

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
TOWN COUNCIL
Council Chambers
Windsor Town Hall
April 1, 2019
PUBLIC HEARING**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Mayor Trinks.

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

Mayor Trinks read aloud the notice of the public hearing to hear public comment on:

- THE FY 2019-2020 BUDGET AS PROPOSED BY THE TOWN MANAGER

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

Coralee Jones, 1171 Matianuck Avenue, recalled that last year citizens were good stewards and voted to approve expenditures for the new public safety buildings, updates to the school buildings, and open space. She has two concerns about this year's proposed budget—the Board of Education's proposed budget increase and the state government. She fears that Democrats are so desperate for money that they will tax everything they can think of and then still decrease funding to the towns. Ms. Jones asked that the Council stay on top of the state's plans, decrease the Board of Education budget, and decrease the town budget by reducing or delaying certain town expenditures. She also asked the Council to seriously look into whether or not we should continue to support the Caring Connection.

Linda Alexander, 155 Fieldstone Drive, expressed appreciation for last week's budget presentation and the online budget tools like the calculator. Using the calculator, she was able to see that spending increases made up most of her tax increase and not revaluation. Ms. Jones summarized an article she read about Windsor Locks schools and feels that Windsor is having similar issues—elected officials are reluctant to put the brakes on spending and cuts to the Board of Education budget are designed to trigger emotional responses from parents. She also noted that last year, a vice principal was added without budget approval. She agreed with Ms. Jones that year after year, the Board of Education always needs more. Overall, it's a culture of spending and balancing it with increased taxes even though some citizens are struggling with water bills, utility bills, and this year people are concerned about the governor implementing tolls. Adult daycare, another emotional issue, is a nice service, but Ms. Alexander

would like to see it be rolled into the senior center rather than be two separate entities because year after year they need a subsidy. She asked the Council to look for other similar cuts as well.

John Dunn, 15 Strawberry Hill, voiced concerns about funding Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) and asked if there was an accelerated plan to add money to the fund. Mr. Dunn also asked when, if ever, it will be fully funded. He noted that it appears the town will be spending the whole gain from the grand list in one year. Mr. Dunn stated that the Board of Education budget is likely higher than the operating budget of many countries and is more than twice the total operations budget for the whole town. Lastly, Mr. Dunn asked if any of the town departments or Board of Education use a zero-based budgeting to create their budget.

Paul Panos, 48 Brookview Road, recommended trying to lower the mill rate to below 30 over the next few years. He stated that the tendency of many town councils is to try and please various groups, support public school spending increases, and provide subsidized housing, but made the point that tax money is not charity money. Mr. Panos stated that the mill rate decreasing from 32.96 to 32.44 is not very much for a revaluation year. He spoke about surrounding towns with very high mill rates and how it is a slippery slope because the grand list doesn't go up as much and it becomes increasingly unsustainable the higher it goes.

3) ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trinks declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin Rand
Clerk of the Town Council