

**TOWN OF DARIEN
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 1, 2016**

ATTENDANCE: Jon Zagrodzky, Chairman; James McLaughlin, Frank Huck, Diana Maguire, David Lopiano, James Palen (7:39 p.m.)

ABSENT: Bruce Orr

OTHERS: Jayme Stevenson, First Selectman; Kate Buch, Town Administrator; Michael Harman, Board of Education Chairman

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Zagrodzky called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. A quorum was present.

Mr. Zagrodzky greeted everyone and explained that this meeting was for the Board of Finance to receive the budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education.

**RECEIVE BUDGETS FROM BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board of Selectmen - Ms. Stevenson came forward and greeted everyone. She thanked all the Board of Selectmen members, Ms. Buch and others who worked on the budget.

Ms. Stevenson narrated a PowerPoint presentation that listed a number of challenges and opportunities such as multiple large development projects, aging infrastructure, internal changes in the administration and the low cost for petroleum. She also outlined some of the changes in the revenue such as cuts in the PILOT payments and other reductions in State funding.

Ms. Stevenson gave an overview of the layout of the document and additional information that was included in the budget. She said the paving budget had been moved to the Reserve for Capital Non-Recurring Expenditures.

Mr. Palen joined the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Ms. Stevenson then reviewed the additional positions that were being requested along with the reasons for these additional staff members. Ms. Stevenson then summarized the Budget Cost Drivers including the Workers Compensation and Pension and Retiree Medical Contributions. She noted that all the contracts had been settled.

Ms. Stevenson then noted that Police Body Cameras, the Fire Commission Trench Rescue and the Pear Tree Beach Master Plan were not included in the budget. Ms. Stevenson reviewed the reasoning for these decisions.

The next topic Ms. Stevenson addressed was the FY 16-17 Capital Highlights, which include a Town Hall Generator, sidewalk rehabilitation, and replacement of the Cherry Lawn Basketball court.

Some upcoming projects include acquiring the street lights in Town from Eversource and retrofitting them with LED technology.

She respectfully requested that the Board consider supporting the budget.

Mr. Zagrodzky then listed a number of areas that the Board would be reviewing in the budget with Ms. Stevenson.

Board of Education - Mr. Harman came forward and greeted the Board of Finance members, Ms. Stevenson and various other officials present. He noted that last year when the budget was presented to the Board of Finance, the word "Interim" was used too frequently. However, this year, the Board has a permanent administrative staff in place.

He said that the budget was constructed on the modified zero based budget model and drivers for the Board of Education budget continue to be the increasing student enrollment, the desire to support student learning through the current services and identifying areas for improvement.

The budget builds on the various goals laid out during the past summer, which Mr. Harman listed. He said that the budget was \$93,847,816, which contains an increase of 3.44% over the 2015-2016 budget. The personnel and benefits portion represents a 2.7% year to year increase, and represents 52% of the total budget increase. Another significant portion of the increase is the Professional Development component.

Mr. Harman then gave a brief overview of the 19 Priority 1 Capital Projects for 2016-17 Budget year. He said that he looked forward to discussing the details of the budget with the Board members in the next few months.

Mr. Zagrodzky said that having the opportunities to ask questions in advance was quite helpful and the various public hearings also provided additional information. Mr. Zagrodzky said that the Board was looking forward to the budget process.

SET INTEREST RATE FOR TAX DEFERRAL

Mr. Zagrodzky said that the ordinances require that the Board of Finance set the Tax Deferral rate. Ms. Buch explained that the two plans outlined in the documentation would allow the residents to defer based on their income and the value of the house. She explained that the Town places a lien on the residence and when the home is sold, the amount due is collected.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Zagrodzky said that the updated calendar was distributed. He listed some of the dates that he would not be available and requested that the other members contact him about dates that they may not be available.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. LOPIANO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. MCLAUGHLIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Maguire
Clerk, Board of Finance

Prepared by,

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