

Lebanon Board of Finance

Minutes

Public Hearing – FY 2024-2025 Budget

April 15, 2024– 7:30pm

Lebanon High School Auditorium

Members Present: Mike Nintean (Chairman), Philip Johnson (Vice Chair), Diane Malozzi (Secretary), Gregg Lafontaine, Justine Spielman and Harold Nelson. Giselle Russo (Alt.), John Noblet (Alt.).

Members Absent: Haley Messier (Alt.)

Also in attendance: Andrew Gonzalez, Superintendent.

42 members of the public formed the assembly.

1.0 Call to order

M. Nintean called the public hearing to order at 7:30pm.

Members of the Board were introduced to the public and procedures for the hearing were explained to the assembly.

2.0 Presentation of the FY23/24 Budget proposal.

M. Nintean, and P. Johnson walked through highlights of the BOF proposed FY2024-2025 town budget with a PowerPoint presentation explaining operating, capital and revenue budgets.

P. Johnson explained the major driver of the operating budget is contractual salaries. Other areas with significant increases were highlighted. He explained the impact revaluation has had on the budget and the challenges maintaining funding while being aware of the tax impact to residents. The increase in the revenue line is due to increases in investment income and police services revenue.

M. Nintean explained the Capital/Non recurring expenses and the funding for the Board of Education's School Improvement Plan, Technologies and Athletics funds.

A PowerPoint presentation for Revenue highlighted the increase to residential properties taxes and the decline in commercial tax revenue because of the revaluation assessments. Personal property taxes, such as motor vehicle, have come down due to revaluation.

A. Gonzalez advised the assembly that the entire BOE budget power point slide presentation is available on line and gave a presentation of the BOE proposed FY2024-2025 education budget expenditures and projected revenue highlighting staffing changes and how they affect the budget, programs and class sizes. He explained difference between special education costs for in and out of district students.

3.0 Public comments

10 members of the assembly spoke, asking questions about the proposed budget the budget. Correspondence received from the public relating to the BOF proposed budget have been distributed to members of the Board.

Liz Charron, Pigeon Swamp Rd. – Asked questions regarding the amount of funds in the Board of education non-lapsing account, if there is a surplus from the current year and if

the engineering addition to the Department of Public Works is a onetime use.

Chair Ninteanu responded the account has \$80,000.00, there is no figure yet for any surplus from the current budget, if any the community pool repairs could be funded from them, and the engineering addition to the DPW will be ongoing.

Sandy Tremblay, Hillcrest Heights - Emphasized the pool repairs that should be done in the fall.

Carrie Schwartz, Levita Rd – said she would like to see the BOE budget increased to the original proposal.

Sheree Swenson, Leonard's Bridge Rd. – said more needs to be funded for infrastructure.

Guthrie Dinda, - Scenic Rd. – said the proposed budget is too high.

Ed Tytor, Clubhouse Rd. – Said if the budget is flat the mill rate would be 17 mills, which is 4.5 mill increase. He asked if any Covid funding for teachers is being retained.

Superintendent Gonzales responded; no, those positions have dropped off.

Nicole McGillicuddy, Clubhouse Rd. – asked how much is in fund balance. Chair Ninteanu responded approximately 6 million is in fund balance. Ms. McGillicuddy said she would like to see the BOE budget increased to the original proposal.

Liz Charron, Pigeon Swamp Rd. - a mill rate of 20.5 would keep the budget flat. The current proposed mill rate is 1 mill higher, not 4.5 mills. Ms. Charron suggested using surplus to reduce the proposed Capital budget.

Sheree Swenson, Leonard's Bridge Rd. – asked why the Town is putting a million dollars into fund balance. Chair Ninteanu responded the Town is not appropriating funds for fund balance from the proposed budget. The million referred to would be in the Capital budget. Ms. Swenson said that is too high.

Kelly Lawler, Tax Collector for the Town of Lebanon – explained how the fund balance needs to be maintained in a percentage range to qualify for bonding project.

Jeremiah Olden, Oliver Rd. – asked about the cost for the tree removal project. Chair Ninteanu explained the history of the project.

Eileen Weinstein, Goshen Hill Rd. -said she would like the library increased to the original proposed amount.

4.0 Adjourn

M. Ninteanu adjourned the public hearing at 8:30.

Respectfully Submitted,
Diane Malozzi, Secretary
Lebanon Board of Finance
April 16, 2023

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.