

Annual Budget Meeting

May 6, 2019

First Selectman George Temple called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm Town Clerk Margaret A. West-Mainor read the call and return of posting. First Selectman Temple then ask Board of Finance Chairman Jack Kiley to review the budget over view found on page one of the hand out (addendum a).

Following his presentation Vincent Palutis nominated Kathy Johnson as moderator, seconded.

There being no other nominations the moderator read the eligibility to vote at a town meeting.

First Selectman Temple explained that he is in support of the budget, not 100 percent happy but it is workable. Strong desire to support the school security up grade and this is the increase in the mil rate, also state aid is down. This budget makes a lot of sense and he thanked Selectman Scott Flaherty and the Board of Finance, he introduced newly appointed Selectman Arnold Jensen and the Board of Finance.

Moderator then read Item I

Susan O'Brien 8 Country Farm Rd moved Item 1, seconded

ITEM 1 Shall the Town of Oxford approve the Town's Municipal Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020?

Adoption of Item 1, after consideration and/or amendment, shall be by a vote at a Town Meeting by Referendum on Thursday, May 16, 2019 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: Stephen Brown & Bonnie lane commented on his concerns for artificially juicing up the budget with the surplus.

Board of Chairman Jack Kiley explained that we did not borrow any funds but were able to get a lot of things accomplished over the years as well as seeing our revenue grow and keep our mill rate down.

Dick Burke 447 Quaker Farms Rd apologized for not being at Board of Selectman and Board of Finance budget meetings during the budget process. He questioned the 2017-2018 nonunion salary increases including the Selectman salaries. Discussion ensued regarding these increases, he then stated he would like to see every nonunion salary at zero. Town Counsel Kevin Condon explained that this can't be done as it would leave the town subject to possible legal action.

Finance Director Jim Hliva explained that these adjustments were approved by the Board of Selectman and then approved by the BOF

Board of Finance Chairman Jack Kiley explained the Board of Finance has no authority over the salary increases and they were not approved.

First Selectman George Temple explained those increases were 2 years ago before the election. Salaries reflect surrounding towns. They are the result of work put in to the job. The Selectman position requires you to be on call 24/7. The Board of Education hired a Superintendent and he is a professional being paid a very good salary, he further commented that this is what we need in our town, we need professionals to run our town.

Jack Kiley commented that other towns do not pay their Selectmen.

Selectman Scott Flaherty said he did some research and there are plenty of towns that do, for example, Woodbury, Beacon Falls and Bethany and their mill rates up. Oxford Selectmen have been getting paid for over 30 years.

Shelly Lacey-Castelot 10 Jenson Farm Rd explained that if Oxford would like to continue to attract people to move into our town our leadership has to work together. If you attend board meeting and become part of the process, you would understand what some of these increases may mean. Become part of the process. I support this budget

Anne Krane 411 Mulligan asked why the Board of Finance Contingency went from \$100,000 to \$300,000.

Jack Kiley explained that this includes an unfilled position that he would not disclose, contingency for public works and funds for raises.

Anne Kane questioned the Economic Development line item that went from \$89,295, to \$39,943.

Jack explained that this is for EDC programs such as the 14 lots of Commerce Dr. that the town owns that will have to be marketed.

First Selectman Temple explained the road has to be accepted and lots appraised. We need to make sure we get the right value for them. The position in the contingency is an EDC position. But not at this time, the Board of Selectman may consider this in the future, right now I am EDC.

Dick Burke 447 Quaker Farms Rd commented that Southbury, Monroe and Newtown do not have paid Selectmen. He further commented that he would like to make a motion to decrease them to 100 a week, which would be something like 5200.00 Moderator Johnson referred to Town Counsel's ruling that this is not a proper motion.

Brett O'brys called a point of order: explaining that as former chairman of the Charter Revision the salary is determined by the Town Meeting.

Town Counsel Kevin Condon explained that the salaries are set by the First Selectman and Board of Selectman, and personnel policy, this could subject the town to possible legal action.

Moderator explained that Town Counsel has ruled and with all due respect we must move on.

Moderator called for a vote on moving Item 1 to referendum. Motion carried;

There was discussion as to voice vote verses hand count the Moderator explained that vote was clearly taken.

Stephen Brown 8 Bonnie lane, moved Item 2, seconded.

ITEM 2 Shall the Town of Oxford approve the Town's Board of Education Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020?

Adoption of Item 2, after consideration and/or amendment, shall be by a vote at a Town Meeting by Referendum on Thursday, May 16, 2019 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.

Mary Freeman 145 Chestnut Tree Hill Rd explained that she supported the budget and an excellent school system makes for a better community.

Stephen Brown 8 Bonnie Lane supports the 3% increase, keeping us competitive with other towns.

Victor Tomporowski 20 Hawley Rd explained that the budget process is a give and take, its more than just about the 3%. He continued on the cost of education.

Susan O'Brien thanked everyone for their work on the budget and for the 3% increase and moved the question to Referendum seconded, Motion Carried: Unanimous

Brett O'Brys 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 2019-2020?

Adoption of Item 3, after consideration and/or amendment, shall be by a vote at a Town Meeting by Referendum on Thursday, May 16, 2019 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.

David Sauter, moved Item 3, seconded to Referendum Motion Carried Unanimous

Rocco Trungadi 336 Spruce Hill Rd moved to recess to Referendum May 16, 2019 from 6:00AM-8:00PM

Quaker Farms School 30 Great Oak Road Oxford Ct

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret A West-Mainor

Oxford Town Clerk

19 MAY 10 PM 2:22
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT
Margaret A West
TOWN CLERK