



**THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE
JOINT BOARD OF FINANCE / BOARD OF
SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022
6:00 PM**

A Joint Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen Meeting for the Town of Woodbridge was via WebEx on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Link to YouTube broadcast: <https://youtu.be/n-0WeoskTK4>

BOF PRESENT: Chairman, Matthew Giglietti; Vice Chairman; Susan Jacobs Tom Handler; Donavon Lofters; Dwight Rowland; Ellen Scalettar

BOS PRESENT: First Selectman, Beth Heller; Sheila McCreven; Joseph Crisco; Paul Kuriakose; David Lober; David Vogel

ALSO PRESENT: Administrative Officer/Director of Finance, Anthony Genovese; Budget Analyst/Payroll & Benefits Administrator, Karen Crosby

OPERATING BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Woodbridge Board of Education

Dr. Jonathan Budd, Superintendent of Schools and Lynn Piascyk, Board Chairman presented an update on their FY23 budget. The Board met last Thursday and Friday to review the budget. There are three adjustments they approved:

- Based on preliminary rate developments the medical insurance lines have been reduced
- Based on newly confirmed rates, the electricity and heating projections have been reduced
- Request that three smaller building improvement projects and the oil tank removal at Beecher Road School be moved to their Capital Budget

There have been some small operational adjustments bring the requested FY23 budget from an increase of 13.52% to an increase of 9.21% or a total of \$16,994,370. The Board unanimously supported this proposal. They recognize that an increase of this amount is unusual perhaps unprecedented. The Board doesn't make the request lightly.

They urged the Boards to consider funding the needs of their students and staff.

Town Clerk

Stephanie Ciarleglio presented a budget of \$244,130, an increase of 7.48%. Stephanie explained the duties of the department. The department takes in over \$1.2M for the Town and the State. The office is governed by the State and Federal governments.

If the budget was cut, she would be forced to close the department two days a week, she would have to cancel the restoration of Town documents and the re-indexing of hard to read hand-written land records. Their services are mandated by the State of Connecticut and the Federal Government in addition to the Town of Woodbridge. The part time personnel in the office hourly rates of other towns that have been surveyed are lower by \$5 to \$7 per hour. The Town has lost numerous employees over the past few years. If the Town adjusted hours to close one day a week- open late one evening and open early (close from Thursday evening until Monday morning) for public convenience, it would save on heating and cooling costs. As of two years ago, there are 118 Towns out of 169 that have adjusted their days/hours.

Matt stated that it seems that our Town departments have been squeezed and squeezed and there is no more room to squeeze these budgets. There are things that don't get done and repairs that go without being done.

Registrars of Voters

Registrars Pennell Hamilton and Anna Dickerson presented a budget request of \$70,735 which is an increase of 54.19%. The increase is due to having no elections this year to having to fund a number of elections next year. They also have to do a canvass this year. Anna stated that they are hoping to implement the E-Pole Book this year.

Tax Collector

Pat Crisco presented a budget request of \$166,319 an increase of 2.74%. General Professional Services has increased due to having access to DMV on delinquent taxpayers. Employees in the Tax Collector's office must be certified, and they have to attend conferences in order to remain certified.

Tax Assessor

Marsha Benno presented a budget request of \$189,879 which is an increase of 5.94%. Pricing Guides for motor vehicles, JD Powers have taken over for NADA and there was an aggressive increase for that. General Professional Services increased due to a new company providing the mapping of the town and will deliver fly-over maps during the year. In order for Marsha to maintain her certification, she needs to attend the educational conferences.

Marsha updated the Grand List: Last year \$1,145,794,844 to \$1,145,794,844, an increase of 1.71% Motor Vehicle values from most towns in Connecticut have increased about 25%, in Woodbridge the increase is 15.36%.

Board of Assessment Appeals

Marsha Benno presented a budget request of \$2,000 which is the same as FY22.

Fire Commission

Chief Sean Rowland and Commission Chairman Karen Kravetz presented a budget request of \$1,075,222 which is an increase of 6.63%.

Larger increases are in the Radio line due to the service agreements, the Technical increase is due to the increase in price for their everyday supplies, Hydrants are increased due to an increase in rate from Regional Water Authority, there will be a 6% increase.

Sean stated that Electricity can be reduced from their original request of \$45,745 to \$39,000. Sean addressed the budget line increases and explained that most of them are a result of vendor price increase. He suggested areas where they may be able to cut in the area of the Radio System by taking a risk on the service agreement. That would be approximately \$7,400. The radio system is for Fire, Police and Public Works. Also, the Fire Prevention area where they supply fire hats, coloring books & crayons, etc. for students.

