BOARD OF FINANCE

Town Hall
5866 Main Street
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611

Board of Finance/Finance Board of the Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers, Trumbull Town Hall
Department Budget Hearings
Approved Minutes
March 19, 2026
8:30 am

Call To Order
Board of Finance Chair, Ms. McHugh, called the meeting to order at 8:38 am followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Present

Board of Finance	Finance Committee of the Town Council
Lainie McHugh, Chair	Nicole Satin
Paul Timpanelli	Mary Isaac
David Galla	
David Pia	
Massimo Mallozzi	
Michael Colohan	
Nathan Tinker	
Vincent DeGennaro	

Also Present
First Selectman Vicki Tesoro
Maria Pires, Director of Finance
Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer
Rebecca Lopez, Auditor

Department Hearings – Second Day – full recording on TCTV/Youtube.

01060800 – Trumbull Community Television – Kate Donahue/Laura Walden

- Have a full Commission.
- Programming features sports, meetings and town events.
- New service is working great.
- Engagement at THS with teachers - teaching or advisory positions; building up studio for students to be engaged. Student videographers cover school events; two others hired.
- Social media, video, audio quality and support for capital projects helps the channel to look and sound better.

- Chart reviewed with viewership statistics. Everything asked for over the years allows them to bring viewers what they want.
- Asking for a small amount in the videographers/supervisor line.
- Three-year Capital Plan now in year two. Looking for a bi-max server and some remote streaming equipment for outside events; need additional lighting in the studio.
- BOE funding – teachers are paid by the BOE; one line item for repairs; the Town supports the channel.
- Any redundancy for vacations, etc. – has an editor to program the station in an absence. Suggested someone should be cross-trained.

01060600 – Business Education Initiative (BEI) – Dan Neumann

- Provides opportunities for students to see what is available after high school .
- Distributed and discussed college and participation report. Includes internships and site visits.
- Transportation inflation – cost has increased between 25%-46% over three years.
- Annual Recognition Breakfast is April 23, 2026 at the Library.
- Board of Education vans for transportation are too small and not practical in most instances. Teachers do not want to take on the responsibility of driving the students.
- Have representation on the Board from Christian Heritage High School and St. Joseph's High School.
- BEI Club has regular speakers for trades - automotive, construction, etc.

01015400 – Conservation Commission – Tim Coughlin/John Massari

- Advisory Board working with IWWC, Town agencies, Parks Department.
- Tree planting arm for the Town with the Parks Department supplying labor and planning. In the fourth year of the program.
- Long Hill Green plantings came from the budget; remainder of budget is for Tashua Knolls; approximately $4,000.
- Established a Vine Committee to remove invasives from the parks. Added $750 to budget for tools; no labor involved as it is all volunteer.
- Tashua Knolls - trees cut down for encroachment to power lines; using right tree/right place guidelines to strategically replace.
- Involved in open parcel walks with CT DEEP and actively engaging; working on specific management plan for Tashua Tree Farm property removing vines and invasive species.
- Encouraging younger individuals to engage in the environment

01015800 – Transit District – Maria Pires

- GBT - covers buses that come through town – no change.

01011000 – Finance – Maria Pires

- Two vacant positions – grant administrator (posted); pension/budget administrative assistant (recently filled)
- Requesting $9,000 to implement MUNIS software (outside service) for salary projections.
- Requesting funds for training in MUNIS and UKG timekeeping system to look for unused capabilities.
- Staff training discussed.
- Grant administrator position discussed.

01011400 – Board of Finance – Maria Pires

- No change; fundings is for the auditor.

01023200 – Building Official – Robert Dunn

- Building Department is in great shape.
- Department fee collection is at 63% of goal. Numerous projects are beginning that will generate fees. Anticipate $1.2 million in revenue from those projects.
- Increases - none other than dues where the cost was raised minimally.
- Migration to Open Gov; can look up permits by address and close out; all in one place. Helps title searches. Assessor, Fire Marshall and Engineering use for various tasks.
- Efficiencies with Open Gov and METROCOG for fees – METROCOG did help with a decrease in fees.
- Research for permit fees – Permit fees were in line with other municipalities; using guidelines by the International Code Council - formula to give them more accurate values for fees. Does not require any changes for the Town schedule.

