



**TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 3, 2019
UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Councilor James Govoni, Councilor Donald Jepsen, Councilor Black-Burke, Councilor Joseph McAuliffe, Councilor Richard O'Reilly, Deputy Mayor Jody Terranova, Councilor Michael Tustin and Councilor Kenneth Wilkos.

2) BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board of Education (BOE) President, Leonard Lockhart; BOE Vice-President, David Furie; Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Craig Cooke; and BOE Business Manager, Danielle Batchelder presented the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2020.

Leonard Lockhart began the presentation by stating the mission of the Windsor Public Schools is "to develop the genius of every child and create life-long learners." They then presented the proposed FY 20 budget, with the following highlights:

- The proposed FY 20 budget represents an increase of \$1,844,561, or 2.67% over 2018/2019. 2.2% of this increase is due to fixed costs.
- Estimated Revenues include \$11,547,663 from the Educational Cost Sharing Grant, \$1,500,000 from Special Education Excess Cost & Tuition, and \$582,729 from the Alliance Grant among others.
- Enrollment is increasing steadily each year. In October 2016 there were 3,186 students and in October 2018 there were 3,269 students enrolled. The public schools are seeing children return from magnet and private schools at the middle and high school levels.
- Contractual obligations for all six bargaining units increased \$1,025,224, but includes estimated retirement savings of \$300,000.
- This year will be year three of a five year transportation contract. There is an overall increase in transportation costs of \$268,515.
- The LED lighting upgrade will save the district between \$50,000 and \$70,000 per year.
- Program additions include various "additions with reductions" to staffing changes, a high school business teacher, a speech and language pathologist, major maintenance to the Sage Park science labs, elementary summer program expansions, and additional math tutors for grades K-2 totaling \$327,000 or 0.47% of the budget increase.
- Various additional requests were not factored into the budget in order to keep the budget increase low.
- The budget absorbs various costs that other towns have shifted onto parents including no charge Advanced Placement testing, PSAT test, SAT test preparation, athletics, music programs, and "late bus" transportation for after school in grades 6-12.



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Councilor McAuliffe thanked staff and BOE members for their presentation. He then asked for a breakdown of the 114 projected new students. He asked if some are returning from private and magnet schools or are they new to town. Dr. Cooke responded that, typically over a summer, we see 20-30 new students return from magnet schools and another 20 new students coming into the district. We presently have 3,300 students. The town also gets yearly projections of enrollment from the New England School Development Council.

Councilor Jepsen thanked staff and Board of Education members for the presentation and their work on teacher contracts this year. He was happy not to see any step freezes while still coming in with the 2.67% budget increase. He said that he was impressed and feels they did a great job.

Councilor Jepsen asked how many total speech pathologists work in the district. Ms. Batchelder responded that there are currently 8.5 FTEs (full-time equivalents) throughout the district. Dr. Cooke added that the district is required to give speech services to any child over three years old. Some of the earlier identification and work has not been happening as often because the "Birth to Three" program is struggling so that all falls on the district. He then stated that there are currently 160 applications for 30 seats for the preschool program for next year. The criteria via the state grant gives preference for special education, English language learners, and low-income students.

Councilor Jepsen asked about Special Education costs and noted that spending went up by \$1 million, yet reimbursement went down. Ms. Batchelder responded that the state uses a formula for the excess cost grant and the amount the town pays is about 78% of the excess cost. She also noted that each year the state tries to save money by pushing more and more of that cost back onto the towns.

Councilor Jepsen asked for more information regarding the elimination of a teaching position to add a fourth vice principal at the high school. Dr. Cooke responded that they had been seeing the effect of two previous reductions and the principal came to Dr. Cooke to say that they really needed the fourth vice principal in order to function. There was a neutral cost with the retirement of a teacher and there have been less complaints and concerns that reach the principal. More geofencing and technological work has been done like adding the "Stopit!" program. PPTs require administrators to sit in on them and there are a lot of special education students, so he feels that it is money well spent. They have been able to handle it on the teaching end because the position that was eliminated was a credit recovery teacher and other staff took that on.

