

Minutes of the Town of Farmington
Regular Town Council Meeting March 15, 2023
Held in Person and by Zoom Webinar Meeting

Attending:

C. J. Thomas, Chair
Rafeena Bacchus-Lee
Joe Capodiferro
Johnny Carrier
Brian F. X. Connolly
Edward Giannaros
Keith Vibert

Kathy Blonski, Town Manager
Kathryn Krajewski, Asst. Town Manager
Maureen Frink, Town Clerk

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Council and members of the public recited the Pledge of Allegiance

D. To consider and take action on the proposed FY 2023-2024 Budget

Mr. John Sakon of Farmington spoke about the 1928 building, citing three authorities as to why the town should not do the 1928 building: Olson's Logic of Collective Action, Down's Inside Bureaucracy, and Price's Law. He asked, "what's the future of Farmington?" He asks the Council to take a look at the amount of square footage at the police department and the other offices along with the amount of budget and the amount of people that are employed by the town and compare it to the population. He states the compared numbers will be exponentially out-of-whack. He states that if the Council allows the 1928 to be built, they are allowing the bureaucracy space to grow.

Mr. Tim Kelly, 62 Westview Terrace, stated the population has grown, in the last 12 years, 2.9 percent in total. He stated he believes strongly in Farmington Education and has a lot of respect for the Superintendent and staff. He believes we may have opportunity for significant cost recovery in the proposed school budget. Mr. Kelly spoke of Open Choice Funding being at \$8,000 per student, but stating today we spend about \$18,000 per pupil. He inquired about working towards rectifying this by this school year, stating adequate funding should follow a child. Mr. Kelly inquired about the line item Public Relations, stating it is up 50% over two years. He asked if the item is worth review at this time. He also inquired about the line item Other Professional believing it is for legal and consultants. He states the \$30,000 expenditure per month seems a little rich and asks if we really need that much help. Mr. Kelly inquired about line item Audio Visual stating its almost \$150,000.00. He states it's designated for the current high school and is a curious time to be making this purchase. He stated that millions of dollars for FFE, which he believes includes

AV equipment, were backed out of the first referendum, but was put back in for the second referendum. He stated he is wondering how many times the town will be asked to pay for this equipment. He hopes this discussion will come up in the course of the evening. Mr. Kelly also states he doesn't think the town should invest another bucket item. He also spoke about natural gas, electricity, gasoline, as well as management growth and teach headcount.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to take action on the proposed FY 2023-2024 Budget.

The Board of Education, including Scott Hurwitz, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations, Kathy Greider, Superintendent of Schools, Matt Ross, Director of Technology, and Kim Wynne, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, presented the Board of Education's budget. Ms. Greider stated the BoE's budget has been reviewed to reduce the budget to a 2% target. Ms. Greider presented the Council with general ideas as to where the budget may be reduced including insurance reserve, Chromebooks, major facilities project, and new positions. The Superintendent's reduction presentation is attached as Agenda Item D1.

The Board of Education answered questions from the Council. The Chair reminded the public that the Town Council sets the budget, and the Board of Education decides how that money is spent. He thanked the BoE for meeting with the Council.

Beth Kintner, Democratic Registrar of Voters, and Ann Newbury, Republican Registrar of Voters, presented Page 9 of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ann Newbury stated the Registrars expense do not include the cost of an extra referendum, if necessary. Mr. Blonski added that if there are changes in the legislation, the Registrars will address the issue with both the Town Manager and Finance Director. Beth Kintner stated that Secretary Thomas discussed early voting in CT. The Secretary of the State would like to see funding for the early voting initiatives and would like the Bill to be passed by April 15, 2023, again, with appropriate funding for the November election.

Town Manager Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, Assistant Town Manager, and Joe Swetcky, Director of Finance & Administration, reviewed the General Fund appropriations, pages 1-25 of the Town's Recommended Budget, which is down overall 0.7 percent. Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 1-25 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Police Chief Colin Ryan, Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented pages 31-40, Public Safety, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated that the Police Departments budget is a 3% increase almost entirely for salary. She noted that seasonal employees have been reduced and the fleet has been reduced from 3 to 2 (vehicles).

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 31-40 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Tom Fitzgerald, Director of Fire & Rescue Services, Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski and Joe Swetcky presented pages 27-30, Public Safety, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated that the Fire Department's budget is a 2.4% increase.

