

MINUTES  
REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING  
MAY 12, 2014

RECEIVED  
MAY 19 2014  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
DARIEN CT.

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Annual Budget Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Donna Rajczewski, Town Clerk, who announced that there was a new member of District III, Thomas Foley, and of District I, John Dweck.

Upon Roll Call, the following members were present:

From District I, there were 11 members present, 2 absent.  
From District II, there were 14 members present, 3 absent.  
From District III, there were 13 members present, 2 absent.  
From District IV, there were 14 members present, 2 absent.  
From District V, there were 16 members present, 1 absent.  
From District VI, there were 11 members present, 6 absent.

The absentees from District I were: Conze, DuPont.  
The absentees from District II were: Matton, McIlMurray, Mundt.  
The absentees from District III were: Cepeda, Conniff.  
The absentees from District IV were: Domittner, Millar.  
The absentee from District V was : Coyne.  
The absentees from District VI were: Broecking, McDermott, McLean, Plehaty,  
Van Loan, Whitehead.

The Moderator, Sarah Seelye, assumed the Chair.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

\*\* THE AGENDA WAS ACCEPTED BY UNIVERSAL CONSENT.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 22, 2014 MEETING

\*\* THE MINUTES WERE ACCEPTED BY UNIVERSAL CONSENT.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Moderator acknowledged all of the Town officials present.

MARTHA BANKS, DISTRICT IV MEMBER AND LWV PROGRAM CHAIR,  
PROMOTING THE JUNE 3RD PANEL DISCUSSION BY M.O.R.E COMMISSION  
MEMBERS REGARDING COG, AT THE DARIEN LIBRARY

Mrs. Banks reviewed this event, scheduled to begin at 7 p.m., at which 3 members of the M.O.R.E. Commission will speak, followed by a question and answer period.

**14-12**

**APPROPRIATION OF \$60,000,000 FOR REFUNDING OF CERTAIN OF THE TOWN'S BONDS AND AUTHORIZING ISSUANCE OF REFUNDING BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION**

**\*\* JAMES PALEN, DISTRICT VI, CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE, MOVED:**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Darien is desirous of taking advantage of favorable interest rates and refinancing existing bond obligations.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Representative Town Meeting of the Town of Darien authorizes the authorization, issuance and sale of Town of Darien General Obligation Refunding Bonds in the amount of Sixty Million and 00/100 Dollars (\$60,000,000.00) as more particularly set out in the resolution attached hereto and made part hereof.

**Section 1.** The sum of SIXTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$60,000,000) is appropriated to fund the redemption and the payment, in whole or in part, as determined by the First Selectman, the Town Treasurer, the Board of Finance or any Town official designated by the Board of Finance and the Finance Director of the Town of Darien (the "Town"), of the outstanding principal, accrued interest and any call premium on all or any portion of any issue of the Town's General Obligation Bonds including, but not limited to, the Town's General Obligation Bonds issued in 1999, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 (the "Prior Bonds"), together with the costs of issuance including, but not limited to, any applicable consultants' fees, legal fees, trustee and escrow agent fees, investment fees, verification fees, underwriters' fees and other financing or transactional costs and other expenses related to the payment or redemption of such bonds for the purposes of refunding them.

**Section 2.** The Town is hereby authorized to issue its refunding bonds, in an amount not to exceed SIXTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$60,000,000) (the "Refunding Bonds"), to fund the appropriation authorized by Section 1 of this resolution, provided that the issuance of such Refunding Bonds achieves present value debt service savings for the Town. The Refunding Bonds shall be issued pursuant to Section 7-370c of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, and any other provision of law thereto enabling. The Refunding Bonds shall be general obligations of the Town secured by the irrevocable pledge of the full faith and credit of the Town.

**Section 3.** The First Selectman and the Town Treasurer shall sign the Refunding Bonds by either manual or facsimile signatures and the law firm designated as bond counsel is authorized to approve the legality of the Refunding Bonds.

**Section 4.** The First Selectman, the Town Treasurer, the Board of Finance or any Town official designated by the Board of Finance and the Finance Director, or any three of them, are authorized to determine which of the Prior Bonds are to be redeemed and the amount, date,

interest rates and interest mode, maturities, redemption provisions, form and other details of the Refunding Bonds; to designate one or more banks or trust companies to be certifying bank, registrar, transfer agent and paying agent for the Refunding Bonds and escrow agent with respect to the refunding escrow or escrows to be funded with proceeds of the Refunding Bonds; to provide for the keeping of a record of the Refunding Bonds; to sell the Refunding Bonds at public or private sale; to deliver the Refunding Bonds; and to perform all other acts which are necessary or appropriate to issue the Refunding Bonds.

