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**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD REMOTELY
at GoToMeeting.com**

**TUESDAY
MAY 5, 2020
6:30 P.M.
FY 2020-2021 BUDGET**

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Special Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2020 was called to order at 6:31 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Craig C. Fishbein, Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Gina Morgenstein, Christopher K. Shortell, Christina Tatta, Vincent F. Testa, Jason Zandri and Chairman Vincent Cervoni. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., and Comptroller James Bowes were also present (BY TELECONFERENCE).

AGENDA

1. Moment of Silence
2. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

LIBRARY

In Attendance: Jane Fisher, Librarian

Ms. Fisher stated that the library proposed a 2% increase from the town and the Mayor did not approve it. She indicated the Budget Committee is revising the budget and they will receive about \$70,000 less. She said they have always used non town funds for Sunday openings and was not sure they could continue.

Ms. Fisher stated they removed 20 part-timers from their payroll and there has been no pay increase to the full-time staff because of COVID.

Ms. Fisher said the library in Yalesville will not be open because it's too small for social distancing and noted they will offer virtual programs. She said they are committed to reaching out to see what the community needs.

Councilor Tatta thanked Ms. Fisher for her budget with all the charts and graphs and said she is sorry to hear she had to lay people off. She then asked Ms. Fisher if they will be getting a revised budget. Ms. Fisher answered no and stated we work within the parameters of the flat number the Mayor gives us.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

*In Attendance: Dr. Salvatore Menzo, Superintendent, Board of Education
Dominic Barone, Business Manager
James Bondi, Director, Food Services
Mark Deptula, Supervisor, Building and Grounds
Karen Hlavac, BOE Chair*

Dr. Menzo stated distance learning will end on June 16th. He went on to say that all of the public's questions have been addressed in this presentation.

Dr. Menzo spoke about the 11.5% reduction in this budget for certified staff and noted they added two paras which are non-certified staff. They reduced 8 part-timers and 1 full-timer.

Dr. Menzo stated they are looking for the 1-2% fund that is left over to be put in the carryover fund and said \$930,364 is left over from last year's 1% fund and \$430,355 is the actual balance of the 1% fund at this time.

Councilor Zandri said to Dr. Menzo you use the terms 1% - 2% of unencumbered and asked are the all the same. Dr. Menzo answered basically yes (* See Attached).

Councilor Zandri asked about the open positions in the current budget and Dr. Menzo replied they become open during the year.

Councilor Zandri asked with regard to transportation does Wallingford not pay for what it does not use. He then said so we are not paying our bus company and they cannot pay their employees is this the case? Dr. Menzo stated we have the contract language and the bus company has been collaborating together with us.

Mayor Dickinson stated there is some key language in the Executive Order where it's practical. The Mayor feels it breaches fiduciary duty to just give the money away and stated we have to protect public money.

Councilor Zandri remarked that was a good point. He said the understanding of why most towns were paying was so bus companies could pay their employees, but he thinks Durham bus company employees are collecting unemployment. He feels we are being very smart all around.

Dr. Menzo stated he is confident in giving back \$1 million and he feels they will do just fine going forward.

Councilor Laffin stated \$3.3 million is the unencumbered amount and asked Dr. Menzo what is the State looking to reimburse you. Dr. Menzo answered 83% of Title I funds. Councilor Laffin then asked how much we would have paid the bus company. Dr. Menzo replied \$2.3 million.

Councilor Morgenstein talked about class sizes and then stated she wonders if maintenance expenses can be deferred to the town. Dr. Menzo stated as a district we cannot go below what we spent the prior year.

Councilor Tatta thanked Dr. Menzo for all his hard work and then asked if he could explain what the added transportation is. Dr. Menzo explained the added transportation is for out of district special needs children for the school cost plus transportation.

Councilor Tatta referred to the Contingency line and asked Dr. Menzo how much he has spent. Dr. Menzo said \$255,949 is left and \$343,949 is what we budgeted for.

Councilor Tatta inquired about the central office lease. She asked how long and how much? Dr. Menzo replied one year left of the five year lease - \$149,453.