Ms. Blonski added, in all departments, all the utilities are up and it is one thing that is driving this budget.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 27-30 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Russ Arnold, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer, Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented pages 43-54, Public Works, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated that overall, the Public Works account is down .4%. She noted that there has been a reduction of two full-time positions and no seasonal summer help at the Highway Department.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 43-53 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Nancy Parent, Director of Community & Recreational Services and Laurie Mucciacciaro, Supportive Services Supervisor, Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented 55-65, Community & Recreational Service, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated there is a 2.4% increase.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 55-65 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Geoffrey Porter, Recreation Supervisor, Nancy Parent, Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented pages 72-79, Recreational Fund, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated the Recreation Fund is supported by User Fees.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 72-79 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Geoffrey Porter, Nancy Parent, Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented pages 82-83, Westwoods Fund, of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 82-83 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented page 26, Fire Marshal, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated the account is up 2.6%, noting the Hydrant Charges, which is the largest line item in the budget, for maintenance fees to the various water companies.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 26 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented page 66-67, Benefits & Other, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Mr. Swetcky stated overall the benefits are up 4.9% with the largest driver being social security and the pension.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 66-67 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

The Council stopped the meeting for a dinner break at 6:00 p.m. and returned at 6:30 p.m.

Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented page 69-71, Waste Collection, of the Town's Recommended Budget. Ms. Blonski stated that there is no rate increase, and the fee will be \$268.00 per household (page 69 of the Town's Recommended Budget incorrectly states \$272.00).

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to pages 69-71 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented page 68, Debt Services, of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to page 68 of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Kathy Blonski, Kat Krajewski, and Joe Swetcky presented General Fund Revenue Account of the Town's Recommended Budget. Mr. Swetcky stated that this category is up 8.14%, primarily due to the supplemental vehicle, interest and late fees, decrease in the delinquent taxes and the telecommunications tax.

Questions from the Council were answered.

Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to tentatively agree to the Non Tax Revenue Account of the Town's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

The Town Manager stated that Thursday's meeting will include a discussion about the revaluation and the tax rate, along with presentations from Economic Development and the Library.

E. Adjourn to Executive Session (if needed)

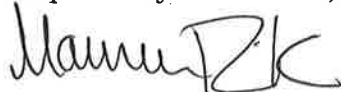
There was no Executive Session held

F. Adjournment

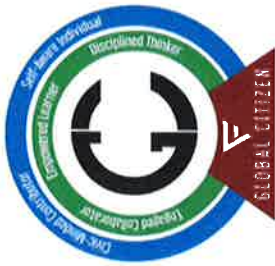
Motion was made and seconded (Capodiferro/Vibert) to adjourn the March 15, 2023 Regular Town Council Meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Adopted unanimously

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Frink



BOE 2023-2024 DRAFT DOCUMENT Possible Reductions Per Town Council's Request

Agenda Item D1



**FARMINGTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Empowering Global Citizens

March 14, 2023

Superintendent's Reductions (Prior to Presenting Recommended Budget to the BoE)

Reduction	Amount
Math Texts, and Some Supplies*	\$22,514
Services	\$14,103
Supplies	\$32,200
Texts & Subscriptions	\$41,559
Equipment	\$13,530
Personnel Requests (Turnover, Zero-Based Budgeting and Reductions from Original Budget Requests)	\$463,372
*Moved to ESSER	Total Reductions for this Page: \$587,278

Board of Education's Reductions (February 4, 2023)

Reductions:	Amount
Residency & Security Coordinator	\$80,000
Residency Clerk	\$50,000
FHS Special Education Teacher*	\$83,653
Additional Retirements	\$74,268
Retirement Stipends**	\$47,000
Replacement of Equipment	\$7,315
NEASC Supplies	\$1,000
Natural Gas	\$20,000
Instructional Supplies	\$22,000
Other (A-V and Custodial Supplies)	\$18,926
Total Reductions for this Page:	
\$357,180	

*Moved to ESSER
 ** Adjustment due to Teacher Turnover

2% Increase-*BoE has final decision-making authority

<u>Reductions:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>	<u>Impact:</u>
Reduction Across Accounts: Accounts 313,330,340,431,433,441,611,612,613,618, 621,622, 642,650	\$197,845	Underfunding several accounts
Self Insurance Reserve Reduction	\$200,000	Impacts Reserve: Within Board/Town Self Insurance Policy
Chromebooks*	\$25,000	Place back on ESSER (Impact on 24-25 Budget)
Major Facility Projects	\$35,000	Reduce Projects (Non-Safety Related)
1.0 Science	\$70,289	New Position-Impacts Computer Science Offerings
.1 Latin*, .2 Applied Art. .7 Special Education, .2 Business*	\$93,961	New Positions-Impacts several courses and supports to students with specialized needs
1.0 End User	\$42,000	New Position-Impacts ability to support end users PreK-12
Teacher Turnover	\$50,000	Reduce Teacher Turnover Further
Professional Development	\$22,943	Reduction in professional development offerings for faculty/staff
		4
*Moved back to ESSER		Total Reductions for this Page: \$737,038