

Received For Record At Plainfield CT

On ~~MAY~~ 4 2022 @ 2:27 pm

Attest: *Cynthia J. Mathau*
Town Clerk
West

TOWN OF PLAINFIELD
PUBLIC HEARING BUDGET
MINUTES

The Board of Finance for the Town of Plainfield held a Town Hearing on Monday, May 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Plainfield Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gorman at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Dean Gorman, Don Kivela, Tom Sinkewicz, Gary Stalaboin, and Linda Fedor (alternate).

Members absent: Ted Dumaine, Adrian Ferrari, Keith Sheeley (alternate)

Also present: Kevin Cunningham, First Selectman; Art Gagne, Selectman; Scott Gardiner, Selectman; Kelly Vachon, Finance Director; Superintendent Paul Brenton; Business Manager, Ronald Lussier; and Board of Education members.

New Business:

In accordance Town Charter requirements, the Board of Finance will hold a public hearing on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 at 7:00 P.M., Monday, May 2, 2022 in the Plainfield Town Hall Auditorium.

All electors of the Town and eligible property owners who wish to be heard will be allowed to do so at the hearing.

Board of Finance chairman started the meeting expressing his views on the proposed budget. Dean stated his goal for proposed budget was to reduce or maintain the current mill rate. He thanked all the departments for their assistance with the budget process. He asked all residents to come to the microphone to voice their opinions on the proposed budget with their name and where they live. Dean invited Superintendent Brenton to give a summary of the Board of Education budget.

Superintendent Brenton, stated the Board of Education budget started at \$37,196,446 and ended at \$36,489,209. Such increases are due to transportation cost, central administration, district increases, and fixed charges such as social security and pension contributions.

First Selectman, Cunningham stated the State Revenue has increased and the local revenue has decreased. Town and school expenditures have increased. Fund Balance is used in this budget for the police evidence building; town hall garage; road construction; playground improvements; community center upgrades; pool and locker upgrades; engineering cost of Shephard Hill sidewalks, Lathrop Road sidewalks, and Dow Road bridge; and IT upgrades.

The chairman of the Board of Finance, Dean Gorman invited residents to come to the microphone to voice their opinions. Matt Radiant, resident of Plainfield noted the grand list growth over the years. 19/20 1.28%, 20/21 1.17%, 21/22 2%, 22/23 3.58% growth. Matt stated inflation is at 8.5% highest in 40 years. He noted the decrease in the proposed mill rate will still result in tax increases to the residents due to the increase assessment value in motor vehicles. He asked the superintendent of school a question on the increase in ECS funds and the relation to an alliance district. Superintendent Brenton stated he has met with the State of CT education department and the town of Plainfield has not yet been designated as an alliance district officially. The increase in ECS is not due to alliance status. The school shall know the alliance status after May 4th, 2022. Matt asked if an alliance education plan has been established and if it's part of the current budget. Superintendent Brenton said no plan has been established and the school would look into using it's current budget to develop such plan. Superintendent noted the state OPM gave him the ECS number stated in the budget. Matt thanked the superintendent for his answers.

Alex Larose, resident of Plainfield stated the First Selectman and Finance Director increase are too much that she is not receiving an increase. Hard economic times and these positions could be zero increase. Chairman, Gorman noted these positions are under paid compared to neighboring towns.

Crystal Ferrari, resident of Plainfield thanked the town and police department for their additional cuts to the budget. She asked why the school did not make additional cuts. Superintendent Brenton stated the school has made cuts since the first proposed budget. Crystal asked if the school could make any additional cuts. She stated the additional cost of oil, gas, food on the residents have all gone up. The residents would greatly appreciate any cuts the school could make. Superintendent Brenton noted the school has increased their pension contribution by \$100,000; heat for the schools have increased; social security tax has increased; administration fixed cost has increased, which all reflects an increase in the education budget. He noted the last 3 years, the school has had minimum budget increases, which now results in a bigger increase this year. Crystal asked if the school in the past would allocate funds for the same project year after year and is the school continuing this practice. Superintendent Brenton cannot speak for the past practice but, currently no. The school is not doing this. Brenton noted many projects are being completed with the 2% set aside account. Crystal thanked the superintendent for his answers.

Luanne Cunningham, resident of Plainfield stated the First Selectman does an outstanding job, and puts in many working hours at the town hall. He is never home. He deserves a salary increase and more for all his dedication to the town.

Katelynn Cunningham, resident of Plainfield noted First Selectman does an outstanding job as First Selectman and deserves an increase. He is never home and spends many hours at the town hall every day. She appreciates all the boards of the town and their dedication to the town.

Madeline Gardner, resident of Plainfield asked about the parking lot located across the street from the high school and when will it get repaired. First Selectman Cunningham stated it's in the proposed budget under road construction. An engineer needs to review the lot and then we can repair it. Madeline noted the First Selectman increase is much deserved by the First Selectman. He is dedicated to the town and deserves his pay. She noted the increase is not even 1% of the proposed budget.

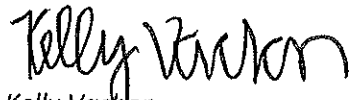
First Selectman Cunningham noted certain positions in the town have been given 0 % increases over the years, which does result in a lower salary. He stated the Finance Director is a contracted salary position and is very dedicated to the town and works many hours especially during budget season. Cunningham stated she was the best candidate. She has cleaned up the finances for the prior finance director and currently is cleaning up after the cyber attack. Kevin noted many town employees go above and beyond. Grant Writer has brought in more than \$700,000 in grants in his first year. Kevin noted positions should be reviewed and adjusted based on the surrounding town wages. Kevin thanked all departments and employees with the proposed budget.

Dean Gorman, Finance Chairman reminded the town that town meeting to vote on the proposed budget is Monday, May 16th 2022 at 7 P.M. at the town hall. The Board of Finance will have a meeting tomorrow night, May 3rd 2022 at 6:30 P. M. to discuss proposed budget and send to town meeting.

Adjournment

Dean Gorman motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm, seconded by Linda Fedor. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by,



Kelly Vackon