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
Budget Voting Sesson
Approved Minutes
March 24, 2026
6:00 pm

Call To Order
Board of Finance Chair, Ms. McHugh, opened the meeting at 6:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Present
Board of Finance
Lainie McHugh, Chair
Paul Timpanelli
David Galla
David Pia
Massimo Mallozzi
Michael Colohan
Nathan Tinker
Vincent DeGennaro

Also Present
Maria Pires, Director of Finance
Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer
Cindy Katske – Chief Administrative Officer
Vickie Tesoro, First Selectman
Danile Schopick, Town Attorney
Lisa LoBuono, Assistant Finance Director

Ms. McHugh welcomed everyone to the conclusion of the Board of Finance portion of the budget process for FY 2026-2027. The Board of Finance will be voting on their proposed budget to be presented to the Town Council. She noted each department will be discussed in order; if no changes, totals will remain the same.

Mr. Galla motioned to accept the budget as proposed by the First Selectman, seconded by Mr. Timpanelli.
Ms. McHugh requested 01060000, Department of Education, be taken out of order for discussion.

01060000 - Department of Education – Total Budget $141,730,089
Mr. Galla motioned to increase Account Number 01060000-522205, Program Expenses, by $500,000 for the purpose of funding needs of the Board of Education budget for 2026-2027. Seconded by Mr. Mallozzi. Mr. Galla - In support of our shared commitment to education excellence and fiscal responsibility to the community, the Board of Finance would like to take some collaborative opportunities to ensure maximum

resources are directed to the student programming and classroom needs. While the Board of Education maintains full authority over the spending decisions, the Board of Finance recommends exploring the following areas including consideration and implementation of the three tiered busing system, electrical and utility optimization, taking advantage of the newly found insurance benefit adjustments and utilization of the non-lapsing account. Our current fiscal climate requires all of us to work collaboratively and find solutions that work both for the Board of Education and the Town of Trumbull. These recommendations, in conjunction with the additional funds the Board of Finance is proposing, result in a minimal budget gap, we believe, and avoids impact on students and the need for staff reductions at scale, supporting the Board of Education's evolving needs and the Town of Trumbull's collective mission of educational excellence.

Mr. Pia motioned to amend Mr. Galla's motion to increase the same line item, 522205, in the amount of $1,520,000. Mr. Pia noted some of the add back items were the three tiered busing system; not confident that would work. Dr. Semmel had indicated he was fairly confident but there was an issue for the younger students and also set aside the emergency savings fund. Would like to see the Board of Education hold on to it. Knows everyone will vote differently and have different ideas. It is a hard mix between education and the taxpayer's in the Town and being sensitive to them. **Seconded by Mr. Colohan.** Mr. Pia noted his number of $1,520,000 takes out the insurance difference and leaves in the three tiered busing and emergency account. **All in favor of amending the original motion on the floor to increase the amount – Motion failed 2-4.** (Yes (Pia/Colohan); No (McHugh, Timpanelli, Galla, Mallozzi). **Motion remaining to increase 01060000-522205 account by $500,000. Motion passed 4-2.** (Yes - McHugh, Timpanelli, Galla, Mallozzi); (No – Pia, Colohan).

New Account Total - $134,844,746; New Department Total – $142,230,089.

<u>01010400 - First Selectman – Total Budget $397,776</u>

Mr. Galla motioned to increase line item 01010400-522202, Services and Fees Professional, by $20,000 to provide sufficient funding for the Communications Consultant to assist with a comprehensive communication strategy for the Town of Trumbull. Seconded by Mr. Timpanelli. Mr. Timpanelli noted most of the effort will be directed toward the Economic Development arena. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Account Total - $50,000; New Department Total - $417,776.

<u>01011600 - Tax Assessor – Total Budget $815,711</u>

Mr. Mallozzi motioned to decrease line item 01011600-522202, Services & Fees – Professional, by $25,000. Seconded by Mr. Pia. Mr. Mallozzi noted it is due primarily to the timing of the reval and expect to see an increase in appeals in the Spring of 2027 leading into late 2027. Does not think the full usage is necessary. Ms. McHugh also noted there is tax appeal money in the consultant fees in the Town Attorneys. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Account Total - $256,250; New Department Total - $790,711.

