



**TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 20, 2020
APPROVED MINUTES**

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Joe McAuliffe, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor James Dobler, Councilor James Govoni, Councilor Donald Jepsen, Councilor Michael Tustin and Councilor Kenneth Wilkos

2) BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board of Education (BOE) President, Leonard Lockhart; Vice President, David Furie; Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Craig Cooke; and BOE Business Manager, Danielle Batchelder presented the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2021.

Mr. Lockhart stated that they need more special education teacher support, a Social Studies teacher at Sage Park along with additional para-educators. They are committed to keeping classroom sizes low. The Board would like to create more STEM activities and would like to update the facilities. He thanks the Town Manager and Town Council for working in conjunction with the Superintendent to make sure their Capital Improvement project priorities are taken seriously and brought to the forefront.

Mr. David Furie, Vice President, stated one of the add-ons at Sage Park is for a Social Worker which was based on an accreditation review. Even though it was an add-on in spending, it was something that was recognized as being needed.

Dr. Craig Cooke, Superintendent of Schools, gave the following presentation:

The budget originally was at a 2.58% increase but it was reduced to 2.49% over the current year's budget. Of that, 2.2% is fixed costs (contractual obligations, etc.) It's a responsible budget and is mainly a roll-over budget.

- For Revenues, Educational Cost Sharing Grant and excess costs are expected to remain flat along with the alliance grant.
- For the past five years, the budget averages to a 1.69% increase.
- From 2016 to 2019 there has been a steady increase in enrollment for students. Many magnet and private school students are returning to Windsor Public Schools. The prediction is for enrollment to grow by 15% over the next 10 years. We are pleased to see this growth.
- Every academic indicator has seen an increase. The 2018-2019 school year was good.



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- The growth score in comparison to the state has shown that Windsor schools have seen an increase in Math and Reading with a significant growth in Math. This is due to the teachers' hard work.
- The graduation rate is over 90.8%.
- Windsor outperformed many districts.
- There is approximately \$1 million in contractual obligations for the six bargaining unit contracts. This includes estimated retirement savings.
- The schools are currently in year four of the DATCO bus contract. Transportation costs are high. Special Education transportation has seen an increase.
- Special Education Out-of-District tuition has increased.
- There is an increased cost of employer retirement match at \$50,296
- There is an increase in substitute pay at \$75,000
- Pupil services have had additional contracted services at the amount of approximately \$52,000
- Some of the budget challenges are an increase in trash removal, natural gas and water costs at \$66,000
- Working together with the town, the employment retirement match has been \$205,296
- Health Benefits remain flat – no increase
- Utilities Reduction is the LED lighting upgrade at Sage Park Middle School – electrical savings of \$50,000
- Additions and Reductions to the school budget include:
 - Add a 10 month assistant principal for Poquonock School
 - Reduce 1.0 Head Teacher
 - Reduce 1.0 Pre-K Teaching position
 - Reduce Head Teacher Stipend
 - Reduce 1.0 Special Education Teacher at L.P. Wilson at \$75,000
 - Add Special Education Teacher at Oliver Ellsworth at \$75,000
 - Reduce Technology Technician at \$60,000
 - Add Data Analyst/Technology Technician at \$60,000
 - Add 1.0 Social Worker at Sage Park
- More staffing reductions include:
 - 2.0 Classroom Teachers – Grades 3-5
- Program Additions include:
 - Major Maintenance at \$25,000
 - Boot Camp at \$5,000
 - Technology at \$75,000
- The net cost of program additions totals \$208,064 totaling 0.29% of the budget increase
- Needs that have been deferred include:
 - School nurse
 - World language teacher at Windsor High School
 - Social Studies teacher at Sage Park School
 - Math Intervention Teachers (2)
 - School Counselor



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- SPARK teacher
- Social Emotional Learning Coach Teacher
- Alliance Grant Highlights:
 - Being an alliance district, the board will receive 1,147 laptops
 - Board of Education will be receiving two scholastic donations for student books
 - Air Force ROTC program safety
 - Math remedial teacher
 - Grade K-2 remedial reading teachers (2.0 FTEs)
 - Grade 3-5 reading teacher
 - School and community coordinator
 - Alternative Ed Facilitator – SPARK program

Dr. Cooke stated that one of the Capital Improvement projects include a new cooling system for Poquonock School. Some of the pending projects include restoration of the roof at Sage Park School, paving/parking/playground project for Poquonock School, restoration of Windsor High School tennis courts and Sage Park LED light conversion. All these projects are done in collaboration with the town.