Councilor O'Reilly asked if the Office of Family and Community Partnership is fully funded through the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Dr. Cooke replied that the \$300,000 they give covers the two salaries in that office and various initiatives. They have expanded the office to include registration and function as kind of a welcoming center.

Councilor O'Reilly asked why the two math tutors were not included in the actual budget. Mr. Lockhart stated that each board member had priorities and nobody really got everything that



they wanted, but priorities were met and the BOE was able to pass the budget 9-0. All BOE members felt it the budget had the right priorities, but may not have been as aggressive as some wanted.

Mr. Furie, Vice President of BOE, added that the approved budget was specifically what Dr. Cooke proposed in order to move the district forward and meet the needs of the children. He feels that the district hit it out of the park.

Councilor McAuliffe asked about transportation cost increases and if the contract is a fixed dollar amount for each year. Ms. Batchelder responded that Dattco's proposal had a set dollar amount for the 5 years. The town was coming off of a less expensive contract but really needed better quality and safety, so they worked with Dattco to stagger the increases. Ms. Batchelder said that the buses added GPS and cameras without any charge and they are committed to the district and are looking to stay. She stated that they are getting back what they are paying for.

Mayor Trinks asked if any of our speech pathologists go to the magnet schools. Dr. Cooke responded that they do not go to the magnet school. The schools bill the towns for these services. However, the speech pathologists do go to parochial schools.

Councilor Wilkos asked if there was any surplus from last year. He was reviewing the Human Resources staffing update document and there are many resignations and wondered if there are savings from getting new staff at lower pay. Dr. Cooke stated that each year over the last five years it has been built into the budget. There is a \$300,000 savings that was taken directly off of contractual costs in the budget.

Councilor Jepsen asked if there are in-house substitutes in addition to the Kelly services. Dr. Cooke responded that each building has its own substitutes that come in every day. It has been difficult to keep full-time substitutes in place considering the good job market.

Mayor Trinks concluded that the Council is satisfied with the budget and that the BOE would not have to return as scheduled for April 15th.

3) REVENUES

Jim Bourke, Finance Director for the Town of Windsor, provided a brief overview of the current fiscal year revenue projections and the proposed FY 20 revenue budget.

For Fiscal Year 2019, the adopted budget totals \$115,219,930. We are estimating revenues for this year to be approximately \$1.4M more than budgeted which assumes no use of opening cash.

- We expect to achieve favorable results in the overall general property tax category due to favorable collections from the current levy as well as interim motor vehicle taxes.



- Building permits, conveyance fees and interest income are expected to provide additional revenue as compared to budgeted amounts.
- State grants in lieu of taxes (as well as special education tuition from other towns) are also anticipated to provide additional revenue as compared to budgeted amounts.
- We anticipate collecting less revenue than budgeted from Special Education Excess Costs reimbursements.

For Fiscal Year 2020, the proposed General Fund revenue budget totals \$118,864,040. This budget is an increase of approximately 3.2% over the FY 19 adopted budget (\$3.6M). Most of the town's revenue will come from two main sources—the General Property Tax is expected to contribute approximately 85% and State Aid for Schools is expected to contribute 11%. We are proposing to use \$900,000 from opening cash, which is the same level as the current fiscal year.

- We are using guidance from Governor Lamont's proposed budget for our State Aid revenue categories.
- Interest income is projected to increase for FY 20 due to continuing positive interest rate projections.
- We are projecting increases in conveyance fees and cell tower lease revenues.
- We are projecting decreased revenue from Special Education Excess Cost reimbursements.
- Total non-tax revenue for FY 20 is \$19.3M or approximately 3.2% more than what was budgeted in FY 19.

Councilor Wilkos asked what the significant change in permit revenue was due to. Mr. Bourke responded that there was a large amount of revenue from the Great Pond and Verizon projects. Councilor Jepsen asked about more revenue from those. Town Manager Souza stated that the next phase of permitting will perhaps be in FY 21.

