

SPECIAL MEETING BOARD OF FINANCE

The Board of Finance (BOF) held a special meeting on April 16, 2007 in the Courtroom of Town Hall, 979 Main Street Willimantic, CT 06226 for the purposes of revising and accepting the Board of Education, General Government, and Willimantic Service District budgets for the upcoming fiscal year.

Members present: Harry Carboni, Andrew Carey III, Hannah Clements, Peter McDevitt, Jr., Christopher Marot, Gordon Muir, and Joseph Underwood.

Note: The Chairman votes only to **make** or **break** a tie.

Chairman Andrew Carey, III called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Public Comment

Tom DeVivo, Board of Selectmen, speaking on behalf of First Selectman Michael Paulhus, asked to reinstate the third Code Enforcement position, and Third Thursday funds.

Brian Anderson, Willimantic, spoke on behalf of Third Thursday funding and the Code Enforcement position.

Jean DeSmet, Willimantic Renaissance, spoke in favor of Third Thursday, believing it is a partnership with the Town.

Kay Haskell, Third Thursday Volunteer, asked the Board to increase the funding for Third Thursday.

Doug Fleming, Windham, spoke in favor of Third Thursday, noting it was a good way for Law Enforcement to interact with the community. He also spoke in favor of the education budget asking the Board to consider the “output” from the schools.

Marvin Edelman, Windham, beseeched the Board to use zero-based budgeting, asking how the “arbitrary” cuts were made to the budget.

Iлона Gabowski-Stone, Windham, asked the Board to settle on priorities in order to reduce the tax burden on citizens.

Everett Berube, Willimantic, spoke in favor of Third Thursday, saying he believes it is the best thing that ever happened to the town.

Peter Hughes, South Windham, spoke in favor of the education budget and Third Thursday.

Steve Russ, Windham, spoke in favor of the education budget, saying a good school system helps us compete with other towns in attracting residents.

John Moran, spoke in favor of the education budget and Third Thursday.

Murphy Sewell, Windham, asked the Board to invest in the future, suggesting that property values are affected by perceptions of the school system and economic development in town.

Debbie Stoloff, Willimantic, spoke in favor of the education budget and Third Thursday.

Kevin Hoxey, Willimantic, spoke in favor of the education budget.

Eric Martin, Willimantic, spoke in favor of the education budget and Third Thursday.

Gina Potvin, Windham, spoke in favor of Third Thursday and the education budget, suggesting that the Town could save money through creative programs.

Dan Lein, Willimantic, spoke in favor of Third Thursday, restoring the Code Enforcement position and restoring the pumper truck expenditure in the Service District.

Kathy Rodriguez, Willimantic, spoke in favor of the education budget and Third Thursday.

Kathy Roberts, Windham, spoke in favor of the education budget and Third Thursday.

Mark Doyle, Board of Education, thanked the citizens for their support and asked the Board of Finance to pass the full 7.9% increase based on forecasts from the State.

Discussion and Possible Action – Board of Education Proposed Budget

Joseph Underwood, seconded by Chris Marot, moved to reduce the Board of Education increase to 6%, or \$40,273,771 for the fiscal year 2007-2008.

Harry Carboni asked why 6%? Joseph Underwood said the public was asking the Board to support the budget and give it a chance to pass. Chris Marot said 6% would be a good balance since it would fund the budget at cost of living levels. Peter McDevitt said he would support 6% so long as any additional education funding resulted in a reduction in the Town's tax burden and did not go to education costs above 6%.

Members voting **in favor** of the motion: H. Clements, P. McDevitt, C. Marot, G. Muir, J. Underwood.

Members voting **against** the motion: H. Carboni.

Motion **PASSES**, 5-1.

Discussion and Possible Action – General Government Budget

C. Marot, seconded by H. Clements, moved to reinstate \$5000 for the Third Thursday line item 50507-386.

Harry Carboni asked why the money should be put back in. Chris Marot responded that after discussing the issue with all sides, he felt the money should be restored and the Economic Development committee should meet with members of Willimantic Renaissance, the Police Department and the Board of Finance to cut costs in the future.

Members voting **in favor** of the motion: H. Clements, P. McDevitt, C. Marot, G. Muir, J. Underwood.

Members voting **against** the motion: H. Carboni.

Motion **PASSES**, 5-1.

G. Muir, seconded by J. Underwood, moved to accept the General Government budget as amended, resulting in a budget of \$14,069,613 – a 2.93% increase over 2006-2007.

Members voting **in favor** of the motion: H. Clements, P. McDevitt, C. Marot, G. Muir, J. Underwood.

Members voting **against** the motion: H. Carboni.

Motion **PASSES**, 5-1.

Discussion and Possible Action – Willimantic Service District Budget

G. Muir, seconded by J. Underwood, moved to accept the WSD budget as amended, resulting in a budget of \$8,647,428.

Members voting **in favor** of the motion: H. Clements, P. McDevitt, C. Marot, G. Muir, J. Underwood.

Members voting **against** the motion: H. Carboni.

Motion **PASSES**, 5-1.

Discussion of Revenue Projections

Controller Rob Buden is still finalizing numbers, and the Board is awaiting solid figures from the State.

Discussion and Possible Action on PILOT Allocation

Postponed, pending revenue projections and the report of the independent study.

Adjournment

Gordon Muir, seconded by Christopher Marot, made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

Motion PASSED unanimously

Christopher Marot, Board of Finance