Mr. Lockhart stated that we are growing as a district and are winning many children back from magnet schools. There are new families moving in and new developments in town so we are growing by leaps and bounds. The two buildings of concern to the Board are Oliver Ellsworth and Poquonock School which are near their capacity. We need to start looking 3-5 years down the road to see what we will do if we do get another 100-200 families coming into town since both the schools are near capacity.

Mr. Lockhart stated the Board settled with all the collective bargaining units this academic year. Another step has been added to the teacher's contract. Traditionally out of the three years, there would be two steps, but we added a third step this year. One reason why we added the step is that many employees were not getting to that higher step as fast as other districts were doing it. Therefore, we were losing teachers without this third step.

Mr. Lockhart added that they have heard where school districts have been hijacked through their software. Dr. Cooke has done a good job along with Information Technology in making sure that all of the servers are up to speed so this will not happen to us. They are very aggressive in this area. He wanted to thank the town and the Town Council for believing in the support of technology for the eight years that he has been on the Board of Education.

Councilor Black Burke said that Dr. Cooke had mentioned that a Social Worker was needed at Sage Park School and that it was as a result of the accreditation completed for Sage Park. Are we aware of any other needs across the district where there may be the need for a Social Worker or emotional support person in this budget? Is that something the board is considering? Dr. Cooke stated that they were very concerned about what they will see in August after not seeing the students for 6 months. Especially since staff members usually check in with the students periodically during the school year and that is not happening right now. It can't be just one



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person but rather the staff working with one person. We are hopeful we will be able to do that in August. Next year there may be a need to make up academically, but we need to build social emotional learning as well. They will first look at the social emotional learning aspect when the students return in August and meet those needs and then work on the academic part.

Councilor Dobler stated that in regards to virtual learning, he wanted to let Dr. Cooke know that his children are thriving in virtual learning. It gives them more structure than the parents can give. His question is how has the use of virtual learning and not having the students in school effected the Board of Education's budget? Dr. Cooke responded they have several unanswered questions on their end on how this would work, but they do intend on saving about \$200,000 in associate teacher costs. Looking at the school and site balances, it is anticipated that there will be a savings of \$250,000-\$300,000 mainly for supplies. The transportation contract has not yet been settled and they are still in negotiations with the DATCO bus company. There may be a savings of \$100,000 there. Buildings will have about a \$50,000 savings. The total might be somewhere near \$600,000.

Councilor Rampulla Bress asked about the children returning to school and some of the trauma they have been experiencing. Oliver Ellsworth's goals for next year is to enhance 'trauma informed practices' which she feels is very insightful. Has the Board addressed those needs for this fall? Dr. Cooke stated that while they were preparing the budget they had no idea there would be a need for this. Social workers and psychologists will lead that work along with classroom teachers. If there is a need for additional support, the schools will go before the Board of Education and ask for help.

Councilor Rampulla Bress asked about the Special Education Department and if the Board will be looking for special education models for special delivery and if they will be researching and reviewing those models. Can you tell us a little bit more about that? Will that be something new that will affect the schools? Dr. Cooke answered that special education staff is always looking for good delivery of services and they look at what each individual student may need. We have seen some increases in needs in grades 3-5 this year. Staff has started to plan for the right kind of program for those students. This program is continually refined.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked Dr. Cooke, President Lockhart, Vice President Furie and Ms. Batchelder for their presentation. It was very helpful.

Councilor Wilkos was surprised that the energy costs aren't higher. He is concerned at the 15% increase of students coming into our school system in the next 10 years. That is potentially 500 students plus. The positive on that is while we continue to grow, our capacity grows and perhaps we will potentially have more money with the growth.

Councilor Wilkos stated he has a concern with the 5.61% increase in Transportation. The other concern is the ending of the five year DATCO contract that will be coming up. How will this look in two years from now after the contract is expired? Dr. Cooke responded that he is just as concerned about the special education transportation costs. Outplaced students and those



students receiving specialized transportation are also in that cost. Ms. Batchelder added that Special Education is contracted with DATCO but also with another bus company (Haven Transportation) where services are shared with other towns. Also included in Special Education transportation are fuel costs.