Councilor Jepsen asked about special education tuition revenue just over \$25,000. Mr. Bourke responded that they took a conservative approach as it has fluctuated quite a bit in the past 3-5 years. In FY 18 they budgeted \$100,000 and only actually received around \$46,000.

4) PUBLIC WORKS

Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer, gave the presentation. Whit Przech, Building and Facilities Manager and Ed Wagner, Public Works Operations Manager were also in attendance to present the FY 20 budget for the Department of Public Works and Engineering.

The mission of the Department of Public Works and Engineering is to manage and maintain the town's infrastructure, public facilities, equipment, parks, and the landfill to make a positive difference in the quality of life for residents and businesses of Windsor.

- FY 19 General Fund Expenditures are expected to be under budget by \$109,960 or 1.8% due to savings in Personal Services and Energy and Utility costs.



- The FY 20 General Fund budget reflects an increase of \$196,120 or 3.1% over FY 19 mostly due to Personal Services.

Councilor O'Reilly asked about overseeing the design work of the new public safety complex. Mr. Jarvis responded that they have hired an architect and it is not a significant drain on the department's staff or resources.

Councilor Jepsen asked about the \$50,000 that was left in an account that was used for leased space in a garage. Town Manager Souza responded that funds left over from the sale of the property on Mechanic Street have been used to cover utilities at 100 Addison Road over the past 18 months. The budget will start to use General Fund dollars and incrementally decrease the use of the 03 account or the Council can redirect the money as they see fit. Councilor Jepsen then asked if the utilities would be split between the Public Works and the Police Department. Town Manager Souza stated that ideally, they could implement submetering into the design in order to allow each department to pay the utilities from their own budgets.

5) LANDFILL ENTERPRISE FUND

Mark Goossens, Solid Waste Manager for the Town of Windsor, and Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer presented the proposed FY 20 budget for the Landfill Enterprise Funds with the following highlights:

- FY 19 revenue was budgeted at \$610,000 and is estimated to be \$798,200 due to interest earnings of \$350,000 and the receipt of a state grant for \$448,200.
- The FY 19 net loss was budgeted at \$1,379,330 and is estimated to come in under budget at \$1,354,920.
- FY 20 is budgeted to have a total revenue of \$699,000 between interest income and the state grant.
- FY 20 is budgeted to have a net loss of \$1,318,770 with an end of year balance of \$22,397,553 in retained earnings.

Councilor Jepsen asked what will happen to the 3.8 employees when the landfill is fully capped. Mr. Goossens responded that they may be used for post-closure maintenance of the site. Town Manager Souza stated that via the union contracts, those employees can move elsewhere in public works. There are a number of expected retirements, so the timing of it all will be a factor in what happens. Perhaps the town will hold a position vacant for a certain amount of time.

Councilor O'Reilly asked if the landfill gas is being used to generate electricity. Mr. Goossens responded that it is not. They applied to do that type of program, but the longer the waste is deposited, the less gas is emitted, so there is not enough flow to use.

Councilor McAuliffe noticed an improvement in odor issues. Mr. Goossens noted that this is also a function of less gases being emitted but also, there is a negative pressure in the landfill so if a cap was popped, air would go in and not out of the system.



Councilor Jepsen asked for an update on DEEP. Mr. Goossens stated that due to the natural iron in the soil being a concern, the DEEP approached the town with a concept that instead of leaching water into the wetlands, it will be piped out into the Farmington River.

Mayor Trinks asked if the \$22,397,553 in the retained earnings is enough to do all of the maintenance and closure work. Mr. Goossens responded that it's hard to predict, but it should be enough for quite a long time.

Councilor Wilkos asked if there was still a demo pit or if it is a transfer station only. Mr. Goossens replied that two of the five bays go offsite with bulky waste such as mattresses and sofas, but three of the bays are still deposited within the landfill because it is easy to crush and grade. They expect the air space to be depleted in the near future, between this July and September, depending on intake.

