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*Patrick B. O'Sullivan*  
TOWN CLERK

## **Board of Finance Special Meeting**

Town Hall Meeting Room  
Wednesday, March 6, 2019 7:00 p.m.

*(Unapproved)*

### **Attendance**

**Board Members Present:** Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin Moffett, Joseph Nuzzo, and P. J. Shanley

**Board Members Absent:** Patricia Romano

**Staff:** John Cifarelli, Finance Director; Audrey Geer, Assistant Finance Director; Art Williams, Treasurer; Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

**Guests:** Dr. Vince Scarpetti, Superintendent of Schools; Mary-Jo Sierakowski, Business Administrator

### **1. Call to Order**

- Chairman Houlihan called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and asked the Board of Finance members to introduce themselves.

### **2. Public Participation**

- There was no public participation at this time.

### **3. Presentation of the Orange Board of Education 2019-2020 Budget – Dr. Vince Scarpetti**

- Dr. Scarpetti began his presentation by introducing numerous members of the Orange Board of Education and Administrative Team, including Matt Ullring, IT Director. After introductions, Dr. Scarpetti read their Mission Statement, noting that the fiscal budget is prepared each year with this Mission Statement at the forefront.
- Dr. Scarpetti highlighted some of the school achievements within the current year and gave a quick breakdown of the Orange Board of Education budget. Salaries and benefits comprise

83% of the budget, while Special Education is at 5%. He noted that Special Education fluctuates and this percentile is only an estimate at any given time.

- Dr. Scarpetti reviewed the projected student enrollment over the last six years, with a current projection of 1130 students for 2019-2020. He pointed out that with 169 students expected at Mary L. Tracy next year, they may need another teacher at the kindergarten level.
- The proposed 2019-2020 budget has a 2.80% increase. The major drivers for this increase include salaries and benefits, professional learning, 2 FTE Special Education teachers, insurances, and building maintenance. Dr. Scarpetti also mentioned some of the major drivers for decreases in the 2019-2020 that include 1 FTE classroom teacher at Peck Place School, curriculum material and software, textbooks and supplies, copier and printing, and outplacement costs for Special Education.
- In conclusion, the 2019-2020 proposed budget for Amity has a 2.80% increase, which is an increase of \$573,416 over last year's budget. The total proposed budget for 2019-2020 is \$21,052,548. Dr. Scarpetti took numerous questions from the Orange Board of Finance members regarding specific line items.
- Mr. Leahy discussed some of the unfunded State mandates. He also discussed the student/teacher ratio and how the Town of Orange compares with other towns in the same DRG. Mr. Leahy pointed out that staffing consists not only of the primary classroom teachers, but also library media, music, art, physical education, and world language teachers, and numerous support staff. Mr. Leahy feels that the Town of Orange has always been a desirable place to live due to its excellent school system.

#### **4. Amity Update**

- Mr. Nuzzo reported that the Amity Finance Committee voted 5/1 in favor of the proposed 2019-2020 Amity budget. Mr. Nuzzo voted against the 2019-2020 proposed Amity budget as directed by the Orange Board of Finance. Mr. Leahy advised that he will continue to follow Amity's surplus until the end of the fiscal year.
- Mr. Leahy reported that Governor Lamont's current proposed budget would reduce State support for the Town of Orange by \$889,878, which is a decrease of 42%. In addition, the State's unfunded mandates will increase educational expenses significantly.
- Chairman Houlihan inquired about the motor vehicle tax going back to the State. Finance Director Mr. Cifarelli does not believe that this will happen in the proposed 2019-2020 budget. Chairman Houlihan also mentioned the \$50,000 reduction in property assessments, but this would only result in an increase in the town's mill rate.

## 5. Vice Chairman's Report

- Mr. Leahy mentioned the AAA credit rating of the Town, noting that this will result in lower Bond rates. He discussed the reduction of the ECS grant, and the impact of the Teachers' retirement contribution on the Town of Orange. He also illustrated on PowerPoint the effect of compound interest.

## 6. Discussion and Approval of Minutes – February 25, 2019

- The Board members reviewed the minutes and made revisions as deemed appropriate.

*Mr. Leahy made a motion to approve the revised February twenty-fifth, 2019 Board of Finance meeting minutes. Mr. Moffett seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.*

## 7. Budget Discussion for 2019-2020 Fiscal Year

- Mr. Cifarelli reported that the current mill rate is 0.032. Without any further reductions in the budget, the mill rate would have to be increased to 0.033. Mr. Cifarelli discussed potential increases in revenue from cell towers, \$400k surplus in a refund from Amity, and \$300k in budget stabilization. The expense side was also discussed. Mr. Cifarelli felt that the proposed budget could be finalized in another two meetings. It was agreed that the next two Board of Finance meetings will be held on March eighteenth and twenty-fifth.

## 8. Adjournment

*Mr. Shanley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m., seconded by Mr. Moffett. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

Respectfully Submitted,

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Deborah Satonick  
Recording Secretary