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MAY 28 2008

TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

**TOWN OF BETHEL
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 27, 2008
BETHEL MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
7:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Moderator, Sharon Straiton, First Selectman, Robert E. Burke, Selectman, Paul Szatkowski, Selectman, Kevin L. Cleary, Town Counsel, William J. Hagan, Board of Finance Chairman, J. Philip Gallagher, Town Clerk, Lisa Bergh, Board of Education Chairman, Bill Kingston, Board of Education Fiscal Services Director Teri Yonsky.

CALL TO ORDER: Moderator Sharon Straiton reconvened the Town Meeting at 7:30 PM.

Town Counsel William Hagan read resolution#1 (see attached).
Nick Ellis seconded the resolution.

Moderator Straiton announced that before discussion on the motion Board of Finance Chairman, J. Philip Gallagher wanted to make a statement. Mr. Gallagher explained that the board was able to meet this past Friday and unanimously agreed to reduce the budget by \$200,000.00 on the town side and \$318,000.00 on the Education side. This will reduce the proposed increase in taxes to 3.6%.

DISCUSSION:

Billy Michael- The margin of defeat and the town's advice in regards to the advisory questions clearly shows the Board of Finance took a step in the right direction, however he feels it should have been a 1% reduction across the board. Billy Michael made a motion to reduce the Annual Town Operating Budget by \$50,000.00. Motion seconded by Chris Cudzilo. Chairman Gallagher asked if he meant this to be a bottom line reduction by \$50,000.00. The answer to his question was yes.

Verbal vote was taken, Mr. Michaels called division, Standing count returned 15 for "yes" and 38 "no". Motion failed.

Bill Gulya- Feels it is a good idea

Nick Ellis made a motion to move the question, motion seconded by Bill Hillman. Vote, in favor, motion passes.

Town Counsel reads resolution #2 (see attached). Nick Ellis seconded the resolution.

Discussion:

Billy Michael- Posed a question to Bill Kingston, Chairman of the Board of Education. "Where in the budget is the money for the robo late night phone calls?" Teri Yonsky responded that due to the computer glitch, there would be no charge to the Board of Education. Mr. Kingston stated that the Board of Education has authorized the use of the automated phone system for snow days, emergency usage; however the superintendent directed the automated phone calls to go out for the referendum. Billy asked that considering the reduction on the Education side would there still be a consideration of new hires. Mr. Kingston explained that there would not be any new hires in fact there might have to be a possible reduction in staffing. Mr. Michael went on to question health benefits for Education administrators. Billy Michael made a motion to reduce the Board of Education budget by \$50,000.00, motion seconded by Will Michael.

Discussion:

Billy Michael went on to state that last year the Board of Education budget went virtually unscathed, this a is modest reduction.

Dominic Ippolito- Stated that he was neutral about the budget until he read the article about the late night phone calls going out. Wants to know why a town employee who is hired to teach our children is involving himself in the politics of Bethel, and at a cost to the town.

Nick Ellis made a motion to move the question which was seconded by Bill Hillman, then asked to withdraw their motion to allow Robert Crnic to speak.

Robert Crnic- Questioned the impact of the fuel costs and the potential shortfalls. Teri Yonsky stated that the majority of the utilities are covered under the town operating budget, however the diesel fuel is the responsibility of the Board of Ed. Although she went ahead and locked in a price, she believes the shortfall would be approximately \$50,000.00. He also asked if there were any rebates from the health insurance company as has happened in previous years. The final numbers are in replied Ms. Yonsky and there were no refunds or rebates.

J. Philip Gallagher stated that Mr. Curina had passed on that the potential deficit for heating costs would be about \$300,000.00

First Selectman Burke remarked that the town is aggressively pursuing American fuel sources namely natural gas. We are looking to extend the natural gas lines and are currently in negotiations with Yankee Gas.

Billy Michael- In regards to the diesel fuel, are the field trips paid for by the town or are they self funded. Ms. Yonsky clarified that they are self funded.

Will Michael- Speaks in favor of Billy Michaels motion, he is known as a conservationist and believes that most people these days are trying to conserve and feels the town should do the same.

Dana Eaton- Feels that the impact on the taxpayer in the amount of a \$50,000.00 cut to overall Education budget is so minuscule, when in fact \$50,000 could mean a teacher. There has already been major cuts made to the original budget and wants it to remain intact.

Motion to move the question made by Nick Ellis, seconded by Bill Hillman. Vote taken on motion to reduce the Board of Education budget by \$50,000.00. Motion fails.

