

Minutes of the Town of Farmington
Special Town Council Meeting
March 15, 2017

Present:

Nancy W. Nickerson, Chair
Jon Landry
Peter M. Mastrobattista
Gary Palumbo
Amy Suffredini
Meredith A. Trimble
John Vibert

Kathy Eagen, Town Manager
Paula B. Ray, Clerk

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Public Comment

Tim Kelly of 62 Westview Terrace cautioned that if the Council planned on going to the Town for a bond for the High School in June, the Council needed to demonstrate fiscal control with the operating budget. He suggested the Council meet the 2.5% spending cap that the State law requires to receive full State grants. He reviewed that neighboring school systems were coming in with low increases Simsbury at 2.48%, Newington at 2%, Plainville at 1.98%, Canton at 1.84% and asked the Council to cut the Board of Education Budget down from 2.61% to under the 2.5% cap. He reviewed several items in the Board of Education Budget he felt could be reduced.

D. To consider and take action on the proposed FY 2016-2017 Operating Budget.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to consider the proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Operating Budget.

The Manager began by explaining the procedure to review the budget. She suggested the Council review the budget by sections and handed out the sheet showing adopted budget history with the percentage change recorded with these minutes as Agenda Item D-1. She pointed out that the Town Manager's Recommended Operating Budget called for a 2.41% spending increase for the Town side of the operating budget, which met the Town Council's budget target. The budget maintained current services but contained no new initiatives.

Police

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration and Paul Melanson, Police Chief reviewed pages 31-41 of the budget and answered Council questions. The Manager pointed out the account increased by 3.1 %. She explained the salary account showed three years of budget increases in one year because of the delay in the settlement of the labor contract and without that increase the Police accounts were showing no increase. The Council asked how the new Traffic Officer from last year was working out. The Chief thought it had been very successful for the public and the Department. The Manger informed the Council that the Chief was beginning to quantify the Traffic Officers duties to fully understand the best ways to use the Traffic Officer.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve pages 31-41 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Department of Public Works

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration; Russell Arnold, Director of Public Works and Planning Services and Scott Zenke, Highway Superintendent reviewed pages 43-54 of the budget and answered Council questions. The Manager pointed out the largest increase in the accounts was due to the three-year salary increase being show in one year. The Council asked about the impact of the Storm Water Testing mandate, summer help duties, regional sharing efforts and the one year spike in gas/diesel use at the Highway Department.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve pages 43-54 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Fire

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration and Mary-Ellen Harper, Director of Fire and Rescue Services reviewed pages 27-30 of the budget and answered Council questions. The Manager explained the account decreased because the Building Repairs line was there removed because it was a one-time expense and the salary increases were not in the account because of negotiations. Chief Rich Higley Sr.; Chief Don Antigiovanni and Chief Russ Nelson were all in attendance. The scheduling of volunteers as part-time fire fighters to cover for the full-time fire fighters was discussed.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve pages 27-30 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Economic Development

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration and Rose Ponte, Economic Development Director reviewed pages 14 and 15 of the budget and answered Council questions. The Manager explained the increase in the budget was due to an increased amount of the funding for the flower baskets and the salary of the Director. Ms. Ponte reviewed the handout recorded with these minutes as Agenda Item D-2 highlighting some of Farmington's economic development statistics.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve pages 14 and 15 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Library

Mr. Alan Sherman, Chair of the Library Board and Jay Johnston, Library Director discussed the mission of the library and its motto to provide service beyond expectation and reviewed the diverse services provided by the libraries. Mr. Johnston told the Council the Library was celebrating its 100th anniversary and had an anniversary party planned for April 28th. Mr. Johnston played a video, which celebrated the history of literature, the Farmington Library's history and the steps to be successful in the future for the residents of Farmington.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve page 17 Line 54608 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Community and Recreation

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration; Nancy Parent, Director of Community and Recreational Services and Geoff Porter, Recreation Coordinator reviewed pages 55 -65 of the budget and answered Council questions. The Council discussed the impact of the relocation of the Recreation Department offices to Depot Place with Mr. Porter. He gave a summary of the benefits both the Board of Education and the Town were finding. Mrs. Parent gave an update on the Stone House, the Dial-a-Ride Program and Farmington's affordable housing program.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve pages 55-65 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Recreation Fund

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration; Nancy Parent, Director of Community and Recreational Services and Geoff Porter, Recreation Coordinator reviewed pages 73-81 of the budget

and answered Council questions. The Manager explained for the first time this year there was specific data on the different programs regarding attendance and costs, which was being used to evaluate the benefits of the individual programs.

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to tentatively approve pages 73-81 of the Town Manager's Recommended Budget.

Adopted unanimously

Westwoods Fund

The Manager; Erica Robertson, Assistant Town Manager; Joseph Swetcky, Director of Finance and Administration; Nancy Parent, Director of Community and Recreational Services and Geoff Porter, Recreation Coordinator reviewed pages 82-87 of the budget and answered Council questions. The Manager reminded the Council that the Parks Department is handling the grounds maintenance of the golf course, which was working out well for the Town. The Council questioned about the bank fees account and how credit cards are used in the different departments. Mr. Vibert asked how the expenses at the restaurant were covered. Mr. Swetcky reported the restaurant operator gave the Town of restaurant receipts, and they were sufficient to cover the Town's expenses.

