



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

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

**Annual Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes
Tuesday April 4, 2023 – 7:00 PM
Library Larkin Room
30 Crest Road, Middlebury CT**

Present: Vincent Cipriano, Chairman
Rita H Smith, Board Member
Stephen Ruccio, Board Member
Joseph Drauss, Board Member
John Moriarty, Alternate
Dawn Albizu-Calabrese, Board Member
John Jenusaitis, Board Member

Absent: Natrajan Kuppuraj, Alternate
Brendan Browne, Alternate

Also Present: Ed St John, First Selectman
Ralph Barra, Selectman
Elaine Strobel, Selectman
Rachel Primus, Recording Clerk

Vincent Cipriano called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Public Hearing

- Proposed Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024. Total proposed Town General Fund Budget: \$12,668,501.50. Estimated Mill Rate to be determined when Region 15 FY 2023-2024 Budget is included.

Vincent Cipriano opened the public hearing at 6:32 PM. He reviewed the expenditure side and noted that most of the increases are contractual and salary. He reviewed all the accounts. He noted that the Legal account had decreased, Insurance account decreased because of contracts, Refund of Taxes account decreased 17%, and the Debt Services account is down significantly. He said the total town appropriation is increased by 3.37% and Region 15 has an increase of 8.67%.

Vincent Cipriano reviewed the Revenue side. He noted that the prior year taxes are down 14%, and the State Grants are down 40% because the State decreased the PILOT. Ed St John said the investment income numbers can change once they get the school budget numbers. Vincent Cipriano said the personal property audits are down 100% and there are no audits being done this year. He said the Police Department has a 42% increase because of Region 15 school security. There was a 5% reduction in Park and Recreation due to admissions and park passes. Vincent

Cipriano said there is a 7% increase to the overall revenue. Ed St John said some of the annual numbers were moved to the Capital Account, which will be a question at the election. He noted that the lease purchase payment for Engine #5 will be under Capital Budget/Public Safety. He said that the Capital is not part of the operating budget.

Vincent Cipriano wanted to thank the finance department and staff for a job well done. He also said the department heads have done a great job as well. He said there has been a lot of personal energy put into this budget. He also wanted to thank the Board of Finance and everyone on the board that attends the meetings and provided feedback. Vincent Cipriano also wanted to thank the Selectman for their support and the job that they do.

Ed St John said the actual budget increase was between 4.5-5%. He said the big savings area was Debt Services. He said they did their best to juggle things around. He noted there was a reduction in the pension fund as well because of the reduction in pension payments. There also was substantial decreases in insurance.

Bob Drauss had a question regarding the school budget. He said he is assuming the Board of Finance and Board of Selectman went and spoke about the Board of Education School budget. He felt these increases need to stop. He said the town needs to run and they need the funds to do so. He felt that things could be cut out of the Region 15 budget. He said that something needs to be done and that the town can only afford so much. He felt they needed to get some support. Vincent Cipriano said they now have a more open relationship with them than in the past. They are hoping to reduce it a little bit. It is going out for referendum and will be up to the town's people.

A discussion ensued regarding the money Middlebury and Southbury receive per student from the State.

A discussion ensued regarding the Region 15 budget.

Vincent Cipriano said there needs to be an increase in the ECS money.

Ed St John reviewed the Capital Budget. He noted they will be using \$587,192.00 from the Undesignated account to fund part of it. He said they might see an increase in road aid. He then reviewed the Expenditures and where the money will be spent. This includes the Reserve Account to purchase 4 SCBA's and 4 portable radios. These are to replace aging equipment. Fire Apparatus and Equipment Lease, Public Works Equipment Lease, and Police cars and Equipment Lease will be funded by the reserves. Ed St John said that most of the expensive jobs on the buildings are behind them. He also said that the price of materials for road work has increased drastically.

Ed St John said the next meeting will be a joint meeting between Board of Finance and Board of Selectman where they will discuss changes to the proposed budget. He said they need to make some adjustments. He said they have an active group working on the MRA upgrade. He felt there hasn't been as much progress as he would like and that it looks as if the septic tank will not be usable.

Adjournment

VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by John Jenusaitis and seconded by Stephen Ruccio to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 7:19 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