Bill Gulya- Wants to know why the Board needs \$150,000.00 in diesel fuel, diesel fuel has nothing to do with education. Mr. Gulya made a motion to reduce the Board of Education budget by \$250,000.00. Motion seconded by Billy Michael. Vote taken, motion fails.

Bill Hillman made a motion to move the main question, seconded by Nick Ellis. Vote taken, motion passes.

Vote taken on main motion, motion passes.

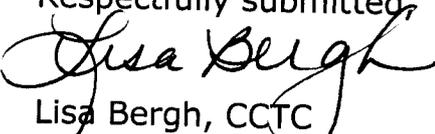
Town Counsel reads resolution #3(see attached). Robert Burke seconded the motion. Vote, motion passes.

Town Counsel reads resolution #4(see attached). Robert Burke seconded the motion. Vote, motion passes.

Motion to adjourn made by Nick Ellis, seconded by Bill Hillman. Vote, motion passes.

Meeting adjourned to machine vote June 10, 2008 at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Lisa Bergh, CCTC
Bethel Town Clerk

TOWN OF BETHEL, CONNECTICUT

RESOLUTIONS, MAY 27, 2008

- 1) RESOLVED, that the legal voters of the Town of Bethel and those persons entitled to vote therein appropriate the sum of Twenty Three Million Five Hundred Ninety Two Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Nine (\$23,592,329.00) Dollars, of which the sum of Three Million One Hundred Eighty Eight Thousand One Hundred Seventy Two (\$3,188,172) Dollars will be used for operation, maintenance and other expenditures relating to education, as recommended by the Board of Finance, as the Annual Town Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2008.
- 2) RESOLVED, that the legal voters of the Town of Bethel and those persons entitled to vote therein appropriate the sum of Thirty Six Million Nine Hundred Eight Two Thousand Four Hundred Seventeen (\$36,982,417.00) Dollars as recommended by the Board of Finance, as the Annual Board Of Education Budget for the Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2008.
- 3) RESOLVED, that the legal voters of the Town of Bethel and those persons entitled to vote therein establish the date of June 10, 2008 as the date on which the machine vote on the annual town budget shall take place in accordance with the provisions of the Bethel Town Charter and the Connecticut General Statutes.
- 4) RESOLVED, that the legal voters of the Town of Bethel and those persons entitled to vote therein authorize any and all things which may be legally necessary or appropriate to accomplish the above named purposes.

BOE BUDGET CHANGES FROM 2007-08 TO 2008-09

	FTE Headcount	Amount in \$ Dollars	Percentage Change
2007-08 Approved Budget	411.80	35,818,146	
2008-09 Proposed Budget	415.34	36,982,417	
Increase in Budget 2007-08 to 2008-09	3.54	1,164,271	3.25%
Cost to Carry Forward 07-08 Budget into 08-09		1,405,381	3.92%
Proposed Changes to Budget - Payroll		199,665	0.56%
Proposed Changes to Budget - Non-Payroll		77,225	0.22%
BOS/BOF Budget Reduction to Education		-518,000	-1.45%
Total Budget Increase 2007-08 to 2008-09		1,164,271	3.25%
Proposed Changes to Budget - Payroll			
HS Technology Education Teacher	1.00	57,403	
MS Reading Specialist/Teacher	1.00	57,403	
JS Fifth Grade Teacher	(1.00)	-57,403	
HS College & Career Center Paraprofessional	1.00	17,634	
HS Custodians	2.00	81,620	
HS Lunch Monitors (2)	0.62	7,466	
BS Lunch Monitor	0.31	2,983	
HS Security	1.00	22,200	
SW Technology Specialist (part time to full time)	0.20	12,053	
SW Summer School Assistance	0.20	8,840	
Staff Re-organizations during 2007-08	(2.79)	0	
Increased Reliance on Staff Vacancy Savings		-20,000	
Additional Summer School Staff (+Teachers -Paras)		10,852	
Summer School Director Funding		-4,625	
JS After School Enrichment/Remedial - 120 hours		3,239	
	3.54	199,665	0.56%
Proposed Changes to Budget - Non-Payroll			
SW Health Benefits related to new positions		47,218	
SW Technology Software Programs		14,842	
HS Library Books		7,400	
JS Purchased Professional Administrative Services		-36,900	
HS Dues - NEASC Accreditation Process		25,000	
HS Athletic Uniforms		7,000	
HS Athletics-Program Change-Delete Ice Hockey		-19,100	
HS Athletics-Program Change-Add Indoor Track		12,765	
HS/JS/RS Classroom Furniture		19,000	
		77,225	0.22%

