

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
PUBLIC HEARING ON  
BOARD OF EDUCATION FY20 BUDGET  
March 25, 2019  
7:30 P.M.  
MIDDLEBROOK SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
TOWN OF WILTON  
2019 APR - 1 P 4: 09  
BY: af

**PRESENT**

**Board of Finance:** Jeff Rutishauser, Peter Balderston, John Kalamarides, Walter Kress, Stewart Koenigsberg, Ceci Maher

**Board of Education:** Christine Finkelstein, Laura Schwemm, Lori Rothstein, Glenn Hemmerle, Gretchen Jeanes, Deborah Low, Dr. Kevin Smith

**ALSO PRESENT:** Anne Kelly-Lenz (Wilton and BoE CFO) and members of the press and public

Board of Finance Chairman Jeff Rutishauser called the Public Hearing to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Rutishauser introduced the Board of Finance. He noted that there will be an overview of the Town's financial position and projected mil rate reviewed by the BoF and Christine Finkelstein, Chair of the Board of Education will present the BoE budget followed by an opening to the public for their comments.

Mr. Rutishauser thanked, on behalf of the BoF, the BoS & the BoE for coming in under their recommended guidance or their budgets.

Mr. Rutishauser spoke in detail on the slides (presentation attached) depicting Budget Highlights, the role of the Board of Finance in the town budget, and how the Board assesses resources and financial condition. He noted total funds requested for both the town and school budgets is approximately a 0.43% increase over last year, the Net Taxable Grand List dropped 2.08% due to revaluation and the Mil Rate would rise 2.56%. The deficit can be closed by budget cuts, tax increases or a combination of both.

Mr. Rutishauser noted there will be a Tri-Board (BoF, BoE and BoS) Meeting on April 1, 2019 to discuss the financial challenges coming from the state. He also noted the BoF Mil Rate Meetings that will take place on April 2 & 3, 2019 as well as the Annual Town Meeting on May 7, 2019 and the Adjourned Vote on May 11, 2019.

Mr. Rutishauser concluded his comments at approximately 7:40 p.m., at which time he turned over the podium to Christine Finkelstein, Board of Education Chair.

Ms. Finkelstein introduced the members of the Board of Education and commended the BOE for their hard work. She also thanked the administration and teachers that work in the Wilton School system. She thanked the citizens for their support of Wilton Schools. Ms. Finkelstein next gave a slide presentation overview of the proposed FY20 School Budget, which is also posted on the school website.

Ms. Finkelstein thanked all who traveled to Hartford to voice their opinion on the school regionalization bills. She especially thanked the Wilton Students who took time out to travel to Hartford as well.

Mr. Rutishauser then opened the floor to public comment at 8:07pm. Approximately 8 citizens spoke and expressed their views on the BOE budget and other concerns.

Mr. Rutishauser invited all to the Board of Finance hearing on the Board of Selectmen Budget that will take place on Tuesday March 26, 2019 at Middlebrook School.

The hearing adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Rochester  
(from video recording)

Att: Board of Finance slide presentation

BOARD OF FINANCE  
FY 20 BUDGET - PUBLIC HEARING  
MARCH 25, 2019

AGENDA

- Introduction
- Overview and Preliminary Mill Rate Projection
- Budget Presentation - Board of Education
- Public Comment

# FY 20 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- BOE budget request is up \$1.1 million (1.35%)
- BOS budget request is up \$0.3 million (0.92%)
- Debt Service is down \$768,000 (-7.0%)
- Tax Relief for Elderly/Disabled increased to \$1.23 Million
- Total Funds Required is up \$0.52 million (0.43%)
- Net Taxable Grand List dropped 2.08% due to Revaluation
- Mill Rate would rise 2.56% if Shortfall closed by taxes

# FY 20 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

## (CONTINUED)

- FY20 General Fund balance (reserves) is set at 10.4%
- Other Revenues are up \$493,000, mainly from higher interest revenue (\$280,000) and Town Grants (\$243,000)
- Pension is funded at 98.7% of liabilities, leaving a \$1.6 million net liability as of June 30, 2017
- Moody's reaffirmed Wilton's Aaa bond rating – Feb 2018

# THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF FINANCE IN THE TOWN BUDGET

## The Town Charter governs the Board of Finance's actions

- The BOF is required to hold hearings on both the BOE and BOS budget requests
- The BOF considers the following when developing the Mill Rate:
  1. The views of the voters expressed at the Town hearings and in direct communication (*boardoffinance@wiltonCT.org*)
  2. The financial resources of the Town
  3. Whether the BOE and the BOS can find savings in their respective budget requests
  4. The appropriateness of revenue, debt service and General Fund balance amounts

# HOW THE BOARD OF FINANCE ASSESSES RESOURCES AND FINANCIAL CONDITION

## Debt, General Fund Balance and Pension Fund Levels

- Bonds Outstanding are \$88.4 Million – Debt Service at 7.9% of Budget
- Maintaining Aaa rating – Minimum 10% General Fund Balance
- Unfunded Pension Liabilities – \$1.6 Million; 98.7% Funded

## Operating Expenses

- Evaluate budget requests versus prior actual expenditures
- Focus on Efficient Staffing and Headcount Control

# FY 20 BUDGET SUMMARY

\$ Thousands

	FY 19 BUDGET	FY 20 REQUEST	\$ FROM FY 19	% FROM FY 19
Education	81,877	82,984	1,107	1.35%
Selectmen Operating & Capital	33,502	33,811	309	0.92%
Debt Service	10,921	10,153	(768)	(7.03)%
Charter Authority	1,263	1,269	6	0.51%
<b>TOTAL OPERATING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>127,563</b>	<b>128,218</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>0.51%</b>
Tax Relief for Elderly & Disabled	1,171	1,231	60	5.1%
Non-tax Revenue	(4,260)	(4,753)	(493)	11.6%
Drawdown of excess fund balance	(3,006)	(2,709)	297	9.9%
<b>TOTAL TO BE FUNDED FROM PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>121,468</b>	<b>121,986</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>0.43%</b>
Grand List	4,342,154	4,251,735	(2,531)	(2.08)%
Collection Rate	99.3%	99.3%	--	--
<b>REQUIRED MILL RATE</b>	<b>28.1875</b>	<b>28.9102</b>	<b>3,050</b>	<b>2.56%</b>



# STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

- Potential Teacher's Pension Fund Contribution
- Potential Elimination of Municipal Tax on Autos (~\$6 MM/yr.)
- Potential Homestead Exemption (~\$7-8 million/yr.)
- Potential Reduction of Municipal and Educational Aid
- Potential Reduction of SPED Excess Cost Sharing
- Other Financial Obligations from State Government

Tri-Board Meeting on Monday April 1<sup>st</sup> to Discuss Town's Response

# BOARD OF FINANCE BUDGET SCHEDULE

March 25 & 26	Board of Finance Public Hearings
April 1	Tri-Board Meeting
April 2 & 3	Board of Finance completes deliberations on budgets and sets mill rate
May 7	Annual Town Meeting
May 11	Adjourned vote of ATM