

**Simsbury Board of Finance  
TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.  
Simsbury Public Library - Program Room 1  
725 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, Connecticut**

**PRESENT:** Lisa Heavner, Derek Peterson, Robert Pomeroy, Linda Schofield, Moira Wertheimer

**ALSO PRESENT:** Melissa Appleby, Deputy Town Manager; Sean Askham, BOS; Nick Boulter, Chief, Simsbury Police Department; Maria Capriola, Town Manager; Cheryl Cook, BOS; Matthew Curtis, Schools Superintendent; Mike Glidden, Director of Planning and Community Development; John Hampton, State Representative; Susan Homrok-Lemke, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services; Lisa Karim, Library Director; Chris Kelly, BOS; Burke LaClair, Schools Business Manager; Amy Meriwether, Director of Finance/Treasurer; Mike Paine, BOS; Chris Peterson, BOS; Tom Roy, Director of Public Works; Susan Salina, BOE; Neil Sullivan, Schools Director of Personnel; Jeffrey Tindall, BOE; Tom Tyburski, Recreation Director; Eric Wellman, First Selectman; Tara Willerup, BOE Chair; and other interested parties.

**1. Call to Order - Establish Quorum**

Chairman Pomeroy called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Presentation of the FY 19/20 Budget Process**

Mr. Pomeroy gave an overview of the budget process using a slide presentation, noting the three boards, (Board of Selectmen, Board of Education and Board of Finance), and the Town Manager work together in this process. He noted the overlapping stakeholders, including the three boards, taxpayers, citizens of the Town, and students and teachers. Further, he noted the BOF is a citizen oversight board and noted its responsibilities. Mr. Pomeroy explained the key BOF criteria for 2020. He noted Simsbury is recognized as a fiscally strong community. He explained how the BOF must balance expenditure needs with available revenues. Next, he provided a three-year forecast on the Grand List, noting increases all three years. He explained how the BOF sets the mill rate based on assessed property values. He noted the estimated 2020 State budget impact. Mr. Pomeroy reported on the 2020 BOF Operating Budget guidelines given, a 2.00% increase maximum for the BOE and a 2.72% increase maximum for the BOS. He summarized the budget drivers and changes and noted the effort to make the process more transparent. He provided proposed budget numbers for the Town and BOE, noting requested expenditures of \$100.6 M and projected revenues of \$100.6 M. The mill rate proposal for FY 2020 included a mill rate of 37.36, a 2.59% increase, and a median home tax impact of \$202. Further, he reported on projects in the works and planned capital projects. Lastly, he explained the order of the evening's presentations, the public hearing, discussion and possible action.

#### **4. Presentation of Proposed FY 19/20 Board of Education and Board of Selectmen Operating & Capital Budgets**

Ms. Willerup presented the BOE 2019-20 Budget, noting the BOF expenditure guideline of a 2% increase. She noted the BOE revised 2019-20 budget is \$70,670,269, an increase of \$1,520,717 or 2.2%. She reported enrollment projections, noting the decline at the high school is offset by an increase at the middle school and elementary level, a decline of 17 students overall. She noted the per pupil expenditure and ranking within the State. She gave examples of providing varied educational opportunities for all students. She noted the three main drivers of the 2019-20 Budget, including contractual obligations, program improvements and employee insurance. She noted cost savings measures and operational efficiencies. She reported fixed contract costs represent an increase of \$1,458,958, 2.11%. She noted program improvements including academic enhancements, safety and support, and responsible reductions. Further, she noted a net increase in employee insurance of \$465,611. She presented a summary of changes to the original 2.5% BOE Budget, noting the 2019-20 Revised Budget amount is \$70,670,269. Lastly, Ms. Willerup presented the Non-Public School Budget of \$546,432, an increase of .54% or \$2,942. Mr. Burke presented on the three BOE capital projects for 2019-20, including an underground oil tank replacement at Tariffville School, the removal of the oil tank at Simsbury High School and sidewalk replacement in its place. He outlined school security improvements, as well as, a roof replacement project at SHS.

Mr. Wellman provided a BOS budget overview, noting the revised, (set 3/25/19), Town Operating Budget of \$22,749,927, an increase of \$1,729,200 or 8.23%. He noted it is an actual increase of 4.7% due to the movement of some items into the operating budget in an effort to increase transparency in budgeting. He noted new developments in the Operating Budget, outlining reductions totaling approximately \$85,000. Further, he noted expenditure drivers. Mr. Askham reported on FY19/20 CNR Fund Projects being recommended, noting top priorities. He noted FY19/20 Capital Fund Projects and recommended potential reductions. Lastly, he reported population trends for 2010-2017, noting the increase in population.

#### **5. Public Hearing on FY 19/20 Operating and Capital Budgets**

Mr. Pomeroy opened the Public Hearing.

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, made comments concerning the need for a fiscally responsible budget, the cost of living increase, vacant properties, the decrease in home sales, the supply of housing units, the mill rate, schools, and other areas of concern.

Mike Rinaldi, 32 Pinnacle Mountain Road, expressed disappointment with the budget, noting a lack of transparency and collusion, and spoke about the HJMS project and class sizes.

#### **6. FY 19/20 Budget Discussion and Possible Action**

Mr. Pomeroy began the discussion by noting the topics to be discussed, including the overall budget, the insurance fund and the use of the non-lapsing account. Discussion ensued. Topics included changing the assumption rate from 14% to 12%, teacher pensions, capital projects, moving police vehicles into the Police Operating Budget, bonding pavement and other areas of discussion.

**MOTION: Ms. Heavner made a motion to move the Police vehicles into the Operating Budget. Ms. Wertheimer seconded the motion. Ms. Schofield abstained and the motion passed.**

Discussion followed.

**MOTION: Ms. Heavner made a motion to recommend that Pavement Management be bonded in the amount of \$606,500. Ms. Schofield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed.

**MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to book an additional \$150,000 in revenue from investment income. Ms. Wertheimer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed.

**MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to unassign the \$1.5M Hartford Fund. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed.

**MOTION: Ms. Wertheimer made a motion to move \$850,000 from the unassigned fund balance to the Internal Service Fund. Ms. Schofield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed.

**MOTION: Ms. Wertheimer made a motion to change the pension interest rate assumption from 7.00% to 6.75%. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. Ms. Heavner was opposed and the motion passed.**

Discussion followed and Ms. Meriwether outlined all of the BOF-recommended changes based on the meeting discussion. In addition, Ms. Capriola spoke about deferred items and baseline routine needs. Discussion ensued. Regarding the BOE Budget, Mr. Pomeroy noted there was agreement on leaving \$300,000 in contingency for State adjustments. Based on the number of changes made, Mr. Pomeroy recommended continuing the Public Hearing/BOF Meeting on April 23, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. He noted the capital items for the BOE and the BOS that need to be approved for 2019-20 are acceptable to the BOF.

**MOTION: Ms. Wertheimer made a motion to extend the Public Hearing to April 23. Ms. Schofield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

## **7. HJMS Project Discussion**

Mr. Pomeroy noted Bond and Town Counsel were asked about the authority to make any changes to the project and reported this authority rests solely with the BOE.

**8. Proposed Fund Balance Transfer**

Ms. Meriwether noted this has been taken care of.

**9. Approval of Minutes - March 19, 2019**

**MOTION: Ms. Schofield made a motion to approve the March 19, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes. Ms. Wertheimer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

**10. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Ms. Wertheimer, Ms. Schofield second, to adjourn at 8:50 P.M.; unanimously approved**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Haberlin  
Commission Clerk