01050000 – Social Services – Michele Jakab

- No significant changes.
- SNAP changes were a concern for residents; energy assistance was very busy this year; provided winter coats, Thanksgiving baskets, Christmas tree for teens.
- Food share with Daniels Farm – pilot program; staff/volunteers collect food that is uneaten. Meeting to see if any other schools would like to participate.

01050600 – Senior Citizen Services – Michele Jakab

- No staff openings.
- Great membership; full programs; transportation department is thriving.
- No significant changes.
- Volunteer tax program participation discussed.; looking to expand to other departments. Participation number will be provided.

01050200 – Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Center – Michele Jakab

- Fully staffed.
- Youth Diversionary Team – getting more referrals; monitoring the need for additional staff.
- Became a billable center; working on credentialing all clinicians to bill insurance; cost for biller but revenue will offset.
- Statistics on the Youth Diversionary Team will be provided. One employee handles the case load.
- Counseling Center is old; issues with heat; flooding in basement; small – cannot grow; conference room is small – groups meet elsewhere. Privacy is not a concern, waiting room is pretty private.

01012000 – Tax Collector – Cathy Rauso

- Minor overtime adjustment – increased summer help for additional week – August is busy with projects.
- Internships for summer help – never used them but have used different sources to get summer help. Want to make sure they have someone who can be trusted, reliable and there every day. Open to other sources.
- Goals and Objectives – guide staff to provide more empathetic service to the customers.

- Collections are at 78.63% to date; where they should be at this point. Delinquent statements do have a cost for motor vehicle statements because of the volume; real estate, assessment, etc. are mailed internally. Outside processing offsets the cost of the staff work.

Break - 9:45 am – 9:53 am

01010600 – Probate – Judge T.R. Rowe
- Cover three towns - Trumbull, Easton Monroe – most budget is paid by the State.
- Phone, office supplies, postage, digitalization of documents, etc. remain. Goes by the grand list for contribution.
- Asked for additional $200 for office supplies.
- Trumbull's share goes down because of the grand list. $1,200 savings this year.

01010200 – Ethics Commission – Maria Pires
- Clerical fees in case there are meetings; not used in several years.

01012200 – Purchasing – Maria Pires
- Additional part time position in the budget to help with BOE bidding. Not posted last year.
- Diesel locked in at $2.6247; gas at $2.3054; slight increase.
- Efficiencies for savings with copiers – try to use heavy duty printers to eliminate printers in each office; lease for five years; replaced every year.
- Project support for new Hillcrest discussed. All capital projects come through the Town. Work load is significant on all departments of the Town. Consultants do help with some of the aspects of the projects; this is in addition to all the other work in the departments.
- Earliest to lock in for fuel – right before budget. BOE - unsure of process for bus contract.
- Anticipate down time with redoing the pumps at DPW – expect to keep one or two pumps open for use.

01011600 – Tax Assessor – Maria Pires
- In the process of filling motor vehicle/personal property administrator position and tax assessor. HR looking at requirements; assessor position open approximately two years; consultant is in place.
- Professional services account – revaluation - $200,000 for physical reval; over three years for a total of $425,000. Starting some inspections.
- Service contracts for licensing have gone up – discussed specifics and fees.
- Software subscriptions – audit town subscriptions to see if they could be combined or if they are unused; nothing on the Town side is being replicated.
- Increased training fees – two new employees require certifications and training.
- Consultant for tax assessor fee – number will be provided.
- Attorney fees for revaluation – needed for large appeals; only needed $50,000.
- Personal property audits fee based – now bid out.

01080000 – Public Events – Kathy McGannon
- Trumbull Day – last weekend in June – 27th and 28th.
- Flag purchase and numbers discussed. Flags ordered for Main Street, cemeteries and 250th Anniversary.
- Covers Boards and Commissions dinner, etc.