Councilor Tustin remembered last year speaking about potential savings using an alternative capping source that wasn't approved yet and wondered if we are now using that. Mr. Goossens responded that they are, and it's saving \$1.2 million in hauling and screening costs.

6) RESIDENT TRANSFER STATION ENTERPRISE FUND

Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer and Mark Goossens, Solid Waste Manager for the Town of Windsor, presented the proposed FY 20 budget for the Residential Transfer Station Enterprise Fund.

- The facility is open approximately 32 hours per week and is available exclusively to residents of Windsor and Bloomfield.
- The FY 20 budget proposes to continue all current services.
- Materials that can be recycled include electronics, scrap metals, textiles, appliances, propane tanks, tires, waste oils, leaves, brush, mattresses and paint products.
- The "take it or leave it" facility continues to be popular among residents.
- Total revenue for FY 19 will be approximately \$26,970 more than budgeted due to an increase in construction and demolition materials.
- Total expenses for FY 19 are estimated to be \$2,240 under budget due to lower disposal costs.
- The proposed FY 20 budget reflects a deficit of \$36,170 due to the one time installation expense for the new MSW compactor, which is designed to lower costs in the long term.

Councilor Jepsen asked if they will be raising rates. Town Manager Souza responded that they are proposing rate increases that can be found on page G-26 of the budget book.

Councilor Wilkos asked about the mattress and paint recycling program. Mr. Goossens replied that it is as strong as ever. Councilor Wilkos said it's significant not seeing these things on the side of the road, aesthetically it's nice.



7) ADULT DAY CARE ENTERPRISE FUND

Cheryl Rosenbaum, Director of Caring Connection, presented the proposed FY 20 budget for the Adult Day Care Enterprise Fund as follows:

The FY 20 proposed budget can be found on page S-9 in the budget book. The Caring Connection is a medical model center. The center offers patrons personal care, socialization, therapeutic recreation, and therapists as ordered by physicians.

- The FY 19 loss is predicted to be \$136,290 despite efforts in marketing and decreased expenditures in personal services.
- The FY 20 revenues are projected to be \$50,500 or 12.2% lower than FY 19 based on the current average daily census.
- Operating expenditures are expected to decrease by \$21,760 or 4.4% due to decreases in food costs and personal services.
- The FY 20 budget is projected to reflect a \$114,770 loss.

Councilor Wilkos asked how many clients are from Windsor. Ms. Rosenbaum responded that 38% are from Windsor. They also have clients from Hartford, Bloomfield, Windsor Locks, Vernon, East Granby, Granby, and South Windsor. Councilor Wilkos asked why people from other towns are attending in Windsor and what the average length of time clients continue the service is. Ms. Rosenbaum responded that more people are researching and finding the facility and the only other town that has an adult day care is Vernon, but one client from Vernon still chose Windsor. She also stated that the oldest client has been there since 2009. A few have attended since 2011 with the large majority of clients being there from 2-4 years.

Councilor O'Reilly asked how revenue is received. Ms. Rosenbaum responded that currently, it is a 50% split between self-pay and Connecticut Community Care Inc. (CCCI) clients. Councilor O'Reilly asked how they are charged. Ms. Rosenbaum responded that self-pay is per day and Medicaid is different. Town Manager Souza added that CCCI is stable with slight increases and private pay costs about \$81.60 per day with a proposed increase to \$85 and a half-day increase from \$50 to \$55.

Ms. Rosenbaum noted that in a recent report, the average day care charge has gone up 9.5% and the half day has risen 8.6%. The proposed rates will be a bit lower. Ms. Rosenbaum sees this as an attraction to people seeking the program. Councilor O'Reilly asked how the new rate was determined. Ms. Rosenbaum responded that she called local programs to do a comparison and proposed a reasonable rate.