**Section 5.** The First Selectman and the Town Treasurer are authorized to call irrevocably for redemption such of the maturities of the Prior Bonds, as they shall determine to refund from the proceeds of the Refunding Bonds and other moneys as they may determine to make available for this purpose and to defease such Prior Bonds by executing and delivering an escrow agreement in such form and upon such terms as they shall approve, such approval to be conclusively evidenced by their execution thereof.

**Section 6.** The First Selectman, the Town Treasurer and the Finance Director, or any two of them, are authorized to bind the Town pursuant to such representations and covenants as they deem necessary or advisable in order to maintain the continued exemption from federal income taxation of interest on the Refunding Bonds authorized by this resolution, if issued on a tax-exempt basis, including covenants to pay rebates of investment earnings to the United States in future years.

**Section 7.** The First Selectman, the Town Treasurer and the Finance Director, or any one of them, are authorized to make representations and enter into written agreements for the benefit of holders of the Refunding Bonds to provide secondary market disclosure information, which agreements may include such terms as she or he deems advisable or appropriate in order to comply with applicable laws or rules pertaining to the sale or purchase of such Refunding Bonds.

**Section 8.** The First Selectman and the Town Treasurer are authorized to take all other action which is necessary or desirable to enable the Town to effectuate the refunding of all or a portion of the Prior Bonds and to issue Refunding Bonds authorized hereby for such purposes, including, but not limited to, the entrance into agreements on behalf of the Town with underwriters, trustees, escrow agents and others to facilitate the issuance of the Refunding Bonds, the escrow of the proceeds thereof and investment earnings thereon and the payment of the Prior Bonds in whole or in part.

**Section 9.** Any authorized but unissued portions of previous refunding authorizations are rescinded.

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

James Palen, District VI, Chairman of the Finance & Budget Committee, read the committee report (attached).

**\*\* ITEM 14-12 CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A RISING TALLY VOTE.**

**CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON THE JULY 1, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2015 BUDGET  
RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE**

**\*\* JAMES PALEN, DISTRICT VI, CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE, MOVED:**

**BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Representative Town Meeting of the Town of Darien hereby adopts the following appropriations for the July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 budget;

- A. An appropriation in the General Fund to the Selectmen's Operating Budget of \$44,957,974

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

James Palen, District VI, read the report of the Finance & Budget Committee (attached).

Cheryl Russell, District V, Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Committee, read that committee's report (attached).

Mark Adiletta, District V, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, read the committee report (attached).

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson read her speech (attached).

Liz Mao, Chairman of the Board of Finance, said that the Board of Finance voted initially to approve the budget before the RTM. It is a 5.9% increase, which is a large increase, impacted by medical costs. She also said that Parks & Recreation should maybe think about increasing fees. If so, she will support sand.

**\*\* STEVEN ANDERSON, DISTRICT III, MOVED TO AMEND BY APPROVING A BUDGET OF \$44,257,974, A REDUCTION OF \$200,000.**

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

The Moderator said the motion was out of order as there has to be a specific line item reduction. Mr. Anderson said this had been looked into and it can be an appropriation or a line item according to Sec. 39B of the Charter. Town Counsel Schmidt said this issue comes up every 3 to 4 years. It came up in 2007, and in that instance and every instance, it is required that there be a specific reduction. Mr. Anderson asked to be shown specifically where that exists in the Charter.

Town Counsel Schmidt said in 2004, there was a motion that was tied to a specific line item, as there was in 1998, 1997 and 1992. In 1991, there was a motion to reduce the Board of Education budget where there was no specific item identified, but that is the law regarding the Board of Education. There is clear past practice regarding Sec. 39B. The budget can be reduced, but the cut has to be identified.

Jack Davis, District III, said he disagreed slightly. It is in the Charter that appropriations have to be line items. Section E references the total amount. Therefore, in Section D, it refers to the line item or a component part of the line item. This also relates to the Board of Education.

Seth Morton, District III, said that historically, the RTM used to go over the Selectman's budget line by line.

Joseph Hardison, District IV, asked if it would be appropriate to make an across the board reduction. Town Counsel Schmidt said it might not be appropriate to do off the cuff. The Moderator noted it might cause problems in terms of contracts.

Steven Anderson, District III, said he specifically did not identify a line item. Costs are too high across the board. They have to balance taxpayers' needs with the increases in the budget. His taxes are going up 9.22% and he is retired. \$200,000 is a symbolic number; it was not intended to be a specific number.

Cheryl Russell, District V, said if the motion passed, it would be a reduction of approximately \$14,000 per department. She asked if there would also be a reduction in the Board of Education budget.