01010400 – First Selectman's Office – First Selectman Tesoro

- Only regular increases in salary account.
- Requested $30,000 for a communications consultant. Neighboring towns have this position at a higher salary rate than proposed; would free up Economic Development with communication needs. Very bottom of the range for a part-time position.

01011800 – Board of Assessment Appeals – Jeff Craw

- Budget – main item is revaluation October 1.
- Historical budget for clerical is light because of the five year cycle.
- 40-60% increase in numbers. Expects more hearings because of concerns.
- Clerical comes in lower because of the number of appeals but will be remarkably higher this year.
- Historical Analysis – appeals on an annual basis/10 year period/residential and commercial. Numbers to be provided.

01012400 – Treasurer – Anthony Musto

- Change is salary which is part of statute.

01013800 – Town Hall – Maria Pires

- Part time employee changed to seasonal employee.
- Contingency – covers union contracts not settled; PD, MATHIS, Fire Marshall still being negotiated.
- Property and Liability – covers Town and BOE; went up 3%. Increased the threshold to get more coverage - $350.
- Other accounts are the same.
- Program expenses – M&T – investments offset fees; moving accounts to Newtown Savings.
- P&L Insurance fee is an estimate; locked in the beginning of July. Could change.

01010000 – Town Council – Maria Pires

- Clerical fees for meetings.
- Professional service – audit fees have increased; this is the third year fee; legal notices.
- Legal notices – nothing has changed. By charter still have to be posted.

01013600 – Town Clerk – Mary Markham

- Legal notice postings are required by State.
- Not many changes – seasonal increased because it is a State election this year. State and Fed elections take more than the locals.
- Overtime went up because of the election requirements.
- Program expenses for Municipal Code – gone up.
- Increases are based on contracts.
- Program supplies – increase with State elections.
- Conferences – unable to attend recently because of open positions; fully staffed now.
- $5,000 adjustment to a position upgraded to a Deputy position – more responsibility in position. All new regulations fall under his work load.
- Goals and Objectives – land records – most towns do not use the current system; looking to upgrade. Program/equipment purchased but they could not get it to work. Looking to use a more effective program. Previous contract cannot be ended. Looking at IQS.

- Grant for scanning – this year BOE minutes scanned. Covers scanning for larger departments; smaller departments scan with their own staff.
- Materials Indicator Report – reduction due to interest rates and lack of inventory.

01040200 – Vital Statistics (Public Health) – Mary Markham
- No changes.

Information follow-up – PD sent additional information to cover cars, salary, drone program summary; BOE follow-up will be discussed later in the meeting.

01070000 – Library – Stephan Lyhne-Nielson/Allison Allen
- Discussed changes at the Library.
- Goals and Objectives reviewed. Need additional tables to accommodate students and work-from-home individuals. Expanding library card users through marketing outreach; expanding programs and events – several authors scheduled to present.
- Part time budget – request to increase by $.70 to keep with the median paid in the region. Have lost staff to other libraries over salary. This is a multi-year effort to achieve a competitive position.
- Collection Development Budget – talking about moving to a fine-free policy. This is a nation-wide movement; most towns do not charge. Spoke about the process/pros and cons. Fines are not a sustainable source of income. Request for $26,000 is to bridge the gap in funding should this fine-free policy be adopted.
- Funding - budget does not show outside funding.
- Funding for Fairchild Library - less than 10%; building upkeep is in the Fairchild Trust.
- Regularly evaluate data bases – some have a lot of use and some become less relevant. Purchased Mango Languages to fulfill a niche and developing a collection plan with that in mind.
- Personnel – two vacant circulation positions and a marketing position – currently in Civil Service testing.
- 402 account – would have to make critical assessments as to purchases and the collection development as a whole. Change should encourage more users; intent is to implement fine-free.
- Ebooks do not generate fines because they disappear off the device.
- Spoke on the process involved with late fees. Max fine is $5 but does not allow user to use the library. Fees are hard to enforce.
- Outreach Committee is looking to do more activities for schools, Parks and Rec for Arts Festival and Farmers Market., etc.

