

MINUTES
JOINT BOARDS OF MAYOR AND BURGESSES
AND BOARD OF FINANCE
2ND PUBLIC HEARING – 2014/2015 FISCAL BUDGET
AUGUST 4, 2014
CITY HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

1. Mayor Robert A. Mezzo declared the public hearing open at **6:30 p.m.** with the following in attendance:

BURGESSES:

T. K. Rossi	R. Neth, absent
M. Bronko	A. Olbrys
R. Burns	P. Scully, Sr.
C. Ernsky, absent	R. Vitale
L. Jackson	

PRESS:

L. Marshall
P. Singley

RESIDENTS:

Seventy-two

FINANCE BOARD:

A. Bottinick	D. Scinto
J. Branco Sampaio, absent	D. Sheridan, Jr.
A. Campbell, absent	S. Stirk, absent
K. Kiernan	
A. Pistarelli	

ALTERNATES:

W. McAllister, absent
J. Savarese
D. Wisniewski, absent

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

S. Locke, School Superintendent
C. Montini, Assistant School Superintendent
J. Kallipolites, IT Director
B. Rizk, Assistant BOE Business Manager

A. Merly, BOE IT Director
J. Goggin, Tax Collector
R. Butler, Controller

OTHERS:

D. Neth-Kunin, Board of Education
K. Carten, Code of Ethics Commission
J. Jordan, Board of Education
R. Rebimbas, State Representative
E. Carter, Mayoral Aide

J. Taf, Housing Authority
J. Scully Board of Education
J. Miller, Library Director
V. Healy, Pension Board

2. Mayor Mezzo led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
3. Mayor Mezzo welcomed everyone to the public hearing and acknowledged all present from the Board of Mayor and Burgesses, Board of Finance, the Controller, and Borough Clerk.
4. Mayor Mezzo introduced the Chairwoman of the Board of Finance, Diane Scinto who stated the purpose of the public hearing and gave the ground rules for conducting the hearing and also stated, for the record, that the hearing was being recorded legally. Chairwoman Scinto took comments from the public after they stated their name and address.

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D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive

Zero based budget for all departments including the Board of Education. Share services with neighboring communities. We should consolidate departments in the borough subject to conflict of interest.

D. Carten – 23 Coventry Lane

Thanked the board for their hard work. Cuts being made are making the borough less attractive and will come back to hurt us. Homes are people's biggest investment. We now have to bond because of unfunded maintenance of our streets.

K. Kuzma – 438 Allerton Road

Revaluation was devastating. Does not believe the town's financial problems occurred in a single year or two. There is low morale in the town. People would leave if their home values were higher. Bumpy roads, etc. have effect on morale. If there was a significant rise in healthcare costs, a company would shop around for the best price and not absorb the increase. It would be passed onto employees. The pensions are out of control. The 401K plan is not going to help until twenty years from now.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

S. Tansley – 42 Barn Finch Circle

1.1 million dollar loss in revenue and yet only \$200,000 was cut from the Board of Education budget. He does not think it is collaborative or fair that the Board of Education only took \$200,000 in cuts and the town needs to make up the rest.

E. Cerasale – 110 Birch Lane

He and his wife are retired senior citizens. The teachers were given \$25,000 in bonuses to retire. It is a lot of money out of the pocketbook of citizens that we cannot afford. Who decided \$25,000 instead of \$5,000?

S. Hebb – 136 Conrad Street

\$675,000 came out of the Board of Education's budget for the teachers to retire. Why not cut their budget if they had enough in last year's budget to entice teachers to retire? The Board of Education is holding us hostage and dictates our mill rate because they are more than 50% of our budget. There is money floating around the Board of Education that is not being used for education if \$675,000 could be found for teachers. A lot of waste going on especially at the high school.

D. Hawkins – 222 Lincoln Street

There is too much focus on money and not enough on parental involvement.

M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street

The Joint Boards made a good start in cuts but \$400,000 is truly the only reduction. \$800,000 is delayed until future years. There has been no mention of approaching the bargaining units for concessions regarding uniforms, healthcare costs, etc. The Board of Education did not go out to bid for healthcare. Social workers might be certified teachers

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but believes they can no longer teach. There is a 15% increase in student spending over the years.

A. Wargo – 1058 Rubber Avenue

The upper and lower two to three percent of students have nothing to do with our school system. They will perform that way regardless. The average student is a product of our school system. He said nothing has changed since he sat on the school board fifteen years ago.

D. Neth-Kunin – 40 Donovan Court – Board of Education Vice Chair

The Board of Education went out to bid for insurance. Four bid and two declined.

J. Jordan – 72 Elmwood Street – Board of Education Member

The Board of Education tried to create a relationship with the Board of Finance by communicating as early as possible about the budget.

F. Scheithe – 243 Millville Avenue

He taught for thirty-nine years at the high school and took offense to the prior comments regarding the level of success at the high school. Walk a mile in someone's shoes before commenting.

M. Stopa – 43 Fieldstone Terrace

There are too many counselors and administrators in the school system. Four counselors are at Andrew Avenue alone. Is there a way to open contracts to renegotiate the rising cost of insurance?