The Moderator said the budget would have to be sent back to the Board of Selectmen if this reduction is approved. Mr. Anderson asked how they came to that conclusion. The Selectmen can re-allocate and make transfers. The Moderator said they were going with the ruling of Town Counsel.

Nancy Coyle Downs, District III, said this is not terribly efficient. There is not much time for debate; everything is being shoved down their throats. Maybe they need to go through the line items. The Moderator noted that all of the meetings have been going on since January.

Liz Mao, Chairman of the Board of Finance, said that budget deliberations began in January. Copies of the budget were not picked up; they are not ramming anything down anyone's throats. People should say what they object to in the budget. She is disappointed. There was not enough RTM participation this year in the budget process.

Selectman Reilly Tierney said there are people who are uncomfortable with the increase in the budget, but the Board of Selectmen spent many hours working on it. It makes sense that the full budget be voted on tonight.

William Ball, District VI, said he went to all of the meetings, and the budget is rammed down their throats. It is a 9% increase.

**\*\* WILLIAM BALL, DISTRICT VI, MOVED TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION BY A 1% REDUCTION TO EACH LINE ITEM IN THE SELECTMANS' BUDGET, EXCLUDING DEBT SERVICE AND CAPITAL. (14-13A2).**  
**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

It was clarified that the prior motion by Mr. Anderson had been ruled out of order by Town Counsel.

First Selectman Stevenson asked for clarification of the amount; Mr. Ball said it was \$27,000,000.

Lucy Fiore, District IV, asked why they can't take \$200,000 from the library. The Moderator said that would be another motion.

Barbara Thorne, District II, urged everyone to consider this amendment to be ill-conceived. They got the message from the taxpayers. She urged everyone to show up in January, February, March and April. Tonight is not the time to do this.

Kirk Hoffman, District II, said the budget is available online. They are looking to make a point. He urged the RTM to come to a swift conclusion. He noted that the Finance & Budget Committee had voted to approve the Board of Education budget.

Kate Buch, Finance Director, said a 1% reduction would be approximately \$310,000, which would be difficult to do because of collective bargaining agreements.

**\*\* WILLIAM BALL, DISTRICT VI, WITHDREW HIS MOTION TO AMEND.  
\*\* THERE WAS NO SECOND.**

**\*\* THE QUESTION WAS CALLED FROM THE FLOOR.  
\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.  
\*\* ITEM 14-13A1 (CALL THE QUESTION) FAILED.**

James Cameron, District IV, said the budget books should have been picked up, reviewed and suggestions made. They are the RTM. They cannot live on the cheap. You cannot get what you don't pay for. Let's get on with the business of approving this budget.

Robert Cardone, District III, said he sent a 3-page document to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, but did not hear back for 3-1/2 weeks. Let's keep it a bit more civil.

Jack Davis, District III, said many people went on line to read the budget. They did not need the budget books. There was tremendous work on both sides. There was a lot of discussion. Fees should be increased in Parks & Recreation and Planning & Zoning. There is a philosophy that people using services should pay for them.

Cheryl Russell, District V, said that the Parks & Recreation Commission raised its fees many times and did not get sand. \$456,500 is the money raised, but it goes into the General Fund. They had a \$330,000 cut in their operating budget. If they want to cut something, go after the Board of Education budget where there is fluff.

Selectman Susan Marks said the Board of Selectmen meetings are open. If the RTM makes this cut, they should think long and hard about how it is going to affect departments.

William Ball, District VI, said he is not speaking for himself. He is a Darien senior. They feel a cut needs to be made.

Bruce Orr, Board of Finance, said that the Board of Finance held a public hearing, but only one person spoke against the budget. He is, frankly, disappointed in this arbitrary cut. The Board of Selectman's budget is not the driver of this 6% increase.

Robert Young, District V, said they should not be focusing on the Selectman's budget; they should be focusing on the Board of Education budget.

James Palen, District VI, said that the Finance & Budget Committee worked hard on this budget but could find no consensus on reducing this budget. He was against an unidentified decrease. This is very dangerous.

Holly Schulz-Amatruda, District III, said she went to the public comment section, but there is not one single area for sidewalks and public safety.

Clara Sartori, District II, said she was concerned that constituents have told her that budgets are too high, but she was not sure how to do anything about it, as a new member of the RTM. The Selectmen should get the message.

Selectman Kip Hall said the message has been sent - they get it. His message is "please start speaking in January".

Seth Morton, District III, said this is not a perfect process. The message is out there. They got whip-sawed this year. They have to work a lot harder.

Peter Kelly, District I, said he went to Board of Education meetings and asked them some hard questions. He was in favor of that budget and the Selectmen's budget because they have gone through the process.

**\*\* ITEM 14-13A2 FAILED ON A RISING TALLY VOTE OF 6 IN FAVOR, 68 OPPOSED AND 2 ABSTENTIONS**

Lucy Fiore, District IV, asked about cutting the contingency fund by \$200,000. Kate Busch said that the increase in contingency is because money is set aside for contract settlements which expire on June 30th.

**\*\* LUCY FIORE, DISTRICT IV, MOVED TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION BY TAKING \$200,000 FROM THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S GRANT TO THE DARIEN PUBLIC LIBRARY (14-13A3).**

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

Alan Gray, Library Director, said he is not a Darien resident, said that the increase in the library budget is approximately \$85,000. A \$200,000 cut would be a decrease of \$215,000. It would cut out a significant number of hours, including Sunday hours. Books and technology are paid for by the Friends.

Martha Banks, District IV, said that the library has one of the best managed budgets. It would be a shame to cut their budget.

An unidentified library board member said they rely on the public/private partnership. Town residents would not be happy with a \$200,000 cut.

**\*\* ITEM 14-13A3 FAILED ON A RISING TALLY VOTE OF 1 IN FAVOR**

**\*\* ITEM 14-13A CARRIED ON A RISING TALLY VOTE OF 54 IN FAVOR, 21 OPPOSED WITH 1 ABSTENTION**

**\*\* DENNIS MARONEY, DISTRICT III, CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, MOVED:**

B. An appropriation in the General Fund to the Education Operating Budget of \$88,135,967 (14-13B).

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

Dennis Maroney, District III, read the report of the Education Committee (attached).

James Palen, District VI, read the Finance & Budget Committee report (attached).

Elizabeth Haggerty-Ross, Chairman of the Board of Education, read the Board of Education report (attached).

William Ball, District VI, said he went to every Board of Education meeting, and he recommended approval.

Joanne Hennessy, District V, said she received input from constituents that this increase is too much. From 1992 to 2009, Connecticut enrollment increased 18% but administration increased 68%. She read the Board of Education budget and compared it to other towns. New Canaan's special ed budget increased by 3-1/2%; Darien's by 5%. There were some problems, but she questioned if they were as bad as the press made it to be. Greenwich's special ed budget is the same as Darien's, but they serve many more students. She asked if they need 6 new administrators. Maybe this is where the budget could be reduced. They need to address their problems. People expect elected representatives to keep their taxes in line.

Elizabeth Haggerty-Ross, Chairman of the Board of Education, said last year's special appropriation was for the acceleration of oil tanks and special education professionals are teachers, not administrators.

Jack Davis, District III, Chairman of the Board of Education subcommittee, said he had called for an audit of special education two years ago. Last year, he gave them a pass, but this year, he recommends approval of the budget. He urged everyone to support this budget.

**\*\* ITEM 14-13B CARRIED ON A RISING TALLY VOTE OF 62 IN FAVOR, 12 OPPOSED, 1 ABSTENTION.**

**\*\* JAMES PALEN, DISTRICT VI, CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE & BUDGET, MOVED:**

C. That the above appropriations, totaling \$133,093,941, are for the purpose of meeting the expenses of the Town of Darien for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2014 and ending June 30, 2015 as shown by the budget this day approved.

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

**\*\* ITEM 14-13C CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

**\*\* JAMES PALEN, DISTRICT VI, CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE & BUDGET, MOVED:**

D. Appropriations for other funds are hereby made below for the 2014-2015 fiscal year as shown by the budget this day approved;

1.	From the Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditures	\$ 2,510,955
2.	From the Sewer Operating Fund	\$ 3,293,139
3.	From the Sewer Assessment Fund	\$ 550,000
4.	From the Sewer Capital Fund	\$ 203,807
5.	From the Parking Lot Administration Fund	\$ 779,000
6.	From the Parking Lot Capital Fund	\$ 231,040

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

Mr. Palen read the Finance & Budget report (attached).

**\*\* ITEM 14-13D CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

**\*\* JAMES PALEN, DISTRICT VI, CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE & BUDGET, MOVED:**

E. That a tax of 15.01mills is hereby levied upon the last complete grand list of the Town with a total net assessment of \$8,250,643,822 on property as of October 1, 2013 payable in two equal semi-annual installments, the first installment to become due and payable on July 1, 2014 and the second installment to become due and payable on January 1, 2015, provided however that:

1. Any taxpayer may pay both of said installments on July 1, 2014;
2. The personal property tax on motor vehicles in said Town shall become due and payable in one single installment on July 1, 2014.
3. Any property tax in any amount not in excess of one hundred (\$100) dollars shall become due and payable in one single installment on July 1, 2014.