Councilor Jepsen said the Governor issued an order that you have to pay everybody. Who specifically is everybody? Does it encompass all of the salaries everywhere? Dr. Cooke replied he felt that they captured everybody and have brought everyone back as much as possible to help with handing out meals at some sites, and helping with other functions. Para-educators and people that work for FRCs are making phone calls and stopping by homes (when that was more available in March).

Councilor Jepsen asked if technology is reimbursable. Dr. Cooke said he believes the meals are reimbursable but is not sure about technology. Ms. Batchelder said there is not any reimbursement for technology costs at this time.

Councilor Jepsen asked if the meals will continue through the summer. Ms. Batchelder said yes it would but it is under a different program.

Councilor Jepsen asked about substitute teachers. He stated that they have been pretty flat. We may be seeing more maternity leave in the next 9 months due to COVID 19. Is that covered in this budget? Dr. Cooke said typically when there is a maternity leave there is a savings as the employee that is out is not paid for a certain amount of time while they are out.

Councilor Jepsen asked if there will be Windsor High School graduation. Dr. Cooke responded that at this point, no decision has been made.

Mayor Trinks asked the Council if there is a need for the Board of Education to return. Councilor Jepsen noted that if need be, they could just ask questions later on if they have some for the Board of Education instead of them coming in again.

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 21 revenue budget.

For fiscal year 2020, the adopted budget totals \$118,719,040. We are estimating revenues for this year to be approx. \$165,000 more than what was budgeted.

- We expect to achieve favorable results in the overall general property tax category due to favorable collections from the current levy as well as from the supplemental motor vehicle tax levy
- Conveyance fees and Special Education tuition are expected to provide additional revenue as compared to budgeted amounts



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- We are expecting to receive state reimbursement of approximately \$102K for eligible properties located in the airport development zone
- Most of our other revenue categories are relatively stable, and are expected to come in slightly over or slightly under budget.

For fiscal year 2021, the proposed General Fund revenue budget totals \$122,408,810. 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.

- Interest income is projected to decrease \$800,000 from the FY 20 budgeted level. This is due to declining interest rate projections which are a result of the current economic environment.
- State aid as proposed is based on the second year of the State's biennial budget. An additional \$389K in state aid was approved by the State bond commission for the current 2020 fiscal year, however, this amount has not been included in the proposed FY 21 budget.
- We are projecting increases from building permit fees as well as from supplemental motor vehicle tax collections
- Rental of town property of approximately \$118,000 and was paid by the child day care enterprise fund will now be going into the new Milo Peck building special revenue fund. This loss of revenue is partially offset by a reduction in the Social Services budget of \$85,000. These expenditures are for repairs and improvements to the Milo Peck building, and will now be coming out of the new Milo Peck building special revenue fund.
- Non-tax revenue for FY 21 totals \$18.7 million or approximately 3.4% (\$659K) less than what was budgeted in FY 20, and is primarily due to the loss of interest income as described previously.

Councilor Wilkos asked if there is any anticipation on that loss of interest changing. Mr. Bourke said it is hard to say at this moment with all that is currently happening. Councilor Wilkos asked if the money for this is on a 12 month basis. Town Manager Souza responded that it was

Councilor Jepsen asked about section 9/10 of the budget and if the interest would be impacted? Mr. Bourke responded that it would be. Councilor Jepsen asked by how much. Town Manager Souza stated depending on if the Council chooses to do a deferment or not, we are estimating that interest penalties would be reduced by approximately \$100,000.

Councilor Jepsen asked about building permits. Any chance that we are low balling that number? Town Manager Souza said it is always a best educated and best informed assumption that we make this time of the year because we are looking out 14-15 months.

Councilor Black-Burke asked a question about the line item 'State Grants in Lieu of Taxes', where it says Airport Development Zone. She noticed that in the book FY 19 states the actual



amount and there isn't an amount budgeted for FY 20 but there is an estimate and for FY 21 there isn't anything. Town Manager Souza said that the reason FY 20 and FY 21 have no estimate is because there is a question mark of funding at the state level. The airport development zone is what the state calls an enterprise zone. The state reimburses money on a state-wide basis for enterprise zones. Depending upon the overall request on a state-wide basis, the town may not receive funding. Two or three fiscal years ago, we did not receive anything due to state budget constraints. We are taking a conservative approach with our numbers for now.