Break at 11:24 am – 11:46 am

01012800 – Town Attorneys – Daniel Schopick
- Legal notices – Zoning legal notices need to go to print under State statute; could save money under Town Council but that would require a charter opening. Probate is not in the town's budget. IWWC and Zoning are under State statute. Town Council meetings and results required by Charter. Total amounts will be provided.
- 6% increase in ancillary – a number of 8-30g applications coming in and do not know what assistance will be needed in order to defend the appeals. Anticipate additional tax appeals for revaluation.
- Supplementary appropriations are not appropriate as some situations are immediate needs.

Lunch Break – 11:52 am – 12:45 pm

01010100 – Nature Commission – Sheryl Baumann/Emily Shufrin/Jack Boynton

- Slightly adjusted.
- Repairs still needed to the building; unknown if they were budgeted for by Public Works – flashing, gutters and floor repair/replacement that had water damage. Will be looked into.
- Record number of participants over 6,300. School programs reviewed.
- Grant funding for new programs for memory impaired seniors and mommy and me program.
- Grant funding received to make repairs to the building – replaced lighting in front room and classroom; painted the ceilings; installing an interactive education display.

01014600 – Economic Development – Rina Bakalar

- Have a similar budget with minimal changes. Flexibility within the budget is helpful.
- Had a good year in terms of development; many projects in place; major development sites.
- Robust interest in the mall property; should go swiftly. Doing the study was key; listing for the mall articulates all they have been talking about. Potential for $10 million over time in grand list growth.
- Staffing resources were discussed. Currently understaffed for upcoming project work load. Communications consultant is good. Mall is a massive undertaking; have some funding to support the sales process for six months to one year. Potentially need additional money next year for a person dedicated to this redevelopment but needs to see how the sale progresses. Encouraged to come back with a plan for resources to expedite the plan for the mall.
- Ms. McHugh – suggested additional discussion with all the projects coming up. Current staffing is one full time and one part time; upgrading .5 position to full time (full time status but divides time between Economic Development and Zoning Appeals); have consultants but are shared with other departments; part time clerk would be wonderful. Staff would need professional capacity that is more technical; political skills to tap Hartford; grant experience; ability to undertake the day to day management of the redevelopment. The Board is open to this conversation; requested additional information, when available, on timeline and status. Consultants can be a separate discussion.
- Remainder includes minimal changes.
- Spoke on updates for Trumbull Center, School House Project, Gateway Commons, Trefoil and Main, 48 Monroe Turnpike.

01014200 – Planning and Zoning – Rina Bakalar/Rob Librandi

- Building residential comes through P&Z.
- Updating the accessory apartment lists.
- Assisted Economic Development in the mall study.
- Finalizing the POCD.
- Working with Fair Rent Commission.
- Nothing has changed from last year in the budget; solid for what they need.
- Requested funding for required licenses/certification for staff. Approximately $1,200.
- Vacant position – have part time; looking for full time; funded at full time.
- Housing Growth Plan – has been completed; needs to be updated to reflect new regulations under statute.
- Upcoming Housing Forum in this area. Need to find out what we are responsible for and a plan needs to be developed in terms of growth.

- Discussion of 8-30g moratorium and potential development.
- Zoning Officer goes out each day; needs a new vehicle; will check with public works; could be placed in the budget.

01013000 – Human Resources/Civil Service – Thomas McCarthy

- Budget – nothing much has changed.
- Requesting additional $2,700 for background checks for new employees.
- Requesting additional $1,600 to increase coverage for information from the county governments in background checks.
- Vendor fee increases such as Test Genius for civil services; Neo-Gov does all but police hiring.
- Capital budget – asking for money for two new bargaining groups in town.
- Met all the required OSHA standards in the inspection; all the changes approved. OSHA will conduct regular training and update policies and regulations. Need the technical expertise.
- Questioned about salary and attendance.