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

Mr. Palen read the Finance & Budget report (attached).

**\*\* ITEM 14-13E CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

**\*\* JAMES PALEN, DISTRICT VI, CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE & BUDGET,  
MOVED:**

F. That the Town of Darien, acting through its Board of Selectmen, and subject to the approval of said Town at the Annual Budget Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting to be held May 12, 2014, be authorized to borrow on the note or notes of the Town the sum of five million (\$5,000,000) dollars or so much thereof as may be necessary for the general expenses of the Town pending the collection of either or both of said semi-annual installments of taxes on or prior to June 30, 2015.

**\*\* THE MOTION WAS SECONDED FROM THE FLOOR.**

**\*\* ITEM 14-13F CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

**\*\* UPON MOTION MADE AND SECONDED BY VOICE VOTE, IT WAS  
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADJOURN AT 11 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco Blois  
Telesco Secretarial Services

APPENDIX

<u>DISTRICT I</u>	<u>(14-12)</u>	<u>(14-13A-1)</u>	<u>(14-13A-2)</u>	<u>(14-13A)</u>	<u>(14-13B)</u>
Buchesky	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Bumgardner	yes	?	no	yes	yes
Conologue	yes	no	no	no	yes
Conze	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Dupont	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Dweck	yes	?	no	yes	yes
Glassmeyer	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Hayes	yes	?	no	yes	yes
Henderson	yes	?	no	yes	yes
Kelly	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Schneider	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Valentino	yes	?	no	yes	yes
van der Kieft	yes	no	no	abstain	yes

DISTRICT II

Bacon	yes	?	no	yes	no	
Ebrahimi	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
Finn	yes	?	no	yes	yes	
Hoffman	yes	yes	no	no	yes	
Howe	yes	?	no	no	no	
Keith	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
Marston	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Matton	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent	
McIlmurray	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent	
McNally	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
Miller	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
Mundt	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent	
Sartori	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
Sawitsky	yes	?	yes	no	?	
Seelye		DID NOT VOTE				
Thorne, B.	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
Thorne, M	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	

DISTRICT III

Anderson	yes	no	yes	no	no
Camuti	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Cardone	yes	no	no	no	yes
Cepeda	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Conniff	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Coyle	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Coyle Downs	yes	no	no	no	no
Davis	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Foley	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Hegarty	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Larkins	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Maroney	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Moore	yes	?	no	yes	yes
Morton	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Schulz-Amatruda	yes	no	no	no	yes

<u>DISTRICT IV</u>	<u>(14-12)</u>	<u>(14-13A-1)</u>	<u>(14-13A-2)</u>	<u>(14-13A)</u>	<u>(14-13B)</u>
Banks	yes	no	no	no	yes
Cameron	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Davis, Joan	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Domittner	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Fiore	absent	absent	yes	yes	no
Haidinger	yes	no	no	no	yes
Hardison	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Hawkins	yes	yes	abstain	no	no
Kemp	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Miceli	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Millar	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Morrison	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Peters	yes	absent	absent	absent	absent
Rayhill	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Rycenga	yes	no	no	no	no
Savage	yes	yes	no	yes	yes

DISTRICT V

Adiletta	yes	yes	no	yes	abstain
Bayne	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Boulton	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Burke	absent	no	no	yes	yes
Coyne	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Duffy	yes	yes	abstain	no	no
Fead	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Fiveson	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Hennessy	yes	yes	no	yes	no
LeHan	absent	yes	no	yes	yes
Lublin	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
McLachlin	yes	yes	abstain	no	yes
Mosher	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Patrick	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Russell	yes	no	no	no	no
Stolar	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Young, Rob	yes	no	no	yes	yes

DISTRICT VI

Adelman	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Ball	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Broecking	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Cherico	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Grogan	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Hawkins	yes	no	no	yes	no
Luz	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
McDermott	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
McLean	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Palen	yes	yes	no	yes	?
Plehaty	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Poli	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Ritchie	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Swenson	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Van Loan	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Whitehead	absent	absent	absent	absent	absent
Young, David	yes	yes	no	yes	yes

**Finance & Budget Committee  
Report to RTM, May 12, 2014**

**(14-12) RTM RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING SIXTY MILLION DOLLARS  
(\$60,000,000) TO REFUND CERTAIN OF THE TOWN'S OUTSTANDING BONDS AND  
AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF REFUNDING BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH  
APPROPRIATION**

I am James Palen, District 6 and Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee.