Matt asked Sean if there was a lower level of coverage on the service contract for the Radio. Sean stated that he will work with Tony to see if there is any other service contract available for savings.

Sean stated that if we are in a better place with Covid, there may be some cost savings in the cleaning of the Fire House.

Human Services

Jeanette Glicksman and Commission Chair Susan Davidson presented a budget request \$505,161 which is an increase of 3.69%.

Susan stated that during Covid, the department reinvented itself. They kept residents, fed, warm and vaccinated.

Their request minus the revenue is an \$11,000 decrease. They propose an increase to the part time social worker hours. There has been an increase in the caseload.

Capital Item – FY2023 requesting \$35,000 for the replacement of sedan for transporting residents that need to use the Merritt Parkway that doesn't allow the van to use.

FY2026 will be requesting matching funds for the replacement of the van \$15,000 for a \$70,000 van.
FY2028 request of \$50,000 for a carport.

Public Works

Warren Connors presented a budget request of \$1,451,752 which is an increase of 5.10%. The Engineering line has increased due to an evaluation of the roads. Contracted Services increase due to equipment rental

cost increase, tree service, catch basin contractor is no longer participating in the COG bidding. The paint used in line painting has increased.

Highway Maintenance -Sand/Salt has increased. The budget was underfunded this year. The bid for salt went out with no bidders. The treated product that is available is more expensive and is better for the environment and is easier on the vehicles on the road.

Road Maintenance increased due to increase in asphalt product.

Waste Management

Warren Connors presented a budget of \$572,549 which is an increase of 3.04%. Tipping Fees and cost of hauls have increased for this budget.

The new fees for bulky waste went into effect today.

Board of Finance

Tony Genovese presented a budget of \$193,066 which is a decrease of 1.61%

Medical Services

Tony presented a budget of \$317,848 which has no increase. The majority of the budget consists of the contract with AMR.

Animal Control

Tony presented a budget of \$115,335 which represents a .30% decrease. Tony explained that the total budget is for the Towns of Bethany, Seymour, and Woodbridge. Bethany and Seymour pay a proportional amount and the total budget is \$265,287. The Woodbridge portion is \$115,335, Bethany pays \$56,740 and Seymour pays \$88,712.

Tony stated that we do look for other towns to participate.

Employee Benefits

Tony presented a budget request of \$5,157,105 which is a 7.44% increase. FICA, Medicare, and Retirement amounts are based on wages. When the wages change, FICA and Medicare will change for all employees and the Retirement changes for full time employees.

Healthcare is still being negotiated and Tony is hopeful that the numbers will go down.

The OPEB contribution is what the Town contributes to Other Post Employment Benefits. Once the fund is fully funded, the retiree benefits can be paid out of that fund.

Workers Compensation is also bid out and he hopes that it will come in lower than the current number.

Debt Service

Tony presented a budget request of \$2,244,240 which is a decrease of 1.58% over FY22.

Tony showed an illustration of debt going out 10 years. It shows all the projects that are existing bonds and also shows the Woodbridge portion of Amity debt. In 2025 the Firehouse project is paid off, in 2030 the radio project is paid and in 2032 the country club is paid.

Revenue

Tony stated that the list of revenue is all non-tax revenue. Intergovernmental Revenue is basically the same as last year except for the Excess Cost grant, which is higher than this year. We have to wait for the Governor's Budget comes out for the final revenue. Mosat times the State budget does not come out until after the Town budget is approved. Department Charges are the revenue that each department estimated as to what they may collect next year. As the budget process progresses, we may need to adjust the numbers.

Matt wanted to correct the record. The Woodbridge Board of Education did cut their Operating Budget by \$670,984 but they transferred \$93,600 to the Capital Budget which means they really only cut \$577,384 from their request. This would probably have them at an increase of more than 10%.

The Board of Selectmen meet on February 22nd to consider their budget recommendations that they submit to the Board of Finance and the Board of Finance meets in early March.

Tony revised numbers based on the Woodbridge Board of Education revised request and the Grand List Increase of 1.97%:

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|-------------------------|-------|
| Expenditure increase of | 10.2% |
| Tax Rate increase of | 10.4% |
| Mill Rate increase of | 8.3% |

Matt stated that this is probably the most difficult year he can remember. Requests are much more than we can afford. There will have to be cuts and he wishes the Board of Selectmen luck in their budget recommendations. He looks forward to seeing their recommendations. Once the recommendations come to the Board of Finance he will meet with Tony and speak Beth and review the Board of Selectmen recommendations.

The Board of Finance will then meet and determine what will be presented at the Preliminary Budget Hearing in April.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Crosby

Karen Crosby
Budget Analyst
Payroll & Benefits Administrator