<u>01014660 -Economic Development – Total Budget $277,028</u>

Motion made by Mr. Mallozzi to increase line item 01014600-501101, Salaries – FT/Permanent, by $35,080. Seconded by Mr. Galla. Mr. Mallozzi noted the intention is to move the existing half time employee to full time to better support the Economic Development Department. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Account total - $223,908.

Mrs. Pires noted that position is already a full time position split between P&Z and Economic Development. You would want to keep the part time position in P&Z. Ms. McHugh noted they did not alter the P&Z request.

Mr. Mallozzi motioned to increase line item 01014600-522202, Services & Fees – Professional, by $50,000. Seconded by Mr. Galla. Mr. Mallozzi noted they believe there is a need to add Consulting resources to support this department for the growing commercial development, specifically the mall study. Mr. Timpanelli noted it is valuable to point out the Town made a great investment to hire a consultant to do an assessment of the mall. This was done exceptionally well with a number of critical recommendations made. There is a timeline in the report that is a concern. If we pay attention to the report and its implementation with the current staff, it would take 10-15 years to complete the plan. The department needs resources dedicated to guiding, managing and looking after the recommendations in the report and how they are being implemented over time in partnership with the new owner of the mall. There is no more critical economic resource in town than the future of this property. It was once the biggest tax payer, no longer; once our biggest draw, no longer; it is happening to malls all over the country. Suggested to add significant resources to this department and enable Rina to expedite the development. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Account Total - $65,500; New Department total - $312,108.

<u>01022000 - Police Department - $11,746,785</u>

Mr. Galla motioned to increase line item 01022000-501101, Salaries - FT/Permanent, by $9,826. Seconded by Mr. Mallozzi. Ms. McHugh noted this was a correction. The funding is already in contingency and does not need to be added. **Mr. Galla removed his motion as presented.** Account will remain at $8,690,181.

Mr. Pia made a motion to increase the budget by $400,000 for salaries, overtime and cars. Seconded by Mr. Timpanelli. Ms. McHugh noted they should be okay with the overtime amount. The salaries reduced were for the current vacant positions. By the time positions are filled, they will not need the full salary. This is adjusted every year and they return for additional funding, if necessary. The department would like to have six cars and the Board would like to accommodate that request. They would like to take the funding from the Special Agency Account that is not part of the Operating Budget. Discussion was held regarding funding sources. Mrs. Pires indicated a motion could be made to approve the funding so the department is not required to return with a request. Would like to put three in the Special Agency Account and leave one in the budget.
Mr. Pia withdrew his motion. Motion to increase the vehicle purchases in the Public Safety Department from the Special Agency Account. Seconded by Mr. Pia. Discussion was held regarding allocation of purchases for six cars. Mr. Galla noted there is value in this purchase as other departments would benefit from receiving the older vehicles. It is good to have the officers in safe vehicles. Ms. McHugh asked for a vote to support the addition of those vehicles that does not affect the Operating Budget. **Motion passed 6-0.** Leaving one car in the line item. Mr. Galla referred to the request for vehicles. Mrs. Pires noted five vehicles were requested, three coming out of the special detail and one from the Operating Budget. We will be adding two to the special detail for a total of six (taking five out of special detail).

Break – 6:37 pm – 6:40 pm.

Mr. Pia motioned to increase line item 01022200-501101, Salaries – FT/Permanent by $210,000 for turnover. Seconded by Mr. Galla. Mr. Pia noted this was a request of the Chief after discussions. **Motion failed 2-4.(Yes – Pia/Colohan; No (McHugh, Timpanelli, Galla, Mallozzi)**

Mr. Mallozzi moved to increase line item 01022200-578801, Maintenance/Repair Service Contract, by $37,680. Seconded by Mr. Pia. This is for a repair contract omitted. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Account Total - $357,680 ; New Department Total - $11,784,465.

New Total for Public Safety - $17,067,826. **All in agreement with the new total for Public Safety – Passed 6-0**

01020400 - Recycling Center - $3,164,840

Mr. Galla motioned to decrease 01030400-522204, Services & Fees – Contractual, by $46,000. Seconded by Mr. Timpanelli. Mr. Galla noted it more accurately reflects expected tonnage at 500 tons at $92 per ton. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Account Total - $2,787,652; New Department Total -$3,118,840

New Total for Public Works - $11,103,719. **All in agreement with the new totals – passed 6-0.**

01060000 – Education Department – previously discussed.
New Department Total - $142,230,089.

