

Town Council Meeting Minutes April 7, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call

All Councilors were present and answering roll call.

Chair Goldberg led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 1 Presentation and Discussion of the Fiscal Year 2017 Proposed Budget.

The School Department, through its finance committee chair, Danielle Tracy, presented the School budget.

The Town, through its finance committee chair, Caleb Hemphill, presented the municipal budget.

Item 2 Public Hearing to seek public input and inquiries relative to the Fiscal Year 2017 Proposed Budget.

Chair Goldberg opened the public hearing.

Andy Meyer of Beechwood Lane thanked the Council and School Board for keeping the increase down to 1.5% and for increasing the budget for open space. He spoke about his use of and appreciation for the open space the Town has.

Michael Mannion of Knight Hill Road was grateful for all the hard work and fiscal responsibility in the budget. His family chose to live in Falmouth because of the schools and the open space. He said they use the trail system year-round and is glad to see the increased funding.

John Winslow of Gray Road said the school budget is 40% greater than it was 6 years ago, and enrollment is slightly smaller. Household incomes have not increased 40% in 6 years. He said there has to be a more affordable way to achieve a good education. The school budget has increased at 4 times the rate of inflation. He spoke about recent building projects and improvements. These projects were supposed to save the Town money; he wondered where the savings are.

Julie Motherwell of Lowell Farm Road asked about the increases in the school budget for athletics, transportation, and curriculum. She pointed out that Falmouth will soon be the most aged community in the state. Many of the town's elderly own their own homes. As a caring community, they need to study the community so that they are serving the needs of all members.

Dan O'Shea, Director of Finance & Operations of the School Department, explained the increases that Ms. Motherwell had questioned.

Chair Goldberg closed the public hearing.

Councilor Farber asked about the Pay-to-Play program. Ms. Tracy said they reviewed the program this year and have lowered the cost for students; they are proposing a one-time annual fee for the athletes instead of paying for every sport separately.

Adjourn

Councilor Kitchel moved to adjourn; Councilor King seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Tryon
Recording Secretary