TOWN OF BETHEL

RECOMMENDED BUDGET

FISCAL YEAR 2008 - 2009

REVISION #1 MAY 23, 2008

RECOMMENDED BUDGET
FISCAL YEAR 2008 - 2009

ACCOUNT	DEPARTMENT	SPENT 2006-2007	BUDGET 2007-2008	REVISED 2007-2008	RECOMENDED 2008-2009
100	SELECTMEN	177,258	180,458	180,458	192,733
110	TREASURER	6,770	6,550	6,550	6,750
120	FINANCE	309,685	323,542	323,542	336,216
130	TOWN CLERK	186,322	207,948	207,948	210,007
140	ASSESSOR	149,495	167,580	167,580	180,426
150	TAX COLLECTOR	142,577	164,476	164,476	174,425
160	LEGAL & OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	171,747	161,200	161,200	181,380
170	PROBATE COURT	2,291	2,650	2,650	2,650
180	BUILDING INSPECTION	184,107	189,624	189,624	196,155
190	DATA PROCESSING	153,982	117,072	117,072	134,388
200	SOCIAL SERVICES	47,521	54,911	54,911	56,521
210	TOWN INSURANCE	884,362	811,400	811,400	732,403
220	FLEET MAINTENANCE	272,370	300,583	300,583	311,550
230	PUBLIC WORKS ADMIN	231,760	269,063	269,063	321,979
240	HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT	1,417,815	1,555,232	1,555,232	1,629,692
250	PLANNING AND ZONING	175,118	189,073	189,073	192,316
260	BUILDING MAINTENANCE - TOWN	532,908	743,177	743,177	680,006
270	TREE WARDEN	66,790	62,600	62,600	83,700
290	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	8,943	9,850	12,309	38,538
300	FIRE MARSHAL	65,744	73,111	73,111	83,161
310	BETHEL FIRE DEPARTMENT	111,338	150,250	150,250	163,850
320	STONY HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT	131,203	155,050	155,050	155,450
330	REGISTRARS OF VOTERS	71,593	79,086	79,086	79,886
340	BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS	100,394	121,855	121,855	134,448
350	HEALTH DEPARTMENT	210,461	242,591	242,591	253,457
360	POLICE DEPARTMENT	3,249,328	3,360,891	3,360,891	3,462,978
380	PARKS AND RECREATION	783,200	907,409	907,409	913,202
390	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	3,457,601	4,089,651	4,089,651	4,272,996
400	NON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	26,069	35,509	35,509	25,052
405	INTRA GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	327,850	492,649	492,649	446,483
410	UTILITIES AND OTHER CHARGES	1,939,216	2,034,053	2,034,053	2,340,078
420	MISC CHARGES AND TRANSFERS	585,867	374,500	372,041	368,574
430	SENIOR CENTER	107,109	125,516	125,516	129,018
435	LIBRARY	729,134	774,616	774,616	794,430
440	DEBT SERVICE	3,886,586	3,974,155	3,974,155	3,956,602
460	BUILDING MAINTENANCE - EDUCATION	447,344	376,945	376,945	350,829
TOTAL TOWN BUDGET		21,351,858	22,884,826	22,884,826	23,592,329
450	BOARD OF EDUCATION	34,299,264	35,818,146	35,818,146	36,982,417
TOTAL BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET		34,299,264	35,818,146	35,818,146	36,982,417
TOTAL BUDGET		55,651,122	58,702,972	58,702,972	60,574,746

INCREASE IN TOWN BUDGET	3.1%
INCREASE IN EDUCATION BUDGET	3.3%
INCREASE IN TOTAL BUDGET	3.2%
CURRENT BASE MILL RATE	20.84
PROPOSED MILL RATE	21.59
INCREASE IN MILL RATE	0.75
% INCREASE IN MILL RATE	3.6%

**TOWN OF BETHEL
ESTIMATED REVENUES
FISCAL YEAR 2008- 2009**

ACCOUNT	REVENUE SOURCE	RECEIVED 2006-2007	REVENUES 2007-2008	REVISED 2007-2008	ESTIMATED 2008-2009
500	GENERAL TAX REVENUE	44,809,336	47,744,760	47,744,760	49,342,040
550	LICENSES AND PERMITS	389,272	287,800	287,800	287,800
600	INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUES	9,139,621	9,314,320	9,314,320	9,781,312
700	CHARGES FOR SERVICES	802,278	837,658	837,658	747,558
750	USE OF MONEY AND PROPERTY	559,059	338,586	338,586	391,586
850	OTHER REVENUES	38,018	179,848	179,848	24,450
900	FUND BALANCE				
	REVENUE TOTALS	55,737,584	58,702,972	58,702,972	60,574,746