



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

*Board of Finance
1212 Whittemore Road
Middlebury, CT 06762*

Annual Budget Hearing Minutes Wednesday April 6, 2022 Library Larking Room 30 Crest Road, Middlebury

Present: Ed St John, First Selectman
Elaine Strobel, Selectman
Ralph Barra, Selectman
Vincent Cipriano, Chairman
Rita H Smith, Board Member
John Jenusaitis, Board Member
Joseph Drauss, Board Member
Stephen Ruccio, Board Member
John Moriarty, Alternate

Absent: Natrajan Kuppuraj, Alternate
Brendan Browne, Alternate
Dawn Albizu-Calabrese, Board Member

Vincent Cipriano opened the public hearing at 6:30 PM with the pledge of allegiance.

Proposed Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2023

Vincent Cipriano stated the estimated mill rate is included in the documents provided. He reviewed the expenditures and focused on the increases and the percentage of increases. Vincent Cipriano said the Board of Selectman had a 4.04% increase mainly due to salaries, the Assessor increased 9.66% because of revaluation reserve, Tax Collector increased 4.3% because of salaries, Town Clerk increased 1.93% because of salaries, Board of Finance increased 5.81% because of the town account increase, Town Hall decreased -40.24% because the Mitel phone system was moved to another account, Building Department increased 4.63% because of salaries and office supplies, Historical Society increased 20.12% because of the increased cost of heating oil, Fire Department increased 3.01% because of maintenance on equipment and trucks, and Police Department increased 4.74% because of salaries and IT.

Mike McCormack questioned the Police Department FY 21-22 having 1/3 of the budget left and why that didn't reflect the proposed FY 22-23. Chief Deely said the proposed budget included upfront cost for publications and the Nexgen and Exon cameras initial yearly cost. He said a lot of things have been purchased with no follow up for the remainder of the year. Mike McCormack said there is a \$200,000 increase from the past 2 years. Ed St John said there was 4 years of retroactive pay from the reserve account due to contract negotiations. All the contracts are now in place.

Vincent Cipriano continued to review the expenditure accounts. The 2.89% increase in Communications Center is because of the North West increase, Building and Grounds increased 14.23% because of salary and maintenance, Shepardson Community Center increased 2.07% because of light and power, Public Works increased 4.42% because of salaries, Waste Removal increased 8.43% because of tip fees, Park and Recreation increased 3.13% because of salaries and telephone and security, Social Services increased 5.99% because of salaries, Elderly Services increased 5.01% because of salaries, signage and software, Public Library increased 3.11% because of salaries and heating and oil cost, Contingency Fund Snow and Ice Removal decreased -100% because it was moved to another account, Information Technology increased 28.96% because of Mitel phone, Debt Services increased 29.02% because interest went down on principal payment, Capital Budget-Town/Facilities and Capital Budget-Town/Public Safety decreased 100% because they were moved to another account, and Extraordinary Items increased 677.78% because they added snow and ice removal and Fenn Farm.

Vincent Cipriano reviewed the revenue. He noted that ECS increased because of extra money received from the State. Ed St John said the State reduced the towns funding and then picked up in ECS funding, so the loses are offset. Vincent Cipriano said the donations are moving to the Capital Infrastructure Plan and the increase in the Transfer Station Fees are due to rate increases. Vincent Cipriano explained the Infrastructure/Capital/Reserve will be a yes or no question for the public. The total amount would be \$1,284,000.00 which will offset expenditures.

Mike McCormack said the budget is a 2.82% increase which is 50% greater than Southbury's proposed increase, and 300% greater than Waterbury's increase. John Jenusaitis noted that Waterbury received a lot more money from the State than Middlebury did. Mr. McCormack said Middlebury is the highest in the peer group and he feels they need to look at the increase in spending. He said it is a 13.58% increase for one year. He said if there is extra money he would rather see it go back to the tax payers as reduced taxes. He said they are not saving by putting extra money on Capital projects. Ed St John noted that 2016 started the Capital projects with 2 phases already being bonded. This money would be for the next construction year. He said there is an increase in the operating budget. A discussion ensued regarding the debt services account.

Brenda Carter said she is concerned over the State changing the motor vehicle mill rate to 29 and if the State doesn't reimburse the difference to the town. She said she has heard there is no money in the account to reimburse the towns. Ed St John said they had a discussion this afternoon. This would be in the 2023 budget. Brenda Carter said she in hearing now it will take affect July 1st, but she could be wrong. Ed St John felt the town would be ok and that they should receive \$500,000.00 to offset the difference if the mill rate is higher. He said they will struggle with energy cost and inflation cost, but they will make it work somehow.

Adjournment

VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by Joseph Drauss and seconded by John Jenusaitis to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 7:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Primus, Recording Clerk

Cc: Board of Selectmen

Board of Finance and Alternates

Janine Bowler, Town Treasurer

Email Notification for Website

File