

MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF FINANCE
405 Main Street
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

Minutes of the April 23, 2020 Budget Workshop Video Conference

Jim Irish started the meeting at ~7:04 pm.

Attendance:

Members

Others

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| X | Irish, Jim | X | Rusilowicz, Al |
| X | Kowal, Melissa | X | Bailey, Ed |
| X | Lowry, David | | Members of Public |
| X | Nick, Joel | X | Everett Bishop |
| X | Skelps, Michael | X | Marianne Corona |
| X | Wolak, Mary | | |

A=Absent

X=Present

Update By 1st Selectman Ed Bailey Regarding Local Corona Virus Statistics

- Middlefield is up in cases - currently 9 for our town
- Other statistics offered from both state sources and our health district

Update from BOE 4/22/20 Budget Meeting - Jim Irish

- Slides presented from meeting (attachment1) showing current Superintendent's proposal for achieving a \$0 increase in the net budget year to year (for FY20 going to FY21).
- Implication for Middlefield is a potential reduction of \$305K in school support required for next year vs original Superintendent's budget proposal.
- School board voted to move that budget forward to Public Hearing - May 13. BOE vote to adopt will follow on May 27th.

Discussion of BOF FY21 Budget Intentions and Degrees of Freedom- All

- New E-mail address for receiving public comments (BOFcomments@middlefieldct.org) is up on town website. No comments received thus far.
- Intention generally held that BOF would like to come in near 1st Selectman's proposed mill rate - and certainly be below last years mill rate.
- Biggest areas of sensitivity on mill rate will be tax collection rate that BOF anticipates/establishes (in these tough times) and amount of budget buy-down BOF applies from Undesignated Fund (currently healthy, but also facing uncertain times for future state funding).

Discussion of Recent Budget Changes proposed by 1st Selectman/Finance Director - Al Rusilowicz/Ed Bailey

- Discussion of current estimate of FY20 surplus - looking at a current year surplus of over \$200K near 1.4% of FY2020 budgeted expenditures. Likely should allow application of >=\$200K of fund balance to reduce needed property tax collections and therefore, mill rate.

- Multiple capital items have recently been identified as requiring extra funding in FY21: LED lighting replacements in town hall and the community center, an improved system for secure access to community center, and an increase in expense for poison ivy control in Parks and Rec.
- Other recent changes in the general fund needs for FY21 include a decreased projection in interest income, increases in Emergency Management supplies and stockpile expenses (likely refundable at 75% by FEMA sometime), and some reductions in projections for Workers Comp and Employee Benefit items.
- Further discussion of Budget items will continue in the April 30th workshop.

Public Comment:

- Suggestion that many town organizations will suffer reduced funding revenue because of likely cancellation of the Durham fair
- Offer to investigate assistance for Wetland Commission activities by state organization - Jim to request/provide additional detail on current budget items
- Concern about tax collections - payment of escrowed/other amounts if unemployed folks might be unable to pay
- Discussion to consider options for saying thank you to first responders as we get through this pandemic.

The meeting was adjourned at ~9:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Irish