New Total for Education - $144,035,248

01070000 – Libraries

Mr. Mallozzi motioned to increase line item 01070000-534402, Program Supplies, by $16,000. Seconded by Mr. Pia. Mr. Mallozzi noted this is to restore the full amount needed to cover the outstanding leveraged fines to move to a fine free program. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Department Total - $2,096,828.

01080600- Parks and Recreation - $3,834,263

Mr. Mallozzi motioned to increase line item 01080600-578803, Maintenance/Rep-Program Related, by $7,000. Seconded by Mr. Galla. This was a rental fee for the dive safety program for the pool that was inadvertently removed. It was thought to be a purchase but it was a rental. It is life-saving apparatus. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Parks Total - $3,841,263; New Parks & Recreation πDepartment Total - $4,171,997. **All in agreement with the new Recreation and Parks Department total– Passed 6-0.**

21100000 – Tashua Knolls – Enterprise - $2,853,083

Mr. Galla motioned to increase line item 21100000-501101, Salaries – FT/Permanent, by $7,066. Seconded by Mr. Pia. Mr. Galla noted this is to fund contractual obligations for the Director of Golf Course Properties. **Motion passed 6-0.**

New Total for Tashua Knolls Enterprise - $2,860,149; New Total for Combined Enterprise Funds - $14,330,430.

All in agreement with the new Enterprise Funds total – Passed 6-0.

01013400 – Employee Benefits - $23,543,368

Mr. Galla motioned to decrease 01013400-511151, Fringe Benefits -Medical/Dental, by $55,000. Seconded by Mr. Mallozzi. Mrs. Pires noted the new total is $65,670. **Mr. Galla amended the motion to decrease the line item previously noted by $65,070. Seconded by Mr. Mallozzi.** Mrs. Pires noted she had given a range and this is the final schedule. **Motion passed 6-0.**

Mrs. Pires noted due to the increase in the salary account for Tashua Knolls, the FICA amount needs to be increased by $3,224. **Mr. Mallozzi motioned to increase line item 01013400-511150 by $3,224. Seconded by Mr. Timpanelli. Motion passed 6-0.**

Mrs. Pires noted $2,950 increase for Defined Contr-Town Match. **Mr. Timpanelli motioned to increase line item 01013400-522110 by $2,950; Seconded by Mr. Mallozzi. Passed 6-0.**

New Total for Account 511150 - $2,44100; New Total for Account 511151 - $8,695,656; New Total for Account 522110 - $891,816. Total Employee Benefits - $23,483,872. **All in agreement with the new totals – Passed 6-0.**

New Total for General Government - $32,451,869. **All in agreement with the new total – Passed 6-0.**

New General Fund Total - $221,771,080. **All in agreement with the new total – Passed 6-0.**

Grand Total - $236,101,510. **All in agreement with the grand total – Passed 6-0.**

Ms. McHugh thanked everyone for their hard work. Appreciates the time, energy and expertise to address the issues that came up.

Break – 7:11 pm – 7:13 pm.

Ms. McHugh addressed the number for the Education Department as previously discussed. Earlier today, an email was received from Dr. Semmel indicating to close the gap is a much smaller number than he had been anticipating. In order to cover, with three tiered busing, they were looking at a $920,000 add back to position a better path to not reducing services. He wanted to thank everyone for the hours of time put into this year's budget process. He acknowledged a conversation with the Chairman yesterday and discussed some considerations for tonight's budget vote. He thought it would be valuable to share a path for the Board to consider for tonight's discussion. He considered it a compromise from the Board of Education adopted budget that the path, though not ideal, would require they move to the three tier busing system which might not be ideal for some parents and younger students. Wanted the Board of Finance to consider a compromise position whereby they would approve an increase of $920,000. The Board considers the $500,000 a fair compromise with the other savings.

Adjournment

Mr. Galla motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 pm. Seconded by Mr. Timpanelli and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Acting Clerk