Break 1:47 pm – 1:55 pm

- Ms. McHugh clarified they can discuss the salary of the position but no other specifics. Mr. McCarthy declined to make a comment.
- Use of interns discussed - are limited, significant amount of supervision is necessary; operationally it is a department decision because of the time invested in training and evaluation of the intern.
- Diversity Training update – did training with the Police Department for senior staff; looking to expand to the next level of supervisors and work down.
- Contract negotiation status discussed.

01013400 – Employee Benefits – Maria Pires/Thomas McCarthy

- Participate in the State Partnership Plan; doing well in terms of health care inflation. This is a spike year with things we have no control over. Increase was 12.5% for Trumbull (11.5% increase with a cost adjustment of +1% surcharge because Fairfield county is more expensive.) Spoke on spike claims and the effect on the cost.
- More expensive to go out to a private plan; cannot be self-insured.
- More expensive in the Partnership Plan but we do well.
- Medical benefits discussed. Would need to offer it to everyone; bargaining unit would need to agree on terms.
- Worker's Comp – budget for $2,000,000; unknown what claims will be.
- CIRMA is third party administrator; could come to the Board meeting to explain position. Town is self-insured as they pay all the bills; more costly.
- Pension contributions - actuary evaluations will be completed on all plans.
    - 522105 – ($273,000) police pension plan for new hires implemented in July 2025.
    - 522106 – regular police plan – 91.65% funded.
    - Town and BOE -$5,921,000; 54.38% funded.
    - Defined contribution plan – increasing $888,000.
- Current Town FTE number – approximately 350; number will be provided; increases in the summer.
- Revised budget request – changes will be provided.

Board of Education – Martin Semmel

- YTD Statistics – provided as requested.
- Bank of American notes recast in 2020 – discussion held regarding loan status; how long to keep; what should be done. Some loans for technology have been paid off.
- Total Debt Services - Miscellaneous Account – discussion held regarding the food service account and how the program is budgeted and administered. Discussed repayment of funds to the State for personnel considered not qualified to direct the service. Spoke on items allowed to be taken out of the account. Increase in account is the penalty and increases in annual membership – just right sizing the accounts. $260,392.32 penalty over 5 years.
- Memberships were reviewed.
- Purchasing – upgraded transportation software – annual cost; old software was phased out.
- Unknown how many people will retire; incentives offered in the past (21 people in 2018) – savings will be provided.
- Waiver on health insurance – cost benefit analysis done but it is a union issue; benefit depends on the number taking the offer; not offered in other schools. Would like actuaries to see if it is the right way to go. Town looks every year at the potential savings. Numbers requested.
- BOE audit – bids are in; next step is to interview the firms; scope cannot be changed at this point.
- Tier busing – consultants did provide information; gave data back to them and now have a draft. Discussion held on recommendations. Proposed budget includes two additional buses that would not be needed should this be implemented.
- Fuel pricing is with the Town Purchasing Department. All use the same vendor.
- Energy usage was discussed – over budget for electricity; expect this year will be over by $400,000. Public benefit fee $250,000 per year. Increases driven by weather; heat and cooling; electrical – older equipment, computers, white boards, HVAC products. On average 16% of increase is public benefit. Strategies discussed. Possible to set up a preliminary meeting with DPW for discussion.
- UI rebate program discussed. Push is geothermal/solar; moving towards renewal energy; buildings are not up to that due to age. Cost review could be completed; would need to look at the program offered. Car ports for solar; environment needs to be considered.
- Opt-in district printing – opt-out of materials to go home. Most forms are fillable PDF forms or google forms, tried to move forms to an on-line format. Color/vs black and white copies are being tracked. Significantly reduced the number of color copies; reduced copier contract recently; reduced carbon footprint. All done through a central printer that is cost efficient.
- Audit of licenses – receives a yearly usage report; calculation of what it costs; looking at usage data; use State contracts for educational technology software; renegotiates costs if usage is low. MUNIS – might need a consultant to merge the two systems; open to a joint contract with the Town. Time and attendance would need to be addressed; requires a different system. Would like to move forward with a discussion of potential savings and licensures for that software. BOE would like to look at time and attendance.
- Outplaced students – on 10/1/25 there were 42 outplaced students; March presentation is 37. Spoke on the change in the budget. Transportation and programming variations prompt the number. Number is going down but students cost more. Numbers are all projections. All expenses are documented on each student so numbers are calculated on actual costs for the budget. Enrollment

for REACH and ELITE – invoiced and cover the cost for the student. Invoices hit at the end of the fiscal year.

