

CORRESPONDENCE: BOF Meeting 06/15/2020

To: Colchester BoF
From: James D. McNair III
Date: June 7, 2020

Re: Vote on BoE Budget proposal

I have followed the various changes to the BoE budget before you take your vote. I would like to offer my insights that you might find useful. In my past, my training was to review budgets. Financial officers would offer their estimates. My job was to find out how fat of a pencil was used to develop those estimates. I understood no one wanted to get burnt by the unexpected. Yet, some financial officers were overly conservative.

I can say based upon reviewing the audits, our CFO tends to use a fat pencil. This seems especially true since 2014 regardless of the number of referendums that reduced the BoE budget. As a result, I see no reason why this year's budget estimates are will be any less conservative. Therefore, I tend to tune out any comments "not one dollar can come out of this budget".

adoption date	# refs	yes	no	total	BOE surplus
6/27/2006	3	1,576	1,511	3,087	\$80,085
9/25/2007	4	1,989	1,404	3,393	\$15,918
5/13/2008	1	1,144	429	1,573	\$1,088
5/10/2009	1	1,440	683	2,123	\$65,922
5/11/2010	1	1,245	1,177	2,422	\$40,824
5/11/2011	1	852	827	1,679	\$30,013
6/28/2012	3	1,637	1,210	2,847	\$56,602
5/7/2013	1	1,211	1,163	2,374	\$41,580
6/24/2014	3	1,399	1,395	2,794	\$203,792
6/24/2015	4	1,394	940	2,334	\$111,665
6/2/2016	2	1,657	1,210	2,867	\$145,882
6/13/2017	1	1,571	1,448	3,019	\$186,648
6/19/2018	1	1,277	651	1,928	\$152,297(a)
6/11/2019	1	1,100	757	1,857	\$182,045

(a) \$977,297 less \$825,000 contingency adjustment

Second, the public should understand the BoE budget is an estimate. Budget cuts are really reductions in the estimates. To say cuts will reduce services and programs is not necessarily true.

Lastly, I feel it is necessary to commend Chairman Tarlov for his leadership, courage, and integrity. As an ex- BoF member and private citizen, we did not always agree. Yet, my respect for him grew over the years. He always kept an open ear. He always tried to find a diplomatic solution for compromises. He always looked out for the best interest of the whole community and not just some.

June 5, 2020

Board of Finance, Colchester
C/O Robert Tarlov
RE: Colchester Youth Services

Board of Finance,

As a Colchester resident and parent of two students (one in high school and one in middle school), I feel that Youth Services is extremely valuable to this community. Both of my children participate and look forward to the programs/ services offered. They have enjoyed the fun activities/trips as well as benefited from the programs that allow them to give back to the community. Further, Youth Services grants them the opportunity to connect with friends, make new friends and gain new experiences.

With that said, I would like to see a continuation of the amount of programs offered and strongly encourage the board to renew a budget that will preserve the positions of both full-time Program Coordinators.

Best regards,

Kia Poindexter Barnett

From: I.pasternak <lpasternak@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2020 1:32 PM
To: Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Town and BoE budget

I am in favor of passing both budgets as they with the slight increases to both budgets.

Linda Pasternak
636 Westchester Rd.
Colchester, Ct.

From: LYNN <lymagoo@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2020 3:00 PM
To: Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: BOE budget

Board of Finance,

Thank you for your service to the town of Colchester. I am writing to please ask you to vote through the .4 BOE budget. We have lived in town since 2001. My husband and I have always voted yes in support of the town and BOE budgets. We are disappointed we do not get to vote this year. However we sincerely hope you take our voice, and the many yes voters into consideration.

Please vote yes to a .4 increase. We need a budget soon so that our Superintendent and Administrators can begin planning for what lies ahead.

Sincerely,

Lynn Goodwin

From: Jim&Liza Ringuette <jimandlizaringuette@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 5, 2020 5:06 PM

To: Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>

Subject: In support of the .4% increase to the BOE budget

Good afternoon,

I am writing in support of the .4% increase to the BOE budget. During this stressful and very uncomfortable time, I have witnessed our dear teachers rise to the challenge of providing much needed long distance support and education to our youth, many of whom are especially vulnerable due to the isolating nature of this pandemic. Please do not put any additional burdens on our educators by further cutting the budget. Colchester Public Schools are not only dedicated to the education of our youth, but are also a cornerstone to the well being of Colchester's youth. The work of our educators and staff can not succeed without support and proper funding from our tax payers.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Ringuette

9 O'Connell Road

From: James McNair <jmcnair3@comcast.net>

Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 6:33 PM

To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

Subject: Suggestion for meeting

Rob,

It will be helpful for the BOF to issue a document at your meeting the 15th. While a lot of information was discussed, it's hard to follow and write notes.

