

**MINUTES**  
**JOINT BOARDS OF MAYOR AND BURGESSES**  
**AND BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> PUBLIC HEARING – 2015/2016 FISCAL BUDGET**  
**JULY 13, 2015**  
**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, left 8:00 p.m.	A. Olbrys
R. Burns	P. Scully, Sr.
C. Ernsky, absent	R. Vitale
L. Jackson	

**PRESS:**

L. Marshall  
P. Singley

**RESIDENTS:**

Thirty-two

**FINANCE BOARD:**

A. Bottinick	J. Savarese, absent
J. Branco Sampaio, absent	D. Scinto, absent
A. Campbell, absent	D. Sheridan, Jr.
K. Kiernan, arr. 6:50 p.m.	S. Stirk
A. Pistarelli, absent	

**ALTERNATES:**

R. Burke, absent  
W. McAllister, absent  
D. Wisniewski, absent

**DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

R. Butler, Controller  
S. Locke, Superintendent of Schools

K. Hanks, Fire Chief

**OTHERS:**

D. Neth-Kunin, Board of Education  
R. Lennon, 5yr. Capital Committee  
M. Katra, Republican Registrar  
J. Lennon, Golf Course Commission

Five firefighters  
R. Merancy, WPCA  
M. Teator, Arts Commission  
J. LaCharity, Police Dept.

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 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. Mayor Mezzo took comments from the public after they stated their name and address.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive**

Every year the budget continues to grow. It's become harder to pay for it in taxes. Increases exceed the cost of living increases. He asked the board to consider bold actions

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to change the budget. Set the mill rate at a number and work to achieve a budget to fit the mill rate. Look at a 5% decrease in the mill rate. Decrease expenses or increase the grand list. Freeze insurance costs to the cost of living. Ask state legislators to base binding arbitration on what the citizens of the town can afford to pay. He suggests fee for services. Families with children in school pay tuition on a sliding system. Turn Prospect Street School into a charter school and teachers are paid for performance not seniority. He is personally willing to pay more to make the golf course cost neutral but he would like to see other parks be cost neutral as well. Turn the wastewater plant into a fee for service.

**C. Herb – 161 Park Avenue**

He is a businessman in town and doesn't see how the budget will help anyone in the neighborhood around his store. It has been difficult getting more money for his rental property because people look at the school system. The town is ranked 149<sup>th</sup> in the state. The taxes are too high. Tell department heads to lower their budgets by 3%.

**M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street**

He was disappointed more Finance Board members were not present at the public hearing tonight. The Board of Education only decreased their budget by \$318,000 yet enrollment has decreased. The 8% raise for the human resources director, the 27% raise for the assistant business manager and the raises for the superintendent and assistant superintendent of schools are unacceptable. Why are we spending \$500 a week at Nardelli's for Board of Education employees? Shave a million dollars off the Board of Education budget and achieve a flat mill rate.

**R. Merancy – 1074 Andrew Mountain Road**

He was disappointed more board members didn't show up to hear the public speak. The budget is too high. There are ways to save money like in the benefits we pay employees. He has to personally pay \$500 a month for insurance and meet a \$5,000 deductible annually at United Technologies. This is the real world.

**M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street**

He said we allow teachers who coach at another school to leave early while we have to pay for a substitute to take over that teacher's class. We are paying for coffee and water at the Tuttle Building. Why do we pay for someone to mentor an administrator that makes \$130,000 a year?

**J. Szarzynski – 43 Bridle Train Drive**

He said the superintendent is doing a great job but does not agree that she should get a raise. He hasn't received a raise. The mill rate is ridiculous.

**D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive**

He said it would be nice to see progress on the Board of Education website so the public can see proof positive of the changes. Need to see year to year changes. Right now it is smoke and mirrors. The town is struggling with the sins of our roots.

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**J. Szarzynski – 43 Bridle Train Drive**

Freeze the salaries. He couldn't sell his house if he wanted to move.

**D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive**

It is a boiling situation at the Board of Education. He told the board members to make bold and substantive changes. The number of homes for sale in Naugatuck on Realtor.com is stunning. Set a mill rate at a reasonable number. People will start abandoning their homes if something isn't done.

**C. Fain – 19 Corn Tassel Road**

The mill rate has been going up all his life. He lives in a three bedroom house and pays over \$5,000 in taxes. He said school books can be downloaded online. Kids need to sell cupcakes and candy like when he was in school. The Peter Paul property has been empty for ten years. Rubber Avenue is dead, a mess. We didn't need artificial turf; Naugatuck is not a big football town.

**M. Stopa – 43 Fieldstone Terrace**

The high school building project is under budget. Who gave someone permission to spend that money, our money? He would like to encourage the Board of Education to review their raises. There are fewer students in the school system. The assistant business manager is receiving a twenty-seven percent raise. A free pre-kindergarten class is being taught over the summer. Why does he have to pay for struggling students to attend? What about people struggling to pay for the programs? The staffing levels are a little excessive.

**GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**M. Katra – 84 Walnut Street**

It doesn't look like much was done to reduce the town's budget when only \$180,000 was removed. He thought Finance Board members who suggested a 2% reduction across the board were laughed at and ridiculed.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**J. Szarzynski – 47 Bridle Trail Drive**

The Police Department has \$900,000 for overtime. Wouldn't it be cheaper to hire new officers than to pay the overtime? Senior employees pump up their pensions by working the overtime.

**R. Merancy – 1074 Andrew Mountain Road**

Are we still giving pensions based on salary plus overtime?

**M. Stopa – 43 Fieldstone Terrace**

How come the Police Department didn't offer any cuts? The daytime population goes down during the day in Naugatuck. Why do we need more manpower? Homes in Naugatuck are substantially cheaper than in Shelton.

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**HEALTH AND WELFARE**

**R. Merancy – 1074 Andrew Mountain Road**

He is the chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority. The wastewater plant is a merchant facility. If we didn't take in merchant sludge, the cost to operate would be twice as much. Ninety-five percent of the increase is due to unfunded state mandates. He agrees with a sewer usage fee.

**D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive**

What is the percentage of businesses and residents that use the treatment plant?

**PUBLIC WORKS**

**M. Stopa – 43 Fieldstone Terrace**

Where is the savings for the privatization of the trash? The cost of trash removal should be passed onto the residents.

**DEBT**

None

**PENSIONS**

None

**INSURANCE**

**R. Merancy – 1074 Andrew Mountain Road**

Do we have the ability to requote insurance every year?

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

None

**GENERAL**

**R. Merancy – 1074 Andrew Mountain Road**

Has the town looked into LED lighting? How has the solar roof at the high school profited?

**RESERVE FUND**

**M. Stopa – 43 Fieldstone Terrace**

Why are we spending money to install poles from the high school to the field on Osborn Road?

**CONTINGENCY**

**D. O'Connor – 54 Visconti Drive**

Was contingency used this year and for what?

**W. Hulbert – 71 Osborn Road**

Did we use contingency to hire firefighters? Is that normal procedure?

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**REVENUES**

**R. Merancy – 1074 Andrew Mountain Road**

What is the current tax collection rate? What about hiring a private tax collector and requiring him to get 100% collections? Is the grand list status up or down? Is the Train Station sale in the budget? When is Parcel C going to break ground? Do we have a contract with them yet?

5. Mayor Mezzo declared the public hearing closed at **8:20 p.m.**

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

**Attest:**

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Nancy K. DiMeo  
Borough Clerk