

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET HEARING
WESTBROOK MULVEY MUNICIPAL CENTER
MARCH 19, 2013**

The Westbrook Board of Finance Budget Hearing was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2013. In attendance were Chairman Paul Connelly, Sherry Seidman, Rick Westbrook, George Pytlik. Also in attendance were Kelley Frazier, Clerk, Noel Bishop, First Selectman and Andrew Urban, Director of Finance. Absent: Keith Maynard and Gary Gavigan

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Connelly at 7:00pm. Mr. Connelly led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

BUDGET HEARING

All motions made are for the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2013/2014.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Maureen Westbrook, Chairwoman of the Westbrook Board of Education began the presentation by explaining the process and the goals of the school system. She outlined the budget guidelines. She introduced Pat Ciccone, Superintendent of Westbrook Schools. Ms. Ciccone explained the budget process and how they developed the budget proposal.

Ms. Ciccone discussed the expense items in detail. There are five areas that drive the budget areas. They are salaries, benefits, contracted services, State mandates and technology. She noted how important the technology component is for the schools. Safety and security is also driving a portion of the budget. There is also one district wide Social Worker position.

Mr. Connelly noted that the Board of Finance can only reduce the bottom line number of the school budget.

Mr. Pytlik asked for clarification for the Salary and Wage expense. Ms. Ciccone explained how this expense detail came together. Mr. Pytlik also asked for clarification of the purchase services and supplies expense. The additional \$100,000 expense is for additional security measures.

Mr. Westbrook asked for information on benefits. The additional expense for benefits is for the district social worker. Ms. Ciccone also explained the possible mandated expenses for security measures. She also discussed the minor structural changes that could be done for an effective visitor sign in. Mr. Westbrook discussed the services which Youth and Family Services provide and whether they overlap with the additional position the school is asking for. Ms. Ciccone said that they have very different functions. Youth and Family Services is an internship program. She noted that children are able to benefit from these programs, but they do not provide therapeutic connections or every day consistency. The Social Worker is a support worker and can make homebound visits. A social worker can bring her expertise and work to the child in a homebound situation.

Mr. Connelly has suggested that the \$100,000 expenditure for security be removed from the education budget and that this expenditure come from grants or other town funds. He also suggested an additional \$50,000 reduction to the budget.

Mr. Pytlik agrees that the security expenditure should come from town funding. He would consider discussing the additional \$50,000 reduction, but is unsure it is necessary.

Mr. Westbrook said that our decreases last year was due to heating costs going down. He feels that an additional \$50,000 cut may not be necessary unless a specific expense needs to be reduced. He recognizes that salaries and special education costs are increasing and the other categories are kept to a minimum. He does not see a logical sense to make further reductions.

Mr. Urban stated with the \$100,000 reduction the new percentage is 3.89%

Upon a motion made by George Pytlik and seconded by Sherry Seidman it was:

RESOLVED: to appropriate the sum of FIFTEEN MILLION, EIGHT HUNDRED SIXTY FIVE THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY SEVEN DOLLARS (\$15,865,237) for the Westbrook Board of Education. Ayes: Mr. Connelly, Ms. Seidman, Mr. Pytlik. Abstentions: Mr. Westbrook.

The Town Hearing is April 24th and the Town Meeting on the Budget is May 9th.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 8:43pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Kelley S. Frazier, Board Clerk