Councilor Tatta asked if there were savings because of the pandemic i.e. coaches, plays and sports. Dr. Menzo answered yes and mentioned tuition - \$150,000, salaries - \$445,00 and noted transportation was already talked about. He will send the information to the Town Clerk.

Councilor Shortell stated 11 ½ full-time employees were reduced not repurposed. He then asked when the last time was that the Board of Education looked at class sizes. Dr. Menzo replied 11 years ago. Councilor Shortell remarked to Dr. Menzo that he runs the district like a business which is a good thing.

Councilor Shortell spoke about distant learning and asked if snow days are a thing of the past. Dr. Menzo replied that's a state decision.

Dr. Menzo feels distant learning is a good thing but it shouldn't be used all the time. He then stated the Commissioner of Education would make that decision.

Councilor Fishbein asked what the teachers are doing virtually for hours. Dr. Menzo explained on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays middle schools and high schools must do a visual video of 30 minutes. At 9:00 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays assignments for high schools are posted. He went on to say teachers have to be available to students for eight hours. He stated teachers and students are reaching out. For the elementary level, there are instruction days and implementation days every other day. Teachers are not being evaluated at this time.

Councilor Fishbein inquired about the pass/fail system and about the students trying to get grants. Dr. Menzo stated with juniors especially in high school there was collaboration with other states that were looked at. Dr. Menzo feels the students should not be in jeopardy.

CAFETERIA

There were no questions.

FINANCE / DEBT SERVICE / CAPITAL APPROPRIATION RESERVE

In Attendance: James Bowes, Comptroller

Mr. Bowes gave an update.

Councilor Shortell had questions on Finance and Contingency. He stated that the average leftover in the Finance budget is \$225,000 and he would like to be educated why. Mr. Bowes explained each year they budget 100,000 to 200,000 annually for revaluation and then carry it forward to Appropriations in Force. Councilor Shortell said so you're saving up each year for the five year revaluation. Mr. Bowes replied that is correct.

Councilor Shortell remarked that Contingency seems to always drain down to almost zero. Mr. Bowes explained last year we drained it and a lot had to do with how we did in the winter time. He went on to say right now we are seeing unemployment claims and seasonal part-timers that have applied for unemployment now because of COVID and now there will be a Primary in August and Registrars and Town Clerk will need more money.

Councilor Fishbein stated he reviewed the answers that Mr. Bowes gave the Council and thanked him.

Councilor Fishben asked why aren't projects in CAP and NON in Appropriations in Force? Mr. Bowes explained Appropriations in Force have to be brought forward each year and then lapse on June 30th each year. CAP and NON do not lapse, they carry forward until completed or projected is closed out.

Councilor Tatta asked if CAP and NON Appropriations affect the mill rate. Mr. Bowes said they are already accounted for in a previous year and so we are asking for you to authorize it in the new year.

Councilor Tatta asked Mr. Bowes if he saw any savings in his department because of COVID. She then asked if he could reduce 1% and if that would be a hardship. Mr. Bowes stated no, it would not be a hardship. He explained they had an opening in the accounting department for a year and a half and now they see they do not need that position.

Councilor Tatta asked Mr. Bowes if he saw a savings or costs because of the pandemic. Mr. Bowes replied no, I don't think so.

Chairman Cervoni adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Moss
Council Staff

Meeting digitally recorded

Vincent Cervoni /ST
Vincent Cervoni, Chairman

5/19/2020
Date

Barbara Thompson
Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk

5/19/2020
Date

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 5-8-2020
AT 3:00 AND RECEIVED BY
Barbara Thompson TOWN CLERK



Use of Unencumbered Fund Balance as of Monday, April 27, 2020

Estimated Unencumbered Fund Balance as of Monday, April 20, 2020	\$3,257,129
Committed to 2019-20 Purchases	-\$400,088
Committed to 2020-21 Non-Recurring Strategic Plan Items (Listed on next page.)	-\$586,300
Committed to 2020-21 Food Services Due to COVID-19 Crisis	-\$365,463
Funds Returned to Town to Offset Tax Increase	-\$1,000,000
Additional Use to Offset Transfer from Grants	-\$150,000
Remaining Estimated Unencumbered Fund Balance as of Monday, April 27, 2020	\$755,278