

Board of Finance Correspondence for June 3 – 2nd of 2 documents

From: Jeffrey W. Standish <jeffreystandish@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 1:12 PM

To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

Subject: Funding of two new FF's

Dear BOF Chairman,

The attached letter is to replace my earlier email which did not come out properly due to a technical glitch. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please contact me with any questions or concerns. Stay well!

Respectfully,

Jeffrey W. Standish

151 Standish Road
Colchester, CT 06415

BOF,

I would like to extend my support for the funding of two (2) new Firefighter/EMT's. I believe this can be achieved by considering several options. 1.) Entertain freezing salaries/concessions or 2) removing a five month unfilled youth service position to get to a zero budget and include the two firefighter / EMT's. The Firefighters are needed as the national decline in volunteers continues to plummet. Colchester is no exception to this. Time is very limited to most people, especially those with families making it difficult to maintain an active role as a volunteer while meeting all of the required trainings and standards necessary to do the job. We must continue to support the volunteers and focus on retaining them as well. The two new positions will allow for better coverage and to supplement the volunteer force.

I have always supported the need for additional manpower within the FD. I have been involved in the fire service in several different communities as both a volunteer and a career Fire Lieutenant/Paramedic for over 25 years and have witnessed a big shift of available staff in the volunteer ranks. I am fully aware of our current fiscal situation on the federal, state and local levels; however, public safety is and has always been at the forefront of our ongoing situations we face every day.

Public safety and critical staffing needs cannot be pushed to the side due to the current pandemic and financial struggles we all face. These two additional positions were needed much before the pandemic began and I know Colchester could use a few more firefighter/EMT as well! Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions or concerns. I thank you all for the tough job you are doing and look forward to the future of our beautiful town as we all work through these trying times.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey W. Standish
Colchester Resident

To the Colchester Board of Finance,

My name is Duane Palmes and I am the co-owner of Colchester Pizza. I have been a business owner for over thirty years and come in contact with costumers and business owners of this community on a constant basis. All operating businesses, including my own, have seen a loss in monthly income since the beginning of the pandemic. There are many businesses that are wondering if they will ever open up again while others have closed up shop for good. Our customers are also feeling the pinch. Some have lost their jobs while others have seen a reduction in their pay.

Our community is tightening its belt and so should we. There should be a salary freeze across the board. The optics are poor when the First Selectman is pushing for a salary increase when the people she is supposed to lead are struggling. We should also not be holding onto a youth services position that hasn't been filled in five months. That position is not a priority during the pandemic.

In full disclosure, my wife and I have also been volunteers in the local fire department. We realize that there is a shortage of volunteers and that is why I am in full support of the two firemen being put in the budget, but at a zero budget. A budget increase without the say of the voter is unacceptable. Do not take advantage of the situation to meet an agenda. Please do not use the rainy day fund on salaries; they should be used for one time expenditures as written in your policy. You will need those funds to make up the shortfalls coming from the state and for the ancient fire equipment that are long overdue for replacement.

Sincerely,

Duane Palmes

From: Matthew Doucette <matt71896@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 11:52 AM

To: Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

Subject:

Dear Colchester BOF,

It's been brought to my attention that the town is considering hiring two extra firemen. I support this decision because Colchester is an ever growing community. Right now we are faced with a gruesome 30%+ and growing unemployment rate. We must do our share in keeping men and women employed in our town for its wellbeing. With any hiring we must consider if this decision will effect our budget. Thats why I'm proposing that we look into getting rid of any unprioritized vacancies in other departments. Perhaps we need to start with a zero budget, and go from there. Its been suggested that a salary freeze could save Colchester some much needed funds, and there are willing participants.

Thank you for your time and consideration
Matthew Doucette, RTC member

Sent to Townbudget@colchesterct.gov - also sent to BOFChair email on week of May 25.

From: Kim Lewis <kimlewis826@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 12:39 AM
To: Colchester Town Budget
Subject: Budget

I support the budget. Please vote yes.

Kim Lewis

From: LYNN <lymagoo@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 12:09 AM
To: Colchester Town Budget
Subject: BOE budget

Board of Finance members,

Thank you for your service to our town. I am writing today to ask you to please vote for the .4 increase. My husband and I would have voted yes for a 2.99 increase and the 1.43. We are disappointed that it has gone as low as .4.

Please do not go to 0. When this pandemic ends, and it will, we need our school system to be strong. Any and all cuts effect our children. Please don't ask the yes voters to compromise any more than we already have.

Please vote yes to the .4 increase.

Sincerely,

Lynn Goodwin