Councilor McAuliffe asked how many individuals they are serving now. Ms. Rosenbaum responded that they have 34 in the census right now.

Councilor Jepsen noted that if the program were eliminated, the town would still be on the hook for \$106,000 but for \$126,770, the program could continue for another year. Deputy Mayor Terranova added that if the program closed there would also be unemployment costs.



Mayor Trinks asked how many square feet the Caring Connection occupies. Town Manager Souza responded that he would get back to him with that number.

Councilor McAuliffe clarified that there will be a \$114,000 shortfall in total for 34 attendees so that equals about \$3,000 per person.

8) CHILD DAY CARE ENTERPRISE FUND

Laura Casey, Director of Windsor Montessori School and Discovery Center, presented the proposed FY 20 budget for the Child Day Care Enterprise Fund as follows:

The Windsor Discovery Center and Montessori School located in the Milo Peck building provides Montessori services for children 6 weeks to five years of age and a before and after school program for students five to twelve years of age. The hours of operation are 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. During the school year, our services are utilized by approximately 98 families from 19 surrounding towns. Nineteen of our families have more than one child enrolled and 69% of our student body is made up of Windsor residents.

During the summer months, we offer 5 camp groupings with an average of 55 children per week from 18 months to 11-years of age. Our weekly theme-based summer programs participate in field trips, swimming, arts & crafts, group games and community service projects. The summer program's enrollment is 75% Windsor residents.

- In FY 19 we offered 84 enrollments from Infancy to Kindergarten and 26 in the before and after school program. For the second year in a row, our before and after school program had higher enrollment than budgeted.
- Attracting qualified staff has been extremely challenging. Recruiting and hiring qualified individuals moving forward may come at a higher cost as we compete with salaries offered by other centers in the region
- The FY 19 total expenses are estimated to come in \$12,300 or 1% lower than budget.
- The FY 19 total revenues are expected to come in \$7,450 less than budgeted resulting in an FY 19 overall loss of \$54,410.
- The FY 20 projected revenue is based on current enrollment patterns and a 1.5% fee increase per month across the program. In FY 20 we will offer the same full-time Infant program, full and ½ day Toddler Montessori programs, the Primary Montessori program for 60 children, and the before and after school program.
- The revenues combined with expenses results in a projected loss of \$74,150 for FY 20.

We continue to offer special events and activities for the children and families including intergenerational programs with the Caring Connection, trips to the library, educational programming at the Windsor Historical Society, parent education seminars, "special person" visiting days, winter and spring socials and field trips. The children and families also participated in several community service projects this year. We participated in Project Santa; collected candy for the troops; held a PJ Day for Connecticut Children's Medical Center and participated in a "Welly Walk" for the Muddy Puddles project.



Our marketing efforts for this year included:

- redesigning summer camp programs to increase enrollment
- working with marketing interns during the summer months and the January break to improve our social media presence and content
- outreach at a Windsor Chamber of Commerce business fair
- weekly tours for potential customers to build waiting lists
- advertising in the *There's A Lot to Do in Windsor* magazine
- adding parent testimonials to our website
- posting openings on our website

At this time, we have waiting lists for all four of our programs.

Deputy Mayor Terranova noted that next year's projected losses are higher due to personnel costs and wondered what other ways the loss can be made up. Ms. Casey responded that to break even, she would need six more full-time preschool students, but she has done the numbers on various scenarios and if she adds another class, the staffing costs would outweigh the additional revenue. She also noted that the significant waiting lists are within the younger programs, which considering the smaller student/teacher ratios, are more feeder programs than money makers.

Councilor Wilkos asked about projected higher energy costs. He noted that last year came in around \$14,000 and next year is budgeted at \$22,000 and wondered why. Ms. Casey replied that she followed recommended percentage increase guidelines for water, natural gas, and electricity costs but would look into it more specifically and get back to the Council.

9) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Terranova and seconded by Councilor Wilkos to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m.

Motion passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin Rand
Recording Secretary