4) SAFETY SERVICES

Police Department

Donald Melanson, Chief of Police and Captain Andy Power presented the proposed FY 21 budget for Safety Services as follows.

Over the past year, the Police Department has been working with town staff, the Public Building Commission, and contractors to oversee the planning and construction of the new police facility at 110 Addison Road and the town's new public safety radio system.

Our Youth Engagement officer continues to work with the town's Youth Services Bureau, Parks and Recreation Department and the elementary and middle schools. The three Community Block Parties held at Sharshon Park, Lancaster Park and Deerfield Park over the summer had great attendance and grow bigger each year. This has allowed for increased engagement efforts with the public.

Fiscal Year 2020

The Fiscal Year 2020 General Fund expenditures are expected to be under budget by \$321,020 or 3.1%. This is primarily due to savings from Personal Services, partial year vacancies, hiring new officers at a lower rate, military leave, workers compensation and overtime costs.

Fiscal Year 2021

The Overall Fiscal Year 2021 budget reflects an increase of \$287,700 or 2.7% over the FY 20 budget. This increase is mostly due to costs associated with the planned implementation of body worn cameras and Personal Services as a result of contractual wage step increases.

The General Fund budget, including Town Support for Education, is increasing by \$170,550 or 1.7%, primarily due to Personal Services as a result of contractual step increases, pension increases and facility costs.

Councilor Rampulla Bress asked how many officers do we currently have working at the schools and where in the budget can that be found. Chief Melanson stated that it can be found under Support Services in the budget. We currently have a School Resource officer at the high school. The second officer is a Youth Engagement officer and he works in the middle and elementary



schools. The Youth Engagement officer also works for the Recreation Department in the summer.

Councilor Black-Burke said there are some increases in Personnel for the department. At one point there was a social worker/clinician that was working with the Police Department. Is that reflected somewhere in the budget? Is that in the Personnel Services category or is it no longer in the budget? Chief Melanson responded that is a contractual service with Community Health Resources (CHR) and can be found under the Contractual Services in the budget. The position is currently vacant. The department is working with CHR to find a replacement. Councilor Black-Burke asked how long the position has been vacant. Chief Melanson responded since January.

Councilor Black-Burke questioned a sentence in the budget commentary regarding money being used to implement body worn cameras. There is a large amount of money sitting in the police private duty fund. Will we be using some of this money for the body worn cameras? Chief Melanson stated that is where the funds are coming from for the body worn cameras.

Councilor Jepsen asked if we have cameras now and how much does it cost for maintenance and the ongoing expense and if those costs are in the budget. Chief Melanson said when they implemented their in car camera system for the cruisers a few years ago, the system they chose is called Watch Guard. There is an infrastructure in place that downloads all the video. We do maintain our own servers to capture that video and archive it. The body cameras work in conjunction with the car cameras. So the downloads would go into the infrastructure we currently have. The department does not currently have body cameras.

Councilor Govoni stated that regarding the COVID 19 pandemic, he hasn't heard that any money has been set aside for this in the budget. It may be too early to ask, but it's important to him that

we have the funds to buy the equipment that we need for front line personnel and any other items that may be needed for associated costs regarding the pandemic. He would like to be assured that we will have the revenue we need to purchase what is needed to keep everyone up to speed so we can protect the town's employees. Town Manager Souza stated that it is not anything we've ever experienced in the past. As we move forward, we are trying to use the guidance from both the Federal Center for Disease Control and the Department of Public Health. There are some costs that we anticipate over the course of the next 60 days or so. For example, modifying our customer counters with some type of separation with Plexiglas or some other type of material. This is relatively a small amount of money. We are going through all of our buildings and looking at items such as that. Going forward, we are anticipating the 6 foot restriction will be modified and relaxed so we do not see that as a significant cost for the FY 21 period. If money is needed, we will come to the Town Council and ask for some funds.



Fire Department

Fire Chief, Bill Lewis and Fire Administrator, Paul Goldberg, presented the following:

- Structure fires have declined in the Town of Windsor. This coincides with national statistics that have seen a decline of 22% for structure fires during the past 10 years.
- We continue to monitor day time man power responses and have found a slight decline. We will continue to keep a close eye on any further decline.
- The Junior Firefighters continue to be very active with thanks to great leadership that actively recruits and trains our youngest members. Many of them have applied at 18 years old as a tactical firefighter.

The Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget is within our limits, but MDC does keep throwing surprises our way in the middle of budget years. During the year the following has happened:

- A new pumper was acquired for Company 4 at Hayden Station
- A pumper is being built for Company 2 in Wilson
- Tanker truck in Company 5 has finally been taken out of service due to major maintenance breakdowns due to its age. It is being replaced with a spare pumper.

The Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget sees a slight increase due to the Fire Department taking over the cost of the utilities at 340 Bloomfield Avenue. The department continues to do the following:

- Upgrade the fire fighters turnout gear
- Attempting to get each firefighter a second set of gear so that contaminants are periodically cleaned off the gear which prolongs the life of the gear and is proactive in preventing future illness to the firefighters
- Continue to replace outdated and worn equipment
- Continue to apply for grants but have not received any due to stiff competition

Councilor Govoni asked if there has been a reduction in calls lately to I-91 emergencies. Town Manager Souza said we will respond back to that question as they do not have exact totals tonight. Town Manager Souza added that he thinks it's been a significant reduction.

Councilor Govoni asked if the Fire Department has considered using a piece of equipment that rolls up the fire hose line instead of having firefighters do the work. Chief Lewis stated that he has one machine on order and one to borrow to test it out. However, everyone that does have one of these machines does not particularly like them.

Ambulance Services

Terrance Greaves, Deputy Chief of Operations for Windsor Volunteer Ambulance (WVA), presented the following:



FY 2020 Highlights

- Highly involved in community events – Project Santa toy drive, Shad Derby, Torch Light Parade, Special Olympics, and National Night Out
- Windsor EMS received 4,008 calls for service in calendar year 2019
- Continue to provide Initial Certification Courses for new Emergency Medical Technicians
- Continue to provide re-certification & medical training courses for Windsor Police Department and other regional law enforcement entities
- Entered into mutual aid agreements with Bloomfield, Windsor Locks, and East Windsor
- Provided mutual aid to Bradley Airport during the recent major incident

FY 20/21 Projects & Initiatives

- Evaluation of internal business practices and procedures in consultation with a third-party business consultant
- Continue improvements of our Field Training Program
- Improve public awareness about Emergency Medical Services and the role in the community (CPR, AED, First Aid, Stop the Bleed Courses) for the public and businesses
- Work with Office of Emergency Medical Services to increase reimbursement for calls for service
- Improvement of recruitment of staff through a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan
- Evaluation current fund raising programs to make sure we are optimizing all opportunities and efficiencies
- Replace aging capital assets and extend warranties to protect older items as funds allow
- Collaborate with other agencies (Windsor Locks, Bloomfield, Granby, etc.) in coordinating training and improve efficiency and interoperability among other emergency services
- Nurture the strong relationship we currently have with the town management and other town departments to ensure we are all working towards the same goals

For the FY 20 budget, the department will be over budget by 8.6%. This is due to Personnel costs in addition to hiring a full-time paramedic along with the transition of the department's CEO position from a volunteer position to a full-time paid position due to loss of a full-time supervisor.

In total, they have lost 4 full-time employees. Two were due to injuries and two were due to them finding employment elsewhere.

Town Manager Souza added that both the Finance Department and the Town Manager's office have been working with Windsor Volunteer Ambulance (WVA) regarding their budget. What you presently have in your budget book is the town's contribution at the same level. The Town Council made a mid-year supplemental appropriation of \$130,000 for this current fiscal year to help the WVA. Mr. Greaves and Town Manager Souza are both looking at the FY 21 budget needs. Town Manager Souza added that he looks forward to working with the Council and the WVA in the near future to recommend that the Council review the possibility of another supplemental appropriation. The money would come out of the General Reserve Fund.



Councilor Jepsen asked with all the COVID-19 going on and people sheltering at home, have ambulance calls gone up or down? Have you seen any change? Mr. Greaves responded that call volumes have actually gone down significantly.

Councilor Jepsen asked how the reduction in call volumes has impacted the budget. Mr. Greaves stated that it will have a negative effect since there will be less potential revenue to recover. The WVA also staffed up in response to the COVID 19, which will be an additional expense coming out of the budget.

