

Minutes
Board of Finance
Budget Meeting
March 13, 2024

6:00 p.m.

The Board of Finance of the Town of Oxford held a budget meeting on Monday, March 12, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Oxford Town Hall meeting room located at 486 Oxford Road, Oxford, CT 06478

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm. In attendance were Jack Kiley, chairman, Susan Arpin, Nicole Dykstra, Victor Catalano, Paula Jensen, Brett Olbrys.

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance

The budget for The Board of Education

The BOE budget has an increase of 5.45%. Deb Sherman, chair of the Board of Education opened the discussion. She said that this budget is a wish list, nor a rubber stamp budget. Howard Wardlow, Business Manager, discussed the handouts and referred to the summary on page 5. The million dollar surplus from last year was explained. \$295,000 of the surplus from the Board of Education went back to the town.

Jack Kiley advised that last year the Board of Education budget went up 3.3%. He also questioned the Assistant Superintendent position. Was advised that it's just a title change. The Director of Special Education will be doing both positions. She received a promotion, hence the title change.

Dr. Miller discussed the timeline of the surplus in added detail beginning with January 2022

Stephen Kozek explained that the student conduct coordinator is being replaced with a teacher who will keep her regular salary and receive a \$10,000 stipend. It's a more economical way. Dr. Miller stated it's a way to grow more from within.

Niki Dykstra questioned what the Director of Security position entails. Dr. Miller said we currently have the police officer. He stated that Seymour has a Director of Security. Niki asked the number of additional police officers and the cost for the school year. The Board of Education will get answer for Board of Finance. Jack Kiley questioned if there was an employee contribution on pension and healthcare. Brett Olbrys asked if if the BOE didn't have the million dollar surplus would you have spent on the same items this past year. Howard Wardlow replied that all years are unique. Another question by Brett stating the average increase is 2.5%, why 5.45%? Deb Sherman advised that in some years they need to order a freeze on all supplies and we are short changing staff who need the supplies for their classrooms. Dr. Miller stated that in the last couple years, they had the ESSER grants to help offset the supplies, which are not available for the new budget. Dr. Miller wants to state that it wasn't poor budgeting for the surplus. There was a software error that shouldn't affect the ask for this year. Jack Kiley asked for the number of certified teachers receiving medical and pensions. Howard Wardlow will provide that number at the next meeting.

Dr. Miller stated that this year for the first time they received a letter of support for the budget from the teachers and parents. He said this budget is to invest in our children's future.

Parents were then asked for comments. Several parents and teachers spoke in favor of the budget: Mollie Smith, Karen Delfino, Beth Drost, Josh Dykstra, Brian Goldstein, Amy Sarris, Stephen Kozek, Joseph Lucchi, Margaret Albert

Mike Koosa, Vice Chairman of the BOE, Thanked everyone for coming to the meeting tonight. He believes it is a fiscally responsible budget and they did their best to keep it low. Asked Everyone to come to the public hearing in April.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm. Motion made by Brett Olbrys, seconded by Niki Dykstra.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryjane Calladio

Clerk, Board of Finance

TOWN OF OXFORD, CT
Maryjane Calladio
TOWN CLERK

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