

Robert J. Cook

2019 MAR 11 A 8:13

TOWN CLERK
EAST HARTFORD

TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBER
EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

MARCH 6, 2019

PUBLIC HEARING/BUDGET

PRESENT Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Vice Chair Linda A. Russo, Majority Leader Ram Aberasturia, Minority Leader Esther B. Clarke, Councillors Marc I. Weinberg, Shelby J. Brown (arrived 7:10pm) and Caroline Torres

ABSENT Councillors Joseph Carlson and Patricia Harmon

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He announced the exit locations in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §29-381 after which the Council joined him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chair gave a brief overview of the Mayor's recommended FY2019-2020 budget which totals \$191,523,426. On the expense side of the proposed budget there is a .8% increase in spending – with the major drivers being (1) a \$1M increase in the town's contribution to the pension fund; (2) salary increases of approximately 1%; (3) health insurance on the town's side remains the same as last year. However, on the Board of Education's side, there has been a spike in insurance claims which translates to a 1.1% increase to the Board's budget; (4) MDC sewer costs have increased by \$238,000; (5) the town's payment to the Golf Course is reduced by approximately 50%; and (6) since the Mayor's Directors have been instructed to work within their established budget from the previous year, all accounts – except for labor contracts, health insurance and the other expenses as mentioned – have remained flat lined as has been the case the last few years. That portion of the Mayor's recommended budget allocated to the Board of Education is \$91,662,619, which – when translated to dollars on a per student basis – ranks almost last in the state of Connecticut.

On the revenue side of the budget, the major issues are: (1) the new Pratt & Whitney headquarters was on the tax rolls last year, but since the Certificate of Occupancy was issued this year, their five-year Enterprise Zone tax credit begins and the town loses approximately \$2M in revenue; (2) state grants will remain flat; and (3) the town is looking to replace some police cruisers and a number of the aging stock of trucks/vehicles in the Public Works Department's fleet.

The average taxpayer will see a 3.4% increase in taxes on their residence. However, since the mill rate on vehicles remains the same as last year (45 mills), there will be no tax increase on vehicles. The net increase on an average taxpayer with two cars is 3.0%.

The following citizen came forth to speak:

ADJOURNMENT

Attest Angela M. Attenello
Angela M. Attenello
Town Council Clerk