Councilor Wilkos asked if there is a significant amount of accounts receivables that WVA is not receiving. Is reimbursement unexpectedly down from a Medicare/Medicaid perspective? Mr. Greaves said that they have approximately \$750,000 in reimbursements that are still outstanding. Part of that is demographics of where we are in our payer profile in our town. Also, the majority of the citizens in town are on a fixed income. The other issue is someone that is on a high deductible plan as the WVA is having a hard time collecting the deductible portions for those that have not yet met their deductible.

Councilor Wilkos stated that using a third party to collect the money must be higher than what we could do in house. Mr. Greaves said yes we do use a third party and that the cost comes to 33% of collections which goes to the collection company.

Councilor Wilkos asked what WVA is doing to better prepare the budget so there is no supplemental appropriation needed for future years. Mr. Greaves said they are implementing some new measures internally as well as some better collection means.

5) PUBLIC WORKS

Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer and Whit Przech, Building & Facilities Manager presented the proposed FY 21 budget for the Public Works Fund as follows:

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 20 Budget and Estimate

The FY 20 General Fund expenditures are expected to be under budget by approximately \$198,000 (or 3.1%). This is primarily due to savings in Personal Services, in Storm Control, Administration and Equipment Repair. The relatively mild winter played a role in the budget savings by reducing the overtime required to perform snow-fighting activities.

FY 21 Budget

The FY 21 General Fund budget reflects an increase of approximately \$217,000, or 3.4%, when compared to the FY 20 budget. This is mostly due to increases in Personal Services.



FY 20 Highlights

This year we performed or oversaw the milling and paving of over 6 ½ miles of roads, sealing of 220 miles of pavement cracks, cleaning 2,200 catch basins, the replacement of 135 streetlights and poles, and significant improvements to the Mill Brook Open Space and former clubhouse.

With the guidance of the Public Building Commission, we oversaw preparation of the bid documents and the construction of the new Police Department at 110 Addison Road. The department also directed the Town Hall portico restoration project, and the design of improvements to the Fire and EMS station project.

FY 21 Goals

- Complete construction of the Deerfield Road Rehabilitation project and Archer Road Rehabilitation project, both funded through the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Grant program.
- Work with the Board of Education to complete parking area improvements at the parking area at Poquonock School and installation of the Sage Park Middle School air conditioning system
- Complete construction of new Fire & EMS Department improvements at 340 Bloomfield Avenue.
- Complete installation of the Day Hill Road Adaptive Traffic Signal system.

Councilor Dobler asked has COVID 19 effected operations and what have hey been able to accomplish. Mr. Jarvis stated due to COVID 19 and its impact, they had to stagger the employee shifts and it has resulted in less productivity. We are benefited by the relatively mild winter as we are able to get an early start on the clean-up of beds and cul-de-sacs as well as other routine maintenance. We are not behind but on schedule. We will be back to full strength in the coming week or so.

Councilor Rampulla Bress asked regarding COVID 19 and the renovation to the Department of Public Works, have considerations been made to the design of the building itself? Mr. Jarvis stated the project has already been designed and bid. We have a contractor ready to do the work. Our workstations are segregated from one another. There is adequate social distancing between those stations. We make sure that stations for our crew leaders have walls or protection in-between where the individual would sit. As we go through construction, if there are any other safety measures to be implemented they will be completed at that time.

Councilor Wilkos asked about the savings on road salt. Do we have a lot left which could help us for next year? Mr. Jarvis responded that they did get some shipments later in the winter which was probably at a price that will be less than next year's price. We are in good shape for the early part of next winter.

Councilor Govoni asked commented on the men's showers at the Department of Public Works. There should be more showers for the amount of men at the facility.



Councilor Jepsen asked about the Personal Services line. He came up with a 3.7% increase. He'd like to be walked through the 3.7% increase. Mr. Jarvis responded that is 74% of the increase they have in Public Works and Engineering. The payroll lines of that \$159,000 are up about \$81,000 and that is the contractual obligations we have and pension costs are up about \$74,000. That accounts for the bulk of the increase. There are minor increases in FICA and health insurance is down a bit. Town Manager Souza added that you will see across all Police Department budgets that Personnel Services lines are up at that 3.5% range generally because of the defined benefit increase.

Councilor Jepsen asked about the 03 account regarding Roger Wolcott school. Do we have to take their oil tanks out this year? Town Manager Souza stated that they have to be removed by the end of calendar year 2021.

