

ANNUAL BUDGET TOWN MEEING
MAY 4, 2015

The meeting was called to order by First Selectman George Temple at 7:00PM. He then introduced those at the front table: Jack Kiley, Board of Finance Chairman, Robert DeBisschop and Dick Burke members of the Board of Finance. Town Clerk Margaret A. West read the call and return of posting.

Edward Hardy moved to nominate August Palmer as moderator, seconded.

There were no other nominations for moderator; the Chairman introduced Mr. Palmer as moderator. Mr. Palmer read the eligibility to vote at a town meeting. He then appointed Attorney Condon as parliamentarian.

Amy Cote moved Item 1 seconded.

ITEM 1 Shall the Town of Oxford approve the Town's Municipal Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2015 2016?

Adoption of Item 1, after consideration and/or amendment, shall be by a vote at a Town Meeting by Referendum on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Quaker Farms School located at 30 Great Oak Road. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's office.

There being no questions of comments the Moderator called for a vote on Item 1:

Motion carried: Unanimous

Susan O'Brien moved, Seconded.

ITEM 2 Shall the Town of Oxford approve the Town's Board of Education Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016?

Adoption of Item 2, after consideration and/or amendment, shall be by a vote at a Town Meeting by Referendum on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Quaker Farms School located at 30 Great Oak Road. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's office.

Discussion:

Jennifer Garcia, 8 Bonnie Lane read from a prepared statement, not submitted to the Town Clerk, regarding her comments on the budget process and the Board of Finance.

David Stocker Punkup Rd commented that he took offence to the comments made about the Board of Finance handling the budget dishonestly from the previous statement. He further commented that the Board of Education had their chance during the budget process.

David Stocker moved the question, there was no second.

Jack Kiley Board of Finance said the board left the BOE budget alone last year and put it out to vote and it was rejected. He explained how the BOF went through each budget. The grand list increase was very small this year. He said while the budget was cut, there is \$180,000 in capital projects for maintenance of the schools. The BOF does not have the power to cut line items in the BOE budget, only the bottom line.

Richard Burke, BOF took offence to the comment that the BOF acted dishonestly/cowardly. He further explained that enrollment went down by 230 students, which seemed to have no impact on the BOE percentage increase. Enrollment is going down and the budget is going up.

M. Famato, Roosevelt Dr commented that the BOF was taking the voters rights a way; she further commented that the decisions are not reflected in the minutes.

Stephen Brown commented on the declining enrollments, 10 positions over the last few years. He further commented the town has a right to minutes and the May 4, 2015 minutes are still not available to the public. Out of 298 school systems Oxford ranks 198 on spending, spending \$13,243 per student. He continued reading from a statement giving statistics of surrounding towns. The cut would have amounted to a \$130.00 tax each taxpayer.

Amy Cote commented about operating cost and enrollment figures as well as how the BOE waits on some purchases until the end of the fiscal year to make sure they are fiscally responsible. She asked why the budget figures are not on the ballot.

Margaret A West, Town Clerk explained that the figures are not on the ballot because of the time frame of printing ballots. If we wait until the town meeting then the absentee ballots will not be available until Thursday, that gives only 2 days to vote absentee if you are leaving town.

George Temple First Selectman commented that the BOS sent the budget with no cuts. The BOF job is not easy, there are rules in place. The town budget was cut 3 times more than the education. He further explained that Economic growth takes time. We just had a major manufacture have interest in Oxford which he is not at liberty to discuss at this time. Oxford Centre is moving along and Masonic Care. He further explained that the Health and Safety of our town and its citizens is my responsibility as First Selectman, there are many areas of budget that needed to be addressed, and public works is one of them. The Trucks are getting older and need to be

replaced for safety reason. This winter was very difficult on the roads and the public works budget. The BOE has always been up front with me and we work well together. If any one here is willing to step up and be part of this process as an elected member of this board or any board please let me know. I will connect you to the right people.

Jack Kiley explained that the BOS do not vote on the BOE budget. This goes directly to the BOF.

Elizabeth Alagno 16 MacIntosh Dr commented that many people were there fighting to put money back in the budget, it was standing room only. She further commented that she hoped this was a wake up call.

Amy Cote asked about the capital non-recurring budget.

Jack Kiley commented on the roads portion of the budget and this winter. He continued reviewing items in the Budget, public works trucks, 5 projects that we have notes out on, Center school and fire trucks.

Robert DeBisschop explained that capital projects will not have to go to Town Meeting.

M. Famato commented that at the last meeting Joseph Dempsey suggested that a reverse call go out to everyone regarding the Town Meeting.

Joseph Dempsey explained he did not say for the Town Meeting, he corrected her and said I suggested it for the Referendum only.

Diane Soracco moved the question, seconded.

Motion to Move the question: Unanimous

Moderator called for a vote on Item 2: Motion carried: Unanimous

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Amy Cote moved, seconded:

ITEM 3

Shall the Town of Oxford approve a levy for road projects for the benefit of the Reserve Fund for Capital and Nonrecurring Expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2015-2016?

Adoption of Item 3, after consideration and/or amendment, shall be by a vote at a Town Meeting by Referendum on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Quaker Farms School located at 30 Great Oak Road. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's office.

Stephen Brown asked what this Item would cost each taxpayer:

Finance Director Jim Hliva explained it would be approximately \$100.00.

Stephen Brown further commented that he would be willing to pay this.

There being no other questions or comments the Moderator called for a vote.


Motion Carried: Unanimous


Ed Hardy moved to recess to Referendum on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Quaker Farms School located at 30 Great Oak Road. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's office.

Motion Carried: Unanimous

Meeting recessed at 8:01PM

Respectfully submitted


Margaret A West
Oxford Town Clerk

15 MAY -6 PM 4:49
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT

TOWN CLERK