

**Board of Finance Budget Hearings**  
**Board of Education Hearing #2**  
**and**  
**Nursing / Senior Wellness**  
**Nursing / Public and Non Public School Nurses**  
**Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Center**  
**Parks and Recreation Budget Hearing**

**March 24, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lainie McHugh called the virtual meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom. All those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk called the roll and recorded the following:

**PRESENT**

Lainie McHugh  
Michael Barker  
Marty Isaac  
Scott Zimov  
Vincent DeGennaro – Alternate  
Marc Mascola – Alternate  
Christine El Eris – Alternate

**ABSENT**

Paul Timpanelli  
Elaine Hammers

**The Finance Committee of the Town Council had a quorum:**

Mary Isaac, Vice Chairman	Ashley Gaudiano
Dawn Cantafio	Joy Colon, Alternate
Kevin Shively, Chairman	
Nicole Satin	

**Also present:**

First Selectman Vicki Tesoro; Maria Pires, Finance Director; Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer; Cynthia Katske, Chief Administrative Officer; Rebeca Lopez, Internal Auditor; Ashley Gaudiano, Town Council Chairman; Dr. Martin Semmel, Superintendent of Schools; Susan Iwanicki, Assistant Superintendent; Paul Hendrickson, Business Manager; Lucinda Timpanelli, BOE; Regina Williams, Human Resources Director, Dr. Tammy Hartman, PPS Director; David Cote, Director of Operations, Christina Hefele, Director of Digital Learning

Dr. Semmel, the Superintendent of schools, opened the meeting by asking that the Board of Finance continue to consider their budget request that is \$500,000 beyond the first selectman's proposal.

Regina Williams, Human Resources Director, explained that a full-time equivalent is the number of hours worked divided by the number of hours considered a full-time work week by the employer. The paras in the Town of Trumbull work a variety of hours. She is currently looking for the highest number of hours worked in the district to use as the common denominator in calculating the FTEs as this is the key to an accurate FTE calculation. She is using 37.5 hours as the full-time number of hours. The actual number of FTEs that will be needed for next year is still being worked on.

Mr. Mascola indicated that if you take the total # of FTE hours that you pay out each week and divide it by the # of hours considered full-time, you will have the # of FTEs that you need for the Board of Finance.

Dr. Semmel continued the discussion with comparison to Glastonbury.

- Trumbull's median income is higher.
- We out-perform Glastonbury in reading.
- We are slightly below in Math (other reports show us slightly higher)

We find that we have less support and more need, so we would like to restore support to where we were higher.

In the last 7 years, we have increased 260 students. 70 students moved into town in 2022-2023 and of these 12 needed 1:1 support. If a child has more than one disability, we can only select one.

14% to 16% of the student population are considered special education. We have budgeted a 3% increase and we are at 5-7%. We have SRP classrooms to keep kids in the school system and we currently need to outplace 44 students that we cannot accommodate.

Discussion was then directed to the original intent of loans for equipment. Dr. Semmel indicated he was not aware of the reason for the loans. Mr. DeGennaro indicated the loans were taken out to leverage leasing agreements. Leases were supposed to be implemented. We would lease equipment and keep moving forward with this – spending the same leasing amount each time and bringing in new equipment.

In order to get back on track for leasing, Dr. Semmel indicated that they would be able to put \$230,000 in the budget for technology and there is \$1,000,000 annually in the budget for the next 3 years. Mr. DeGennaro offered to work with Mr. Hackett in order to assist him with reestablishing the leasing plan.

Mr. Hendrickson indicated that there are currently 2 TD Bank loans in the budget. Loan #5 for \$594,000 included HVAC equipment and a vehicle and loan #6 for \$787,000 included a split air system, a lawnmower and THS Marching Band equipment.

The meeting with the Board of Education was ended at 8:45 and continued with the remaining Department Budget Hearings, as follows:

#### **01040400 - Nursing / Senior Wellness**

##### **Lynn Steinbrick, Nursing Director**

- Senior nurse able to keep up some activities with seniors during Covid-19.
- They had walks at the mall and met in the outside garden at the center to talk, etc.
- There was a large turnout during Covid using zoom programs.