I move RTM Resolution (14-12) Appropriating Sixty Million Dollars (\$60,000,000) To Refund Certain of the Town's Outstanding Bonds and Authorizing the Issuance of Refunding Bonds to Finance Such Appropriation.

If there are no objections, I propose to waive the reading of the Resolution.

The F&B committee met twice during the last two weeks for regular meetings that were dedicated solely to discussing and taking action on the Town budget. Our first meeting on Monday, April 28 with 12 of 15 members present and our second was on Monday, May 5 with 13 of 15 members present.

This resolution gives the BOF the ability to issue up to \$60 million to refinance certain of the Town's existing bond obligations in order to take advantage of special circumstances including savings associated lower interest rates or shortened (or lengthened) maturities of our issued debt, without having to come before the RTM. Section 2 of the Resolution specifies that the action to refund, redeem or escrow any bonds can only be done if it "achieves present value debt service savings for the Town". The RTM has approved similar resolutions in each of the past years and the BOF has acted under the resolution to take advantage of low interest rates and has saved the Town substantial interest charges.

The history behind this resolution being adopted annually was that several years ago there was an opportunity to refinance some debt and by the time a Special RTM meeting was convened, the window for favorable refinancing had closed.

The Town currently has approximately \$87 million of outstanding bonded debt and it is important to note that this resolution does not impact the requirement for the RTM to approve any new issuances of debt to fund new capital projects.

The Committee met on May 5, 2014 with 13 of 15 members present, comprising a quorum and unanimously approved this resolution.

Thank you.

James Palen  
Chair, Finance & Budget Committee,  
May 12, 2014

**Finance & Budget Committee  
Report to RTM, May 12, 2014**

**(14-13) RTM RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE  
JULY, 1 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2015 BUDGET**

I am James Palen, District 6 and Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee.

I move RTM Resolution (14-13) Authorizing and Approving the July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 Budget.

If there are no objections, I propose to waive the reading of the Resolution.

The F&B committee met twice during the last two weeks for regular meetings that were dedicated solely to discussing and taking action on the Town budget. Our first meeting was for three hours on Monday, April 28 with 12 of 15 members present and our second was for almost three hours on Monday, May 5 with 13 of 15 members present. These meetings were in addition to the countless meetings that members of the committee attended during the past four months. Our committee was divided into two subcommittees – the Board of Education Budget Subcommittee chaired by Jack Davis and the Board of Selectman Budget sub committee chaired by Robert Cardone. Terry Duffy who serves as the F&B Clerk deserves a special thank you for his speedy turn of our minutes following numerous long and late meetings.

I would like to take this time to thank the Board of Finance, Board of Education, Board of Selectman and the many town staff for their significant work over the past five months working to put together this year's budget. Virtually all of our elected officials are volunteers and they each dedicate significant time and effort to the budget process.

In summary, our town is in good shape. Our credit rating remains at triple-A from Moody's, our town delivers great services, has a strong police force, has wonderful parks, continues to invest in great facilities and is constantly recognized for its high quality of education. We are further benefited from the many volunteer organizations in town including Post 53 and our three fire departments who serve our community and provide volunteer services that many other towns must pay for out of their budget. That said, our budgets and taxes have continued to rise year after year as a result of a growing school population, increased wages and benefits for our employees, rising healthcare costs and substantial increases in the cost of delivering the necessary special education services to our town's children.

The budget proposed by the Board of Finance this year is \$133.1mm, up \$7.4mm (or 5.9%) over our \$125.7mm budget last year which was up \$5.5mm (or 4.5%) from the year prior. Our proposed taxation to fund this budget is \$121.8mm, up \$6.6mm (or 5.8%) versus the prior year. The \$11.2mm difference between the \$133.1mm that we spend and the \$125.7mm that is proposed to be raised in taxes comes from a combination of sources including a \$1.1mm drawn down in our cash balances and the remaining from revenues including licenses, permits, fines, charges for services, investment income and a host of other non-property tax sources.

To recap, spending is proposed to be up 5.9% and taxation is proposed to be up 5.8%.

Because of last October's town-wide reassessment of all property, the grand list is down 7.2% and therefore the proposed mill rate would move from 13.17 to 15.01 under the proposed budget. It is

important to note that this is not just a mathematical adjustment that affect all residents equally because the percentage change in property values varied drastically due to factors such as the value of the house, the proximity to the water and neighborhood. The result is that not all resident's taxes will go up by 5.8% under the proposed budget -- some by much more and some by much less and in some cases a residents may see a decrease in taxes.