Councilor Black-Burke asked about the Deerfield Road and Archer Road rehabilitation projects. Can you share a bit about those projects and any associated costs? Mr. Jarvis responded that both the Deerfield and Archer Road rehabilitation projects will be funded through a grant program, which is a state program. There are no funds from construction coming out of our General Fund or other budgets. It is funded entirely by the state. Town Manager Souza added that these are Capital Improvement projects. Once we receive project authorization, we classify them as capital projects which don't get reflected in the annual operating budget.

6) LANDFILL ENTERPRISE FUND

Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer and Mark Goossens, Solid Waste Manager answered the following questions in regards to the Landfill Enterprise Fund.

Councilor Jepsen said the interest income took a big hit. But the hit does not seem as big this time. Was it invested differently? Mr. Goossens stated it is a blended rate between three different funds. Town Manager Souza stated a significant amount of these funds are in Certificates of Deposit (CD). They are laddered so that is why we are not seeing a significant hit in our more immediate liquid dollars we have in our General Fund.

Councilor Govoni asked what the projected date for the full capping of the landfill will be. Mr. Goossens said that we are trying to get the bulk of the landfill capped with clay by the end of this calendar year. The next calendar year we will do more ancillary items such as drainage structures, outside slopes, etc.

Councilor Govoni asked about employees presently working at the landfill and how they might be effected by the closure. Town Manager Souza stated that whomever is still with us at the time of closure, we will look into reducing staff. It depends on the situation at that time. Per the union contract the employee has the ability to transfer to other divisions within the department.

Councilor Govoni asked if there will still be full-time operators at the transfer station once it is closed. Mr. Goossens said it is not likely.



7) RESIDENT TRANSFER STATION

Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer and Mark Goossens, Solid Waste Manager, answered the following questions in regards to the Resident Transfer Station:

Councilor Jepsen asked if there is a best target level that we want to level off at for retained earnings. Town Manager Souza said we accumulated the retained earnings because we've had the opportunity to use the landfill prior to its reaching capacity. So we internalized that waste. At this time, retained earnings will not be growing to the degree it has over the course of the last five years or so. I expect that we will use the funds over time incrementally for equipment replacement and other needs.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that Town Manager Souza had mentioned a few meetings ago that there was some difficulty in receiving our recyclables and difficulties in terms of revenues. Will that impact the transfer station or is that a different type of situation? Town Manager Souza the impact he was speaking of several meetings ago had to do with the curbside recycling program which is contracted out to Windsor Sanitation which will be expiring as of FY 21. Over the course of this coming winter, we will be placing bids and RFPs for recycling and depending on how things are at that time, there may be an increase in curbside recycling. Mr. Goossens added that the impact to the transfer station is negligible.

8) DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PROGRAM PER THE GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER 7S

Town Manager, Peter Souza, gave an overview of the request as follows:

On April 1, 2020, Governor Lamont issued Executive Order 7S in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The executive order includes language allowing local legislative bodies to adopt certain programs to provide support and relief to local taxpayers effected by the pandemic. Municipalities are required to report to the State of Connecticut Office of Policy & Management (OPM) by April 25, 2020 as to which program or programs were adopted.

The Deferment Program offers an extended grace period for eligible taxpayers to pay their tax bills without interest. For tax bills that are due and payable on July 1, taxpayers can defer payment for 90 days (instead of the usual 30 days). The deferment program applies to real estate, personal property and motor vehicle tax bills.

The Low Interest Rate program can be offered in conjunction with the deferment program, or instead of it. This program does not say a taxpayer can have an extended grace period with no interest at all. Rather, it addresses the rate of interest that is to be charged on a delinquent or past due bill. Interest is normally charged at the rate of 1.5% per month or 18% annually from the due date of the tax. This program allows for the monthly interest rate to be reduced to .25% per month, or 3% annually, and provides for 90 days from the due date in which a delinquent taxpayer would be able to pay at the reduced interest rate.



Councilor Dobler asked if we went with the deferment program how would we go about quantifying who has suffered under the coronavirus and who has not. Are we going to do a blanket type approval for all citizens? What is the criteria going to be? Mr. Bourke said that there would be an application to be filled out by the business or citizen. The town will be asking for some type of documentation to prove their 20% loss due to COVID-19. We don't want it to be burdensome. We will ask for just enough documentation to justify their receiving the deferment.

