present for numbers.

Dr. Conway handed out a packet in response to the questions BOF presented to the BOE after their budget presentation.

Beyond the packet, A. Bisbikos asked what the BOE is doing to address security issues. B. Bernier stated that an audit was preformed recently. Improvements are being made. Some items are already added into budget and have been in previous budgets as well. Town received a grant to address security issues. R. Tarlov feels that the budget presented by BOE is responsible and responsive. R. Tarlov asked the BOE how you communicate the increase in mill rate to the tax payer. B. Bernier stated that the BOE is maintaining services as responsible as can be. Revenue is still unknown, and we are unsure of what Hartford would do. M. Bylone stated that these are essential services. M. Tomasi stated that the loss of a reading specialist has shown its effects already with low test scores. The hope is that the impact can be reduced once someone is hired with the new budget. B. Bernier stated a committee had been formed to further look into consolidation or town sharing to reduce cost. R. Besaw stated that everyone within the school system is "looking in the couch cushions" to save money any way possible. In addition to the lower test scores is has been said that there is a 1 in 7 chance a child has to catch up if they cannot read by the 3rd grade. School has been innovative on finding ways to save money such as replacing knobs on lockers with old chairs. The 1% reduction in budget is hard for the BOE to face. A. Bisbikos asked the BOE how the speakers/presenters for the in school fieldtrips were funded. Superintendent Conway stated that the PTO does a phenomenal job with supporting the schools. Along with the PTO the schools do utilize volunteers as well.

3. Citizen Comments

L. Dimock asked the BOF to send the budgets as is to vote.

M. Hayes thanks the BOE for reinstating the reading teacher and listening to the concerns of the audience members from a previous BOE meeting. M. Hayes also asked if the Norwich tuition off sets those that are sent out for placement elsewhere. M. Cosgrove explained that the two monies are totally different. Tech schools, only transportation is paid. VO-AG, transportation and tuition. Magnet schools, some tuition is paid and no transportation. R Tarlov added that in the proposed budget the tuition being paid out is slightly higher than the Norwich tuition coming in. A study done last year by R. Besaw estimated the marginal cost for each Norwich student was between 1000 and 1500, but had to make a lot of assumptions. The same is true for the reductions when a student leaves and we pay tuition out of district. He also asked the BOE if there was a plan in place for the \$1000 advertising budget. The BOE stated that there was an overall plan to create informational handouts for when Mr. Peel goes to the regional school fair.

4. Schools Budget –Discussion and Possible Action

R. Tarlov stated that when the budget schedule was created there were additional workshops in the schedule, if needed. At this point he would like to use one of the dates to discuss what we need to go to referendum. For the time being, we will have a workshop Tuesday.

5. Citizen Comments

None

6. Adjournment

R. Tarlov closed the workshop at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanie Campbell, Clerk

Attachments: BOF Mill Rate Chart & BOE Responses