Contained in the proposed resolution before you tonight are 6 different items - A through F - the three most important items are:

- A. Selectman's Operating Budget
- B. Education Operating Budget
- D. Appropriations for Capital Approved in A above

The remaining items (C, E & F) are more mathematical as they simply add other pieces or generate the necessary mill rate to raise taxes sufficient to fund what we have agreed to spend or allow us to borrow short term debt in there is a timing difference between the Town's spending and receipt of tax revenues.

As with the past few years, we expect that the RTM will vote on the items in this resolution separately and as such I will deliver the F&B report on each item and then return the floor to the moderator for discussion and questions.

#### **Item A – The Selectman's Operating Budget**

The Selectman's Operating Budget is \$44.9mm, up 5.9% from the prior year.

By way of background, this budget is comprised of four primary parts:

**First** - Town Services including public safety, human services, parks & recreation, public works and general government. This is the portion of the budget that the Board of Selectman and the town administrator are responsible for managing. This portion of the budget is \$27.5mm, up \$1.3mm (or 4.9%) from last year. The largest increases in this portion of the budget are the following:

- \$350k – Police, Fire and Emergency (includes a civilian dispatcher for \$90k)
- \$250k – Employee benefits (approximately 5% increase)
- \$185k – Public Works (including outsourced building management services)
- \$135k – Worker's compensation and liability insurance
- \$180k – Wage contingency to for union contract which expire on 6/30

**Second** – Library Operating Budget. The Library, although privately owned, has it's operating budget paid by the Town. The Library's proposed budget is \$3.5mm, up \$82k (or 2.4%) from last year.

**Third** – Debt Service. This debt service, which include that attributable to Town's capital current and past projects as well as the Board of Education's current and past capital projects is \$11.5mm, up \$685k (or 6.3%) from last year. The allocation between the debt service here is 65% for the Board of Education and 30% to the Town and the remaining 5% to sewer projects. This debt service which is the result of our bonding of capital projects is fully under the control of the Board of Finance. They determine the amount that is bonded and the amortization profile and maturity of the debt. We currently have \$87mm of debt outstanding and based on our current debt amortization schedules, we expect to repay approximately

\$8.6mm of debt this year, which, barring any new major projects, is our peak debt service level and is expected to decrease in the coming years.

**Fourth** – Capital Projects. These are the capital projects that are being funded as part of the proposed budget and include both Town projects and Board of Education Projects. Capital projects total \$2.5mm and are up from \$2.3mm (or 7.1%) last year. This \$2.5mm is broken down between Town projects and Education projects. Town projects of \$1.7mm include capital for sidewalk rehabilitation, computer software to track land use and police vehicles and funding of reserves for emergency equipment replacement and fire commission equipment. Board of Education capital projects of \$800k include a generator for Ox Ridge, digital heating controls for Royle and Ox Ridge and masonry restoration at Middlesex among other things. I would specifically note that the proposed upgrade to our emergency services broadcast equipment to cover certain so-called dead-spots in town has been removed from this budget.

In summary the Selectman's Operating Budget is as follows:

Total - \$44.9mm, up 5.8%

Town Services & Public Safety - \$27.5mm, up 4.9%

Debt Service (including Town and Education) - \$11.4mm, up 6.3%

Library Operating Budget - \$3.4mm, up 2.4%

Capital Projects (including Town and Education) - \$2.5mm, up 7.1%

At our meeting on Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, the F&B Committee voted to approve the Selectman's budget with a \$200k reduction with 6 voting in favor, 5 opposed and 2 abstentions.

Common themes among those voting **in favor** of cutting the budget by \$200k:

A general sense that members of the committee wanted to send a message to the RTM that they do not think the continued increase in spending and taxation that we have seen in recent years will be acceptable to our residents and could have a longer-term negative effect on the value of Darien real estate relative to other towns both in our area and nearby in Westchester.

Although the F&B committee did not specifically vote on any individual line items to be reduced, which is what would be necessary to actually reduce the proposed budget, it did discuss a number of items during its deliberations including the proposed single civilian dispatcher to be added to the police budget and overtime related to sick leave on the police force.

The other common theme among those that voted in favor of a reduction was that they thought the current technology and facilities plans needs to be better managed to control the growth of operations and software expenses going forward. There was a view that a number of planned software and computer upgrades should be delayed until after the joint BOE/BOS technology and facilities program is completed this summer.

Common themes among those voting **against** cutting the budget by the \$200k:

An arbitrary cut of \$200k was the wrong way to bring about change to the budget as it would require cutting services or under budgeting certain departments before managerial or technological changes were made that could lower our spending.

The past practice of negotiating labor contracts that had lower increases in the early years and larger increases in the latter years are one of the items that is contributing to this year's larger than expected budget increases.