E. Adjourn to Executive Session

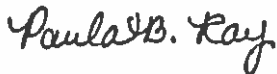
There was no Executive Session held.

F. Adjournment

Motion was made and seconded (Trimble/Mastrobattista) to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

Adopted unanimously

Respectfully submitted,



Paula B. Ray, Clerk

**ADOPTED BUDGET HISTORY
WITH PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY FUNCTION
FY1995/96 TO FY2016/17**

Agenda Item D-1

	<u>1995-96</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>1999-00</u>
BOARD OF ED	23,789,503 2.0%	25,189,777 5.9%	26,735,753 6.1%	29,163,807 9.1%	31,176,110 6.9%
TOWN	16,201,154 3.0%	16,526,178 2.0%	17,050,223 3.2%	17,152,065 0.6%	17,533,642 2.2%
DEBT	3,204,016 -3.7%	3,417,189 6.7%	3,755,759 9.9%	4,478,094 19.2%	4,799,950 7.2%
CAPITAL IMPRV	<u>801,500</u> -30.6%	<u>1,043,000</u> 30.1%	<u>1,071,890</u> 2.8%	<u>1,341,000</u> 25.1%	<u>1,085,450</u> -19.1%
TOTAL	<u>43,996,173</u> 1.1%	<u>46,176,144</u> 5.0%	<u>48,613,625</u> 5.3%	<u>52,134,966</u> 7.2%	<u>54,595,152</u> 4.7%

	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>2001-02</u>	<u>2002-03</u>	<u>2003-04</u>	<u>2004-05</u>
BOARD OF ED	33,357,376 7.00%	35,602,809 6.73%	38,684,086 8.65%	39,600,000 2.37%	41,976,000 6.00%
TOWN	18,435,030 5.14%	19,111,923 3.67%	19,828,457 3.75%	20,430,667 3.04%	20,913,849 2.36%
DEBT	4,849,132 1.02%	5,855,152 20.75%	6,875,233 17.42%	7,985,151 16.14%	8,080,950 1.20%
CAPITAL IMPRV	<u>2,014,000</u> 85.55%	<u>1,978,000</u> -1.79%	<u>2,110,000</u> 6.67%	<u>1,340,500</u> -36.47%	<u>1,746,000</u> 30.25%
TOTAL	<u>58,655,538</u> 7.44%	<u>62,547,884</u> 6.6%	<u>67,497,776</u> 7.9%	<u>69,356,318</u> 2.8%	<u>72,716,809</u> 4.8%

	<u>2005-06</u>	<u>2006-07</u>	<u>2007-08</u>	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
BOARD OF ED	44,578,512 6.20%	46,584,545 4.50%	48,261,432 3.60%	48,569,606 0.64%	49,510,762 1.94%
TOWN	21,698,465 3.75%	22,472,878 3.57%	23,523,163 4.67%	24,246,610 3.08%	22,892,736 0.00%
DEBT	7,897,579 -2.27%	8,822,299 11.71%	8,780,255 -0.48%	8,963,000 2.08%	9,142,000 2.00%
CAPITAL IMPRV	<u>2,145,500</u> 22.88%	<u>1,978,750</u> -7.77%	<u>2,519,000</u> 27.30%	<u>1,304,000</u> -48.23%	<u>635,000</u> -51.30%
TOTAL	<u>76,320,056</u> 4.96%	<u>79,858,472</u> 4.64%	<u>83,083,850</u> 4.04%	<u>83,083,216</u> 0.00%	<u>82,180,498</u> 0.55%

For FY2009/2010 the Refuse appropriation is not included in the totals.

	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2011-12</u>	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>
BOARD OF ED	51,491,192 4.00%	53,978,296 4.83%	55,462,700 2.75%	56,547,790 1.96%	58,236,460 2.69%
TOWN	23,501,331 2.66%	24,160,220 2.80%	24,710,825 2.28%	25,330,950 2.51%	26,179,873 3.10%
DEBT	8,943,305 -2.17%	8,703,570 -2.68%	8,361,617 -3.93%	7,579,198 -9.36%	6,988,196 -7.80%
CAPITAL IMPRV	<u>950,000</u> 49.61%	<u>780,000</u> -17.89%	<u>1,800,000</u> 130.77%	<u>2,562,800</u> 42.38%	<u>2,944,765</u> 14.90%
TOTAL	<u>84,885,828</u> 3.29%	<u>87,622,086</u> 3.22%	<u>90,335,142</u> 3.10%	<u>92,020,738</u> 1.87%	<u>94,349,294</u> 2.28%

	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>
BOARD OF ED	60,391,209 3.70%	62,686,075 3.80%
TOWN	27,118,908 3.59%	28,229,371 4.09% *2.71 without Golf Course
DEBT	6,818,620 -2.43%	6,827,369 0.13%
CAPITAL IMPRV	<u>3,234,000</u> 9.82%	<u>2,856,900</u> -11.66%
TOTAL	<u>97,562,737</u> 3.41%	<u>100,599,715</u> 3.11%

Throughout the past year, Farmington has maintained its strong commercial base, experiencing a modest increase in the grand list. Farmington continues to have the lowest mill rate among the 40 towns and municipalities in the Hartford region.

