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**MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD
BUDGET HEARING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 20, 2015**

Call to Order:

Chairman Paul Dargie opened the Budget Hearing at 7:00 PM in room 182 in the Milford High School. Board members present included Mr. Len Mannino, Mr. Peter Bragdon, Mr. Kevin Drew, and Mr. Robert Willette. Also present were Superintendent Robert Suprenant, Business Administrator Jennifer Burk, Director of Curriculum Patricia Fazioli, and Director of Technology Jerry Stajduhar.

Overview of the Total Spending Plan:

Chairman Dargie provided an overview of the proposed budget of \$38,058,404 or a 2.03% increase over the 2014-2015 operating expenses. He also reviewed the proposed teachers' collective bargaining warrant article which results in a cost of \$441,596 for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Total new spending is \$1,199,077 or an increase of 3.2%. The School Board's default budget is \$37,961,881, or a 1.8% increase over the 2014-2015 operating budget.

Chairman Dargie highlighted the major changes in the proposed budget.

Warrant Articles Proposed by the School Board:

Chairman Dargie summarized the terms of the proposed 3 year teacher contract. First year cost of the new contract is \$441,596. The contract calls for 2% increases in each year of the plan in addition to a major change in the health insurance to a Consumer Driven Health Plan which is a higher deductible plan.

Total Appropriation and Tax Impact/Estimated Revenues:

Chairman Dargie described the estimated tax analysis impact for both the proposed budget and the default budget. Total tax rate increase with the decrease in revenues is 6.96% for the proposed operating budget and 6.55% for the default budget.

Chairman Dargie highlighted the major changes in revenue.

Public Comments:

Resident Rick Wood commented on the Board's decision to accept additional early retirees. He also commented on the new teachers' agreement, applauding the District and teachers for coming to an agreement. He felt a 2% cost of living increase was too much. He stated that the teacher salary schedule with the built in 3.4% step increase is not sustainable. He stated he is not impressed with the District's lack of a conservation plan and believes the District and Board need to develop such a plan.

Mr. Wood stated he is "intrigued" by the default budget being only \$96,000 less than the proposed budget. He encouraged the Board to look more carefully at the default budget development.

Mr. Wood stated there is revenue available due to the health insurance premium holiday.

Chairman Dargie addressed the early retirement savings that were realized elsewhere in the budget.

Ron Carvell, Budget Committee Chairman, expressed concerns about the cost of radios. Mr. Carvell suggested the Board take another look at the default budget. He stated there seems to be something a "little odd" about its development. The Budget Committee will review the default budget going forward.

Mr. Bragdon expressed frustration about not hearing solutions from the Budget Committee or details on how they reached their budget decision.

Mr. Carvell said the Budget Committee is comfortable with a budget of \$38,200,000 or \$300,000 less than the Board's.

Resident Mr. Langdell asked the Board to compare the proposed Milford teachers' contract to other contracts in this area. Mr. Dargie responded the contract is above average.

Mr. Wood asked that FICA numbers be reviewed. He reiterated that as a homeowner, he has to make financial choices and he believes the budget can be reduced to the Budget Committee's number.

Adjournment:

Chairman Dargie closed the Budget Hearing at 8:14 PM.

Chairman of the School Board

Date of signing

The Mission of the Milford School District is to provide a quality education that challenges all students to succeed.