A. Wargo – 1058 Rubber Avenue

Not being factual in regard to one time revenue. Every bit of one time revenue is delayed until next year.

S. Tansley – 42 Barn Finch Circle

When the actual figures come back, does the budget get adjusted for the following year?

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

J. Goggin – 87 Moonlight Circle – Tax Collector

The part time employee in the Tax Collector's office was cut. The motor vehicle tax bill is being split this year increasing the amount of mail. The lines for the office will be fine but processing the mail will be difficult to get out on time. Need to keep the part time position.

B. Meyer – 107 Thunderbird Drive

What are the expenses for the maintenance at the General DataComm building? The building is costing the borough money. Why did we buy it? It's a bad real estate investment.

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D. Hawkins – 222 Lincoln Street

We conduct business the old fashioned way at town hall. We need to modernize and pay taxes online without going through a third party.

S. Tansley – 42 Barn Finch Circle

We are paying \$94,000 for the Naugatuck Economic Development Corporation. Are we reaching too high? What are we getting for that money? What does the position do?

A. Wargo – 1058 Rubber Avenue

The General DataComm building was for site control, thought Parcel C was the same thing. The borough is giving away Parcel C at \$130,000 and we paid millions to clean it up. Where is the plan? The borough spent all our money and refuse to come up with a plan.

Bodas (spelling?) – Spring Street

His firm looks for grants and environmental options. Is there anything in Naugatuck?

D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive

\$26,000 reduction from the last budget.

M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street

The Naugatuck Economic Development Corporation was supposed to be self-funding in five years and it has not happened. Make a reduction this year.

PUBLIC SAFETY

K. Kuzma – 438 Allerton Road

The Police and Fire Departments overtime line item is at a high percentage. Healthcare and raises need to be addressed with bargaining units.

S. Tansley – 42 Barn Finch Road

Is there any way we can force lower paying firemen to work when overtime is needed?

S. Hebb – 136 Conrad Street

Are the Fire Marshal and Fire Inspector positions open?

M. Stopa – 43 Fieldstone Terrace

Shelton has more daytime occupants than Naugatuck but less police officers per shift. Naugatuck has 21,000 daytime occupants vs. Shelton has 43,000. Shelton has a volunteer Fire Department.

B. Meyer – 107 Thunderbird Drive

How many police officers do we have, fifty-four? The Charter states we can only employ fifty.

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D. Hawkins – 222 Lincoln Street

Working hard and living within your means is the way to live. She believes in Naugatuck and said we need to bring it back. How can the board ask people on a limited income to give more?

M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street

Section 60 of the Borough Charter refers to the number of police officers.

S. Tansley – 42 Barn Finch Road

Was there a discussion with the internal IT staff to alleviate the need for a consultant? Is the money budgeted for an on call IT Consultant money we have to pay out but may never use their services? Can't we work with existing IT staff to be on call and pay them a stipend?

HEALTH AND WELFARE

D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive

Kudos to the administration for reducing costs by closing the VNA and Youth Services.

PUBLIC WORKS

D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive

\$28,000 reduction is only a 5/100% reduction.

M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street

Disappointed no cuts were made to the golf course. Cuts should be made to make it revenue neutral. There was an \$118,000 loss last year.

A. Wargo – 1058 Rubber Avenue

Not many people are in favor of closing the golf course. Raising fees is not objectionable. Rent for the restaurant is not much more than a single family home. We are not getting much money in rent and we are paying to maintain the building. Water Pollution Control Authority spending is out of control. It should be paid by user fees. He cannot connect to the sewer system because he would have to pay to do so.

B. Meyer – 107 Thunderbird Drive

What is the \$10,800 for GPS tracking? Who pays the tipping fee? There is \$9,000 in overtime to cut grass in the Industrial Park. Can't they do it during regular hours? The money from the sale of the trucks should be used to lower our bonds. Greater Waterbury Transit District was taken out of the budget. Now round trip goes from \$6 to \$12. The hours of the Senior Center bus were decreased also. The board is taking away some things that are available for him and it's making him want to move out of Naugatuck. It makes him feel isolated and alienated. There are no sidewalks down Spring Street so he is unable to use his scooter. He is for privatizing the gold course.

S. Tansley – 42 Barn Finch Road

He would like a breakdown of the cost savings to privatize trash collection. He asked if

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there were any callable bonds. There is a 1.1 million dollar reduction. If we put \$800,000 in a bond issue, did we really cut the budget? Less focus on that and more focus on the four thousand people who voted that the budget was too high.

A. Wargo – 1058 Rubber Avenue

A group of people said the board was wrong.

R. Vallano – Beacon Falls Resident

She cannot find what the actual expenditures were, only the adopted budgets. There is no accountability in departments. She has seen two DPW employees on a truck while one weed whacks. The interest line item in the budget has increased. Are we spending more? Can we get the Board of Education actual expenditures each year?

5. Chairwoman Scinto declared the public hearing closed at **10:15 p.m.**

A digital recording of this meeting is available in the office of the Borough Clerk for further review.

Attest:

Nancy K. DiMeo
Borough Clerk