Farmington continues to be the economic leader in the Harford Region

- Of the almost 40 towns and cities in the Metro Hartford region, Farmington has the lowest mill rate of 25.78. Farmington's mill rate is among the lowest 25% of all towns in CT.
- The grand list grew by .62%; increasing the net taxable grand list by \$ 22 million and generating approximately \$571,510 in new revenue at the current 25.78 mill rate.
- Farmington's ratio of commercial taxable property is 28 % of the overall tax base which helps to keep the commercial base strong and lessens the burden on the residential tax base.
- As of January 2017 unemployment in Farmington was 3.9% a decrease from 4.2% in January 2016.
- Class A office vacancy rate is 16.13 %, which is on par with the greater Hartford Region
- Industrial vacancy rate is 3.46% and is 37% lower than the greater Hartford Region.
- In 2016 \$ 529,112.14 was collected in Building permit fees, of which \$ 231,856.00 was from commercial investment. This represents approximately \$ 76,000,499.38 of commercial investment.

2016 Commercial Development Highlights

- The Upton Nut Building, located on Mill Street in Unionville, was completely renovated and restored. The building is 100% leased adding 10 new businesses and 64 new jobs to the area.
- FIP moved their headquarters to their newly renovated 24,723 square foot office building on New Britain Avenue.
- New England Airfoil Products was acquired by Pietro Rosa TBM Company, 45 new jobs were added in 2016. A renovated engineering office space was completed in 2016.
- Farmington's first CPACE program was completed in 2016. In March 2016, Tennis Enterprises, 94 & 8067 Brickyard Road, completed a \$337,000 clean energy project.
- Maier Advertising moved to the second floor of their 1789 New Britain office building, this allowed the first floor to offer Farmington's new 10,000 square foot co-working space, added 4 new businesses to town.
- Atria's Landing in Farmington held their official grand opening in January 2016. The Landing is a 94,500 square foot state of the art assisted living community; employing 64 people.

Along Farmington Avenue bioscience efforts continue to thrive

- A \$ 52 million 28,000 square foot addition to UCONN's Cell Genome Science Building at 499 Farmington Avenue, added 32 new labs and 40 offices in 2016. 18 biotech startups, with 43 full-time jobs and 18 part-time jobs are housed in the Farmington TIP Program.
- UCONN Health's new \$203 million, 306,880 square foot ambulatory care facility, with a 1400 space parking garage was completed in July 2016.
- A new 384,000 square foot 11 floor new hospital tower opened in April 2016 complete with 169 private patient rooms and state of the art medical facilities.

- In response to the growing demand for medical and bioscience space, Farmington's Town Plan and Zoning Commission established a medical office-research floating zone enabling Farmington to meet the growing demand for bio-medical space while protecting the nearby residential community.
- MetroRealty started construction on a 35,000 square foot medical office building on Birdseye Road and received approval for a 50,000 square foot medical office building on Farmington Avenue. A proposed 25,000 medical office building on South Road is currently being reviewed by Architectural Review using the newly adopted floating zone.
- To date, Jackson Labs has hired over 200 scientists, technicians and support staff in the Farmington location.

Small Business added in 2016

- Soma Movement- Pilates Studio
- Zen Yoga Barre – Yoga and Barre Studio
- Tap Rock Beer Bar and Refuge- in the former McGillicuddys location
- Jill Jarret's Jillybean's Farmstand temporarily relocated to Bristol, while they completed construction of 2 new green houses, a barn and new farmstand on Scott Swamp Road. Their new location will be completed in April 2017.
- Happiest Inc, brings Turkish towels and unique international gifts to Farmington.
- Executive Talented Services relocated from Windsor
- Interscape Commercial Environment relocated from Hartford.

What's Next for EDC?

The EDC needs to continually engage our stakeholders. As we plan for the future we will continue to engage the business community with a robust business visitation program, with the very popular networking business breakfast series, and with our partnerships with the Farmington Chamber of Commerce, the Farmington Valley Visitor's Bureau and MetroHartford Alliance.

Recognizing the way we communicate has changed dramatically over the past 10 years; we needed to explore how to best engage our residents and business community in today's environment. The internet and smart phones have become most people's choice for shopping, news, and networking. The expectations for the type of information we want and the need and speed by which we receive it vastly different than in the past. The EDC determined that we needed to have a communication plan that reflected the most current effective methods to engage our stakeholders.

The EDC has reviewed 5 proposals from local marketing firms to assist us with implementing a comprehensive communication plan. We will be selecting a marketing company within the next month and anticipate this work to continue into 2018.

2017-2018 Budget Request

The EDC Budget for 2017-18 reflects:

- activities that are aligned with our annual goals and objectives
- Costs associated with a community wide engagement effort
- Funding to subsidize the annual Beautify Farmington Program Gap costs