Councilor Dobler asked if the decision on whether someone would be approved is going to be made by a town employee or is it just very cut and dry. Mr. Bourke responded that we want to leave it broad based so they show their proof of residence and by filling out the application, they are attesting to a hardship. Town Manager Souza said it is in some ways an honor system. To keep it as simple as possible we would be looking at some basic documentation showing that they have been impacted due to a layoff or furlough. This is also applicable to businesses.

Councilor Rampulla Bress did not want to see anyone having to prove their hardship. It might be difficult if these individuals are still unemployed to get the paperwork they need to prove their hardship from their employers. Many individuals are not even in contact with previous employers. With all the uncertainty she would be in favor of the deferment with not having a large onus on people to have to prove their hardship as it might be too hard to get documentation.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe said, in looking closer at the form, is it just that someone is claiming that they have been impacted? He's trying to find where on the form it shows that you have to produce proof. He does not see it. Town Manager Souza stated that it won't be on the form as it is left up to the municipality. This gives us some documentation to go by.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated he agrees with Councilor Rampulla Bress that we do not want to put individuals through more hoops to prove they have been out of work for several months. However, it sounds like its minimal proof that you would need.

Councilor Black-Burke said that she agrees with Councilor Rampulla Bress and Deputy Mayor McAuliffe. She believes it will be hard to say to some individuals that you need to provide proof.

Councilor Govoni agrees that most people having a hardship should have this option. However, if you are laid off and you file for unemployment, that in itself is proof enough. What happens if we go to the low interest rate? How does that work and what type of proof do you have to show for that? Mr. Bourke responded that there is no proof required for that program. It's a matter of if you are late in paying your tax bill. If you are, the interest will be calculated at a lower interest rate. Anyone that is delinquent within the program guidelines will have the reduced interest rate calculated for their bill.

Councilor Govoni said the dilemma here is that the state has delayed mortgage payments for a month or two. Town Manager Souza said the state has allowed for a deferment for rent. He's not sure it's applied to a mortgage.



Councilor Jepsen stated the deferment program does not apply to people with escrow. Therefore, they are not on the table. Town Manager Souza said that the banks are required to pay taxes when they are due. Councilor Jepsen said that being behind in your payment is a whole other issue, correct? Town Manager Souza said it was between the bank and the person.

Councilor Jepsen asked why deferment costs are less than low interest. Deferment will cost around \$100,000 and the low interest rate is \$160,000. Mr. Bourke said \$100,000 is a loss of revenue from what we would normally collect in August and September. Councilor Jepsen explained that this is from people that are delinquent in paying their taxes as of August 1st. Mr. Bourke confirmed that was correct.

Mayor Trinks said he is for the deferment. He feels that everyone in some way was effected by coronavirus. Many utility companies are giving relief to customers. Because this is such an unusual year, he feels this is something that we owe to the citizens.

Councilor Jepsen said this is going to cost us \$100,000. Is there any way that we can pre-fund this and make it come out of this year's funds so it doesn't impact the FY 21 budget? Town Manager Souza stated he doesn't believe there is a way. There is a way to use available reserves as of July 1st that would not cause the mill rate to increase. As part of the adoption process, the Council might be able to come up with something during budget deliberations.

Councilor Dobler said he has no problem with going for deferment for everyone. His question is if you have 1/3 of citizens that have not been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 and they just pay on time, would we be talking about that \$100,000 being a decent amount lower? Mr. Bourke stated that he does not think so. Town Manager Souza added that if you look back at a handful of years, it is based upon what the interest late penalties are for that 60-day period, August and September.

Councilor Govoni stated deferment sounds good to him.

Councilor Wilkos commented that he's personally for the deferment program. The number of people that might need to take advantage of the deferment program should be relatively low. He thinks it's a great program to have available for those that might need it.

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to adopt the Tax Deferment Program per the Governor's Executive Order 7S dated April 1, 2020 without eligibility requirements.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

9) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) April 6, 2020 Public Hearing (FY 21 proposed budget)



Town Council Special meeting
April 20, 2020

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 6, 2020 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

b) April 6, 2020 Public Hearing (various ordinances)

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 6, 2020 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

c) April 6, 2020 Regular Town Council

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 6, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

10) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe and seconded by Councilor Black-Burke to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene Albert
Recording Secretary