Upon approval how much actual belt tightening occurred?

How much in one shot savings, debt service reductions and gfb transfers covered largest labor increase in history.

What would be mill rate increase in following year once one shots no longer there?

The public needs to understand we are not getting a free lunch for no tax increase next FY.

Be well,

James

From: johnbarn <johnbarn@comcast.net>

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 8:29 AM

To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

Subject: approve of budget

I understand that there is no public vote/referendum on the budget this year. However, I just want to let it be known that I support the Town and Education budgets as drafted.

Thank you.

John Barnowski

From: Marycia Stefanowicz <maryciapt@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 10:55 AM
To: Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: In support of the education budget

Board of Finance

I am a Colchester resident writing in support of the .4% mill rate increase for the Education budget. In these changing times I feel the last thing that is needed is cuts to the school. Children have had enough things cut from their lives these past few months. Let's allow them to get back their school work and activities with as much support as needed during these changing times. Let's make sure the administrators and teachers have what they will need to provide quality education and after school activities under possible new guidelines. If I were to vote I would vote yes for both the Education and Town budget.

Thank you for your time.

Kind Regards

Marycia Malloy

From: HAROLD CLARK <harleyfrostysnowman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 14, 2020 7:33 AM
To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Budget

Dear Chairman as a Tax Payer in Colchester for MY Life I would Request a Zero Tax Increase on Both BOE and the BOS with NO Salary Increase

Sincerely Harold B Clark

From: Lynn Stewart <lwarrenstewart@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 14, 2020 10:32 AM
To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>
Cc: Dave Stewart <tachikara@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: Budget Vote

Dear Chairman Tarlov,

As taxpayers in Colchester for 20+ years, we strongly believe that this is NOT a year for a budget or mill rate increase of any kind.

We have three children who have been (are) in the Colchester school system. One is entering her junior year of college, one is graduating as part of the class of 2020, and the third is moving into high school. Over the years, we have been supporter of the BOE budgets, recognizing the need for an excellent education system. We have also been supporters of previous town budgets, knowing that a well run town and infrastructure is vital for the well-being of our community.

That said, this is not a year we can stand behind a budget increase for either the town or the schools. We believe strongly that there should be a ZERO increase in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

We ask that you please take this into consideration as you move towards a budget vote.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards,
Lynn and Dave Stewart

From: John Maldonado <johnlynn09@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, June 14, 2020 8:27 PM
To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Colchester Budget

As a concerned citizen of Colchester, I am urging you that there should be Zero increase to the upcoming budget until the town residents can vote on this!

Sincerely,
John Maldonado
Sullivan Rd. Colchester

From: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 9:53 AM
To: jmcnair3@comcast.net <jmcnair3@comcast.net>
Cc: Dawn LePage <dlepage@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: why was my June 7th letter not included in the June 8th meeting minutes

It was in the agenda package, but I forgot to put Correspondence on the agenda. As it was a special meeting, nothing could be added. It will be included in tonight's minutes.

Rob Tarlov, Chairman, Board of Finance
860-608-4293

From: jmcnair3@comcast.net <jmcnair3@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 5:31 AM
To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: why was my June 7th letter not included in the June 8th meeting minutes

Rob,

I noticed it was not included in the minutes posted in the unapproved June 8th meeting minutes section. Please make sure a motion is made to do so.

Thanks,

James

From: brian.t.smith199@gmail.com <brian.t.smith199@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 9:33 AM

To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

Subject: This Evening's Budget Vote

Dear Chairman Tarlov,

I have missed the last few Board of Finance budget workshop meetings due to conflicting calls on my schedule. As I understand that the Board of Finance will be meeting this evening to vote on the proposed budgets, and as I have another call scheduled this evening which may, again, cause a conflict, I wanted to reach out to share my thoughts.

As I understand, the town side of the budget stands at a \$0 increase and, while I do not view a “no progress” budget as desirable, I am happy to see that the two positions sought by the fire company remain in the budget. I wish to let you and your colleagues on the board know that I am strongly in favor of approving this budget.

With regard to the Board of Education budget, I am also strongly in favor of approving it as it presently stands. I do not support any further cuts to this budget. I urge you and all of your colleagues to accept it in the spirit of compromise from which it has developed, and send to the town a message of unity which we can all use at this difficult time.

Please accept my thanks for all your efforts, and convey them as well to everyone on the Board of Finance and within both the Town and Board of Education staffs who have worked so hard under trying circumstances this year.

Respectfully,

Brian

Brian T. Smith
12 Broadway
Colchester, CT 06415

860.617.8959
brian.t.smith199@gmail.com