



Town of Madison Board of Finance Public Meeting Regarding Budget Meeting Minutes for April 25, 2011

A Public Meeting for the Board of Finance regarding the 2011/2012 Budget convened at 7:30 p.m. at Polson Auditorium.

Members present from the Board of Finance included Lisa Favre, Peggy Lyons, James Matteson, Kathleen Rossini, Kathy Stahleski and Jennifer Tung.

Presentations

Ms. Stahleski presented the recommended budget for the Town of Madison for the 2011/2012 fiscal year. The presentation included a powerpoint document outlining the priorities for the budget and highlighted any adjustments made to the recommended budget by the Board of Finance. She then opened the meeting for public comment.

Public Comment

Mr. Dick Duer of Sandalwood Lane stated he is the current president of the MPOA and wanted to read a letter from the MPOA on its position regarding the budget. Mr. Beerbower stepped in to read the letter for Mr. Duer which stated that the MPOA was not in support of the budget and it wanted to see a 0% increase.

Mr. Jim Ball of Overbrook Rd. stated he is President of the Town Economic Development Commission. He thinks the budget is excellent this year and deserves public support. However, he is upset about the decision by the Board to withdraw funds for secretarial support for some Boards/Commissions and asks it be reinstated. He also would like to see more money spent on the roads and infrastructure, feels our school system is the crown jewel of the town, but thinks we need greater focus on developing the town tax base while also supporting more affordable housing.

Ms. Joanne Reynolds of Randi Drive is 100% for the new budgets and did not want to see further reductions taken.

Ms. Carol Rotermund of Kelsey Springs is a representative for Brown School PTO and sits on its Executive Board. She supports both budgets and does not want to see any further reductions.

Ms. Stephanie Lesnick of Green Hill Rd. is a representative of the Island Ave. PTO and sits on the Executive Board. She asked that the budget be sent to referendum and voiced support for the BOE budget.

Ms. Sherry Brohel of Beaver Pond Rd. is a representative of the Jeffrey PTO and is President of its Executive Board. She supports both budgets.

Mr. Smith from Bartlett Drive stated that the conditions of the roads were atrocious and were hurting property values. He asked that money be put back into the budget for road maintenance.

Ms. Lisa Caruso of Great Meadow Rd., President of the Ryerson Executive Board, voiced her support for the school budget and asked it be sent to referendum with no further reductions.

Ms. Lisa Rollins of Boston Post Road is a realtor in Madison and a parent, and Chairperson of the Parents Representative Council. She believes the quality of the schools have a direct impact on property values. She asked members of the audience to raise their hands in support of the school budget.

Ms. Rhonda Daniels of Lakewood Drive is PTO President for the Town Campus Learning Center. She has received 48 emails from TCLC parents who could not attend the meeting but were in support of the school budget. She asked the budget be passed on to the public with no further reductions.

Ms. Alison Banks of Horse Pond Rd., who sits on MACE, said thank you to the Board of Education for such a thoughtful, honest budget and requested it be sent on to the public with no further cuts.

Ms. Kathi Traugh of Boston Post Rd., Chairman of the Madison Democratic Town Committee, read a statement in support of the Town and School budgets. She asked that no further reductions be made and that residents get out and vote yes on referendum day.

Ms. Joan Walker of Stepping Stone Lane, a member of the Town EDC, asked that the money for secretarial services be put back into the budget in order to support the volunteers on our Boards/Commissions. As a parent, she also asks and encourages people to get out and vote yes on both budgets so that we do not have to experience again the many delays and cuts taken last year.

Ms. Emily Eisenlohr of Neck Road stated that as a former rating agency analyst, the Town's good bond rating is real and an important part of the fiscal health of the town. As a parent, she feels the Town's educational system is excellent and provides good value for money. She felt the current budget is fair and deserves to be passed on to the voters.

Ms. Amy Johnson of Garden Rd. stated she is a third generation Madison resident and supports the BOE budget. She also supports the North Madison water tank project where residents benefit from a more cost effective fire protection program than fire hydrants.

Mr. Ted Mallory of North Avenue stated that although he lives in Madison, he also has a business in Farmington. That Town is voting on a budget with a 4% increase and noted Guildford recently passed a 3.5% budget increase. He thinks Madison's 0.72% budget increase is

remarkable, despite having reduced the library budget, and thinks it should be passed on to the voters as recommended.

Ms. Sharon Clark of Rolling Meadow Rd. is a homeowner and parent in Town that supports the budget due to our great schools.

Mr. Bob Hale of Fairview Drive asked the budget be sent on to the voters as is with no further reductions.

Ms. Mary Helen Litzee from Deveron Drive stated she taught at Hand High School and is president of MASE. She commends the BOF, the BOE and the teachers for this budget. She asks residents to support this budget.

Ms. Heather Crawford of Summer Hill Rd. sits on the Conservation Commission. She asked that secretarial services be reinstated to the Commission given the potential litigation risk of inadequate minutes, and due to the burden being placed on Commission volunteer members.

Mr. Jim Deephouse of Lyndon Lane asked some questions about the budget. How many students are covered by the \$60,000 tuition expense for outplacement special ed students? Will the JFRC, which oversees LOCAP, review future school enrollment and make sure expenditures are not made for buildings that may be closed in the future? Where does the school budget reflect the expenses for the Finance department? He also commented that the Republican Town Committee voted to endorse the budget.

Mr. Bruce Lockhart of Indigo Trail stated that various businesses are laying off workers, the federal government is a mess, and the state is almost bankrupt. He thinks there shouldn't be any increase at all in the budget. He also mentioned the teachers will be getting a 2.8% increase next year and asked who in today's society is getting an increase.

Mr. Spider Gulick of Overbrook Rd. stated the increase in the budget is tiny and we all get the benefits of good schools through the sale of our house in the future. He is in favor of even kicking in another \$250,000 back into the school budget.

Ms. Joan Walker of Stepping Stone Lane, an EDC member, stated that the EDC is currently looking at what attracts businesses to towns - schools rank as one of the most important factors. The quality of our schools is determinant to maintaining our property values and growing our tax base.

Mr. Bill Barker of Hamilton Drive felt the MPOA's arbitrary pick of a 0% increase is a disservice to the hard work of the BOF and BOE. He asked the budget be passed on to voters.

Mr. Herb Graham of Boston Post Rd. asked about the balance of the undesignated fund balance. He asked that the Board dig into this fund in order to reduce the mill rate.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.

APPROVED
4-Minutes for Public Meeting held on April 25, 2011

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Lyons
Board of Finance Secretary