

April 19, 2017

The Board of Finance Public Hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman, David Shippee. Other members present-Robert Lassar, Bruce Lindberg, Dale Clark, Neil Cook, and Neil Delmonico (7:05 p.m.).

Staff present-Joyce Gustavson.

D. Shippee stated that if the proposed budgets were passed as they are submitted tonight, it would mean an increase of .4 mils. This would bring the mil rate from 31.60 to 32.00 mils.

D. Shippee explained that the Grand List decreased by \$658,439 making each mil \$635 less than last year. The total of both budgets increased \$173,023. On a \$200,000 home, a .4 mil increase would be \$80 more in taxes per year.

D. Shippee stated that the Board of Education will present their proposed Fiscal Year 2017-2018 budget first and after the presentation we will have a question and answer period.

Item 1: Itemized Estimates for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Board of Education Budget:

Brenda Needham, Superintendent presented the Power Point presentation for the 2017-2018 proposed Board of Education Budget stating that it is the school's intent to be thrifty and tight as possible while keeping the focus on the children and students.

Items Covered: Mission Statement and Vision; School Board Goals; Budget Information – the proposed budget is a 1.6% increase over last year's budget. Insurance has increased 6%, with salaries being the biggest increase; Proposed Expenditures – Instruction/Student Services Regular Education is the largest cost followed by Instruction/Student Services Special Education. B. Needham concluded the Power Point presentation by stating how proud she is of community support through the school.

B. Needham asked if anyone had any questions or comments.

D. Shippee asked if anyone has any questions or comments for the school board.

D. Shippee stated that if there are no questions or comments we would have the Board of Selectmen present their budget.

Melissa Bood, 230 Harris Road stated that the Certified Personnel under regular programs looks like teachers' salary is being reduced and is that because teachers are leaving or are classrooms being combined?

B. Needham responded by stating that the decrease is due to personnel changes and it depends on where people fall on the salary scale and sometimes substitutes are paid in a different line. There are many variables that go into that, but we are not formally reducing teachers.

M. Bood stated that the Special Education Program, Mrs. Lanza, has received from 15-16 moving into 16-17 a six (6) percent raise and this year's proposed budget would be an 8.6% raise is that something that's within the contract? It appears that the Special Education Director and the principal are getting substantial raises while the teachers' salaries remain the same.

B. Needham stated that due to the time frame of when the budgets are approved, some contracts are done after the budget has been submitted. In the 16-17 budget, the \$112,000 was not the actual salary, it was closer to \$117,000 so it is not at that percentage level. The teachers, based on their negotiated contracts, are also receiving raises.

M. Bood stated that the Superintendent's salary decreased and is that due to working fewer hours or has something changed?

B. Needham stated that last year there was too much budgeted, so there was a change in that line item and then in addition to the process of this budget, the Board of Finance asked the Board of Education to reduce the budget. By mutual agreement, my time will be reduced by .1 meaning I will work two (2) days one week and three (3) days the following week. This was my attempt to support what was happening in terms of reductions.

M. Bood stated that in regards to the sports teams, as a parent, I pay for my children to play and the school has not had new uniforms in years, the sports equipment is outdated and last year my husband donated basketballs to the school and was told they could not use the basketballs outside. Why is there not anything in the budget for the kids?

B. Needham stated that she had a conversation last year with Mr. Giza, Athletic Director, and items that were needed had been purchased. If the current athletic director does not request something, then we don't know we have a need. B. Needham will follow up on that.

D. Shippee asked if anyone else had any other questions or comments. There were none.

D. Shippee asked if anyone else had any other questions or comments. There were none.

Item 2: Itemized Estimates for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Board of Selectmen Budget:

R. Gray presented the PowerPoint presentation for the 2017-2018 proposed Board of Selectmen Budget. He stated that the Board of Selectmen's budget is twenty-five (25) percent of the total Town budget and includes school expenses; such as notes and loans, yearly bus purchase, mechanic and snow plowing for the school which represents thirty-four (34) percent of the Selectmen's budget. Items covered include: Anticipated revenues increased by 6.96%. Anticipated expenses have increased by \$42,405. The grand list decreased by three (3) percent and that is attributed to two (2) of the top ten (10) taxpayers; Empireco Limited Partnership which has not been operating for a few years and Detotec disposed a large amount of equipment. R. Gray also went over mil rate history, bids, grant updates, and the proposed library and recreation budgets.

R. Gray asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none.

D. Shippee asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none.

D. Shippee asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none.

D. Shippee stated that if there are no further questions or comments, then the Local Capital Improvement Plan and Budget would be presented. There were no further questions or comments.

Item 3: Estimate of the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Local Capital Improvement Plan and Budget: R.

Gray explained that the Local Capital Improvement Plan and Budget is money that comes once a year (usually in March) from the State. The Town did not receive an entitlement this year as Local Capital Improvement Funds (LoCIP) have been frozen by the State. The Town keeps a budget five (5) years out on the money with a spending plan. Currently we have \$292,409. This year we plan to replace nine (9) culverts and pave Gibson Hill Road. The money is not raised by taxes; it is money from the State of Connecticut to be spent on capital improvement projects.

R. Gray asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none.

D. Shippee asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none.

D. Shippee asked again if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none.

Item 4: All persons will be heard regarding any item of expenditure they may wish for the Board of Finance to consider for inclusion in the 2017-2018 Budget: There were none.

The Town Meeting for the proposed budgets is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Sterling Town Hall/Municipal Building Gym and the Board of Selectmen will adjourn the Town Meeting to a vote by referendum scheduled for Wednesday, May 10th from noon to 8:00 p.m. in the gym.

The public hearing closed at 7:40 p.m.

April 19, 2017

Call to Order: The special meeting of the Sterling Board of Finance was called to order at 7:45 p.m.

Roll was called: David Shippee-present; Bruce Lindberg-present; Neil Cook-present; Neil Delmonico-present; Robert Lassar-present; and Peter Rabbitt-present.

Staff present-Russell Gray, Lincoln Cooper, and Joyce Gustavson.

II. Consider & Act on Public Hearing Comments on the Proposed 2017-2018 Board of Education Budget:

N. Cook made a motion, seconded by N. Delmonico to keep the proposed Board of Education Budget as it was presented this evening in the amount of \$8,178,377 and not make any changes to it. All voted in favor of the motion.

III. Consider & Act on Public Hearing Comments on the Proposed 2017-2018 Board of Selectmen's Budget:

N. Cook made a motion, seconded by N. Delmonico to keep the proposed Board of Selectmen's

Budget as it was presented this evening in the amount of \$2,790,490 and not make any changes to it. All voted in favor of the motion.

IV. Consider & Act on Public Hearing Comments on the Proposed 2017-2018 Local Capital Improvement Plan and Budget: N. Cook made a motion, seconded by R. Lassar to keep the proposed Local Capital Improvement Plan and Budget as it was presented this evening in the amount of \$292,409 and not make any changes to it. All voted in favor of the motion.

V. Consider & Act on Public Hearing Comments Regarding Any Item of Expenditure to be Considered for Inclusion in the Proposed 2017-2018 Budget: No other items were requested.

VI. Adjournment: N. Cook made a motion, seconded by R. Lassar to adjourn at 7:47 p.m. All voted in favor of the motion.

Attest: _____
Joyce A. Gustavson, Board of Finance Clerk