#### **01060200 –Nursing / Public School Nurses**

##### **Lynn Steinbrick, Nursing Director**

- Challenging 2 years for school nursing; no longer an end of career position and it is really a specialty.
- Many of the special ed children will also need nursing services.
- In the public schools we have 8,000 students that have some type of medical condition that range from seasonal allergies to extreme issues and then we need to write care plans and attend meetings.
- It is challenging to attract and retain nurses since our hourly wage is on the lower side.
- Would like to see more professional development.
- Would like to have 2 CNAs to help the nurses in the most challenging schools.
- Looking at a nursing stipend; nurse can be responsible for 3x as many students and this is a way to compensate them. Goal to support the nurses in the busier schools with a higher work load. One child can change the dynamic of an entire school.
- Nurses get better benefits at other towns and they are not union, which contributes to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining.

#### **01060400 – Non Public School Nurses**

##### **Lynn Steinbrick**

- Same goals and accomplishments as above.

#### **01050200 - Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Ctr.**

##### **Lynn Steinbrick**

- Attempting to resume normalcy.
- Offer on-line consulting and group counseling.

- In house counseling being offered.
- Everything seems to be Covid related.
- Parents don't need to know -- until you need support.
- Revenue does not cover costs. We so not bill insurance. We work on a sliding scale.
- \$4,000-\$5,000 a year in revenue goes to the General Fund.
- Grant supplies \$20,000 - \$30,000 per year.

**01080400 Parks and Recreation**

**Dmitri Paris, Parks and Recreation**

**Noreen Wilpizseski, Recreation Program Manager**

- Increasing offerings to before Covid by 20% and implement.
- All BOE and Town fields are rented out. We have upwards of 30 multi-purpose fields.
- We have makers for use; need to give fields a rest period. Overall, there is a maximum number of hours per field per week that can be used before needing a rest period.
- Merged two departments together for 80/20 split with parks maintenance; built into one budget.
- Full-time staff requirements. We have automated many functions using scheduling specialized software that reduced need for staffing.
- We have security needs. Wage and hour laws have changed with season employees and it is now 1,000 hours. We have only one Park Ranger and now we would like to go back to having 2. So in order to fund this position we are eliminating the Assistant Program Manager and transferring the individual into the full-time Park Ranger at the same rate.
- The Arts Director position was eliminated and a seasonal position added at a higher rate of pay.

Mr. Zimov moved, seconded by Mr. Barker to extend the Board of Finance Budget hearing passed the 10:00 p.m. deadline.

Vote: 6-0-0 motion carries

- This year we will need a minimum of 36 camp counselors this year to run at full capacity, same as pre-Covid, does not include supervisors.
- We charge \$125 for 2 weeks of camp; other towns charge around \$600. If we charged \$550 for two weeks at camp we would break-even.
- We have been trying to get to budget neutral, especially since Covid took us down, and we are sold out of many activities. Camp is sold out and looking at pre-covid number.

**01080400 Tree Warden**

**Dmitri Paris, Parks and Recreation**

- Program is grossly underfunded. It has been continuously underfunded and we try to keep within the budget amount. We have a great number of trees in failing condition.
- On a given day when we get tree complaints, we are on notice.
- We have a comprehensive checklist of standards and both the deputy warden and Dmitri would consistently check Warren's assessments, and it was clear that the he was spot on.
- To take down a tree costs money and we are liable for 10' back from the street is the right of way, and 10' from the curb is the town right of way so trees on this land are the responsibility of the Town.
- United Illuminating has a different agreement for taking down trees and the town is still responsible for removing trunks. Every tree that needs to come down is an emergency and it is a constant. Normally, people notice trees are dead in the spring or after a storm.
- Every high-risk tree is a threat and we cannot give you a definite number.
- We can't approve the dollar amount until we have a firmer number; historical 3-year average.
- We put more in the budget and then come for a supplemental but the trees do need to come down.

By unanimous consent the meeting adjourned at 10:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Phyllis C. Collier*

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Clerk – Board of Finance