

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

Town of Bethel, Connecticut Recommended Budget Fiscal Year 2010-2011

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

At a meeting of the Board of Finance, which concluded on March 10, 2010, the following estimates of expenditures and revenues were recommended for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011.

A public hearing on the recommended budget will be held on Monday, April 12, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at the Bethel High School Auditorium, Whittlesey Drive, Bethel, Connecticut.

All persons entitled to vote at the Annual Town Budget Meeting are invited to make written and oral comments concerning the recommended budget. Copies of the recommended budget are on file in the Town Clerk's Office, Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center and are available for inspection.

Dated: March 25, 2010

Board of Finance

J. Philip Gallagher, Chairman ~ John Dietter ~ Timothy Draper ~ William Kingston
William Slifkin ~ James Roden ~ Gary Regan

J. Philip Gallagher opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel High School Auditorium, noting all members of the Board of Finance present along with Lawrence Craybas, Chairman of the Board of Education and Theresa Yonsky, Director of Fiscal Services for the Board of Education.

J. Philip Gallagher provided a review of the budget process thus far.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Paul Improta, Highview Terrace spoke to the Republican Town Committee's resolution to request that the Board of Finance reinstate the First Selectman salary; the salary had been approved by the voters at the last budget meeting.

William Hillman, Walnut Hill Road, among other comments, noted that the Board of Education budget should be passed, suggested that maybe cuts should be made to the town side.

David Glahn, Elizabeth Street, among other comments, noted that no one has any money; yet people will get raises, noted that Ridgefield took \$500,000 out of their funds to offset the budget.

Nancy Ryan, Walnut Hill Road, offered that the cut to the First Selectman's salary appears to be political; other salaries were either frozen or raises were given and urged the salary be reinstated.

Dominic Ippolito, Linda Lane, among other things, offered that there should be no salary increases where there are no contractual obligations; employees should be happy they have a job.

John Reilly, Adams Drive, among other comments, offered that this is the worst economy ever and he can't support continuing to raise taxes.

Noreen Hochsprung, Nature View Trail spoke to the increased cost to the water hydrants.

William Michael, Fleetwood Avenue, among other things, offered that if nothing else, the Board of Education budget requests have proven that they can live on less, the economy is not good, a look should be taken at the HART buses, First Selectman salary was reduced, the Superintendents salary should be as well.

Bill Allen, Aunt Pattys Lane, offered among other comments, didn't want to see a bond for normal maintenance items, school administration is excessive and highly overpaid, instead of reducing teachers, reduce administration.

Will Michaels, Fleetwood Avenue, offered among other comments, thought the Board of Finance should have more control over the funding of positions, they only control elected official salaries.

Mary O'Leary, Terry Drive, among other comments, spoke to the moral responsibility the town has to fund, even minimally, agencies that provide services to Bethel residents.

Kristin Sprok, Rockwell Road, among other comments, spoke in support of the Board of Education budget, noting that they work tirelessly to improve student achievement, requested budget be left intact with no more cuts to staff and programs.

Cynthia McCorkindale, Elgin Avenue, among other comments, questioned the Board of Finance member's stance on the budget.

Chris Longo, among other comments, noted he wholeheartedly supports the Board of Education budget.

Lawrence Craybas, Board of Education Chairman, among other comments, spoke to the need to have mandates fully funded by the State. They have been meeting with the unions, contracts are fair and reasonable.

Beth Cavagna, Plumtrees Road, among other comments, asked for clarification that the proposed budget increase to the average household would amount to approximately \$200 per year.

Pat Peratoro, Chimney Drive, among other comments, requested that the budget be presented to the voters as is, any reductions to the education budget would leave all Bethel children behind.

Karen Rowe, Grassy Plain Street, among other comments, complimented the superintendent and Board of Education; cuts have been made to budgets and supports this budget as it stands.

Jen Larsen, Grassy Plain Street, among other comments, spoke in support of the Board of Education budget.

David Belcourt, Milwaukee Avenue, among other comments, spoke to supporting the budget and our wonderful school system.

Robert Legnard, Evergreen Drive, among other comments, spoke to supporting the town and education; the budget finances a good product – our town.

Lisa Allaby, Chestnut Ridge, among other comments, spoke in support of funding charitable organizations and the education budget advising that we do get a lot of bang for our buck.

Emily Belardinelli, Dodgingtown Road, among other comments, offered that as a school nurse, they are very busy and volunteer a lot of their time stretching themselves quite thin, and thanked the central office.

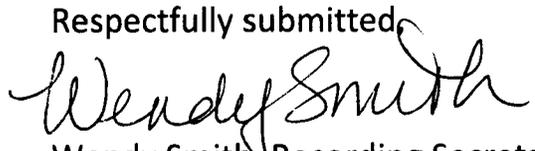
Resident, Lexington Blvd, among other comments, noted that if we start reducing budgets, we will see a negative impact.

William Michael, Fleetwood Avenue, among other comments, noted that the town should not be funding charitable organizations.

John Reilly, Adams Drive, among other comments, felt we should sue the state to ensure that they fully fund their mandates.

As there were no further comments, J. Philip Gallagher closed the Public Hearing at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "W".

Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary