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Patrick B. O'Sullivan
TOWN CLERK



Board of Finance Budget Hearing

High Plains Community Center Cafeteria
Wednesday, April 24, 2019 7:00 p.m.

(Unapproved)

Attendance

Board Members Present: Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin Moffett, Patricia Romano, and P. J. Shanley

Board Members Absent: Joseph Nuzzo

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

Guests: Dr. Vince Scarpetti, Superintendent of Orange Board of Education Schools; Dr. Jennifer Byars, Superintendent of Amity Regional Schools

1. Call to Order

- Mr. Okenquist opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Budget Overview

- Chairman Houlihan began the presentation by highlighting the key contributors to the 2019-2020 budget. He also noted that the Orange Board of Finance unanimously approved the proposed 2019-2020 budget as presented.
- Chairman Houlihan stated that one of the biggest challenges with this year's budget was adapting to State budget cuts and assigned costs. The ECS grant has decreased and the teachers' retirement contribution, estimated at \$137k, has been added into this year's budget.
- Chairman Houlihan highlighted the reasons for the town's AAA credit rating and then proceeded to list the top ten commercial taxpayers in Orange. He stated that the main budget drivers are Capital needs, wage and contractual salaries, safety and security, Debt service, and investment in technology. To illustrate safety concerns, Chairman Houlihan pointed out

that added police presence is required with the new hotel being built and the development of other commercial sites in Orange. In addition, sally ports at the Amity schools are needed for enhanced protection for students and staff.

- The total 2019-2020 budget is \$72,157,952, or a 3.08% increase. The budget components are as follows: Town Operations, \$26,519,330; Orange Board of Education, \$20,902,548; and Amity Regional School district, \$24,736,074.

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

- Dr. Scarpetti began his presentation by listing the numerous members of the Orange Board of Education and Administrative Team, all of who contributed in the budget process. He also encouraged everyone to take the time to read their Mission Statement, as this vision is at the forefront of every budget preparation.
- Dr. Scarpetti briefly discussed the budget process for the Amity budget. The proposed 2019-2020 budget has a 2.07% increase, and the major drivers for this increase include salaries and benefits, professional learning, 2 FTE Special Education teachers, insurances, and building maintenance.

4. Presentation of the Amity 2019-2020 Budget – Dr. Jennifer Byars

- Dr. Byars reported that their budget increase is 1.06%. This increase includes one Special Education teacher, one paraprofessional, and two Job Coaches for their Transition Program. She also reported that their Capital needs include three new Sally Ports for the schools.
- Dr. Byars briefly discussed their surplus, advising that the majority of this surplus money has historically been returned to the respective towns.

5. Town Services – Chairman Kevin Houlihan

- Chairman Houlihan advised that approximately \$443k has been delegated for Capital Projects. He also discussed future economic developments with the Town. Chairman Houlihan concluded by reminding residents that the Amity Budget Referendum is May eighth, the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for May fifteenth, and the Budget Referendum is scheduled for May twenty-second.

6. Questions & Discussion

- Chairman Houlihan opened up the discussion for questions and comments.

Mitch Goldblatt, 291 Drummond Road, Orange

Mr. Goldblatt made an inquiry regarding the funding of the OPEC Trust. Currently, the Town of Orange is not funding it.

James Zeoli, 617 Orange Center Road, Orange

First Selectman Zeoli highlighted some of the recent economic developments with the Town of Orange. He added that the Derby-Milford bridge should be paved sometime next week.

7. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Satonick
Recording Secretary