- Regional linking with other districts for Fairchild Wheeler 6-6 for buses**;** not beneficial after review.
- 205 account **–** athletics – anticipating $300,000 for next year.
- Ag-Science - state regulated program; tuition from participating towns and ASTE grant goes directly to the Town to support the center. ($1.5 million). Additional funds can only be used to supplement items not part of the operational budget (electricity, teachers, supplies); larger items such as equipment. Unknown if it can be used for repairs as that would fall under capital.
- Rebates **–** interest bearing account to offset general fund expenditures.
- Discussion held on continuing education programs and partnering with the Recreation Department. Continuing Ed does not generate funds; must offer adult education; not cost effective to do in house; using Next Chapter Books for revenue opportunities.
- Reserve Account for negotiations discussed.
- Custodial services – if buildings are closed early afternoon, no custodial services would be scheduled. Would need a structure for the buildings to be taken care of - schedule for late events and supplies, adjusting times to begin cleaning; adjust power saving times. Not a lot of savings overall.
- Grant writing – possible sharing of a grant writer between BOE and Town discussed.
- AI – piloting curriculum writing; educators still have a hand in the writing but reduces the hours. Google products discussed. Helps save time in organizing and formatting; customized to Trumbull.
- Dining services discussed. Happy with in-house program – current system fulfills State requirements. Program doing well; not losing funds; puts money back into the program; gives BOE control of program.
- Social Services – Food sharing with Daniels Farm – very successful. Need the support of the PTAs for success. Rules regarding the food need to be followed. Potential for other schools to participate.
- Discussion held regarding disposable lunch products versus washing.
- Discussion held on ECS funding. Unknown what distribution would be; preliminary numbers do not look good for Trumbull. First Selectman has a meeting next week to discuss.
- Galla - looking to partner for solutions to meet department needs and not impact students – buses, retirement, electric rates; looks forward to continuing these conversations.

Break – 4:03 pm– 4:10 pm

Elections – Jean Rabinow

- Budgeting for the primaries, general election in November, recount and possible audit.
- Main change is maintenance; salary is small amount.
- Tabulator maintenance is $18,000; contract not signed by the State or Town.
- Increase in poll worker stipends. Paying so little as compared to other towns in the State; poll workers are being hired by surrounding communities for the same job.
- Salaries part time – $21,000 to $95,000 – nothing in full time; personnel are part time; work full time around elections.
- Locations not a problem; tabulators are through State contract – okay with two tabulators per precinct; medium speed tabulator will do mail in ballots; only one tabulator stand.

Information from Police Department was distributed. Any follow-up questions send to Ms. McHugh.

01090000 -Debt Service – Maria

- Town – Bonding total - $5,850,935; including interest of $3,247,813; Principal $6,850,935. Sold bonds; used $1,000,000 of premium received to reduce the total.
- Board of Education – Bonding total - $5,964,088; Interest $1,517,393; Principal $4,247,251; short-term interest on notes $199,444
- Town Interest and Principal - $9,898,748
- Total - $15,062,836
- Short term notes are due every year in September.
- No potential for bonds because of the interest rate.
- Discussion held on outstanding bonds. Summary will be provided. Should clean up unused authorizations.

Revenues – Maria Pires

- Specifics will be reviewed when setting the mill rate.
- Revenue categories reviewed.
- Interfund transfers to cover administrative costs/in-kind services discussed.
- Mill rate 37.09%; estimated 3.92% increase; will change going through the process.
- Fund Balance – update will be provided.

Adjournment
Motion made by Mr. Timpanelli, seconded by Mr. Mallozzi, to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 pm. Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Acting Clerk