---

\*\*\*\* Return Floor to Moderator \*\*\*\*

---

## **Item B – The Education Operating Budget**

Thank you Mr. Maroney and the Education Committee for a very thorough report on the Board of Education budget. I will try to be brief and repeat as little as possible.

The Board of Education Operating Budget is \$88.3mm, up \$4.9mm (or 5.9%) from the last year. The year before the budget increased \$3.2mm (or 4.0%) from the prior year.

There are a handful of items driving this year's record high increase in the Board of Education budget:

Special Education – RC24 accounts for 23% of our budget and is up \$2.1mm excluding cost of benefits, or 10.5% versus the current years projected actual and 11.0% versus what was actually budgeted last year. The majority of these costs are related to the hiring of consultants to fix many of the problems that were uncovered in the special education system over the past year and the hiring next year of new “Special Education and Student Services Facilitators” who will be able to better manage the delivery of special education in our schools and insure a proper PPT process for children. These new positions that will cost approximately \$600k are designed to better manage the special education program and allow other administration to concentrate on the day-to-day management of the school and other new mandates such as teacher evaluations and common core. The positions will insure children are receiving the appropriate services; and to get all parties back on the proper track.

Health Insurance – This is up \$1.1mm or 9.7% versus last year. This projected increase includes the fact that a majority of teachers and administrators have transitioned to an HSA program, which actually generally provides lower costs.

Teachers Salaries – We are in the third year of the teacher's contract that included an effective 3.36% salary increase after accounting for wage and step adjustment. You may recall that the first two years of the contract included a 1.3% and 2.0% increase and only a half-step increase in each year. Part of this year's large increase is simply the result of the collective bargaining agreement reached with the teacher's union.

Excess Cost Grants - The budget assumes that the Excess Cost Reimbursement for special education expenses from the State of CT will be \$1.8mm which is approximately 72% of the projected expense (the same as which was budgeted last year), although this year initial expectations are that we will be receiving almost \$2.3mm representing 82% of our excess costs. The board continues to use the 72% funding rate given the historical performance and because the current increase may simply be the result of an election year bump.

Human Resources Director – The budget includes \$140k for a new HR director that will insure that all positions have proper job descriptions, work to better allocate and track staff among the different departments and in the long run look for more efficiencies in delivering our services.

Although a minor expense, but one that F&B believes should have significant future impact, the cost for developing a strategic vision for the District is included in this budget. This vision should address not only the District's educational direction but also the District's organizational structure and the tools, metrics and measurements required to ensure the monies and resources allotted to the District are maximized and managed efficiently and effectively.

At our meeting on Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, with 13 members present, the F&B Committee voted to approve the Education Operating budget with 7 in favor, 5 opposed and 1 abstention.

---

\*\*\*\* Return Floor to Moderator \*\*\*\*

---

### **Item D – Appropriations for other funds**

This item includes 6 different appropriations from different funds. All but one of the appropriations are “self-funding” which means the fund that collects the revenues or taxes automatically feeds the expenses for the services which it provides.

The only items that affects our property taxes is the transfer related to the “Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditures” of \$2.5mm. This amount includes the Board of Education and Town Capital items that were approved in Item A of the resolution earlier tonight. To summarize, capital projects in the proposed budget total \$2.5mm this year, up from \$2.3mm last year (a 7.1% increase). These projects are broken down between Town projects of \$1.9mm that include capital for infrastructure rehabilitation, emergency communication equipment, police vehicles and fire commission equipment replacement. The Board of Education capital projects of \$800k include a generator for Ox Ridge, digital heating controls for Royle and Ox Ridge and masonry restoration at Middlesex among other things

At our meeting on Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, the F&B Committee voted unanimously to approve the six appropriations including the \$2.5mm for capital projects.

---

\*\*\*\* Return Floor to Moderator \*\*\*\*

---

### **Item E – Mill Rate**

This item sets the mill rate that is used for collecting taxes during the coming fiscal year. Assuming no changes to the proposed budget, the mill rate will be 15.01 based on the \$8.2 billion Grand List and a 98.9% tax collection assumption. The current grand list is 7.2% lower than the prior year's Grand List of \$8.8 billion.

At our meeting on Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, the F&B Committee voted to approve the mill rate that would be necessary to fund the budget at a level that was \$200,000 less than the originally proposed budget. The votes were 6 in favor, 2 against and 4 abstentions. Generally, those that voted to reduce the budget voted to approve the lower mill rate associated with the lower budget. Those that were against decreasing the budget generally voted against changing the mill rate. To reiterate, the mill rate is the result of dividing the adopted budget, less non-property tax revenues that the town expects to collect by the assumed grand

list, reduced by certain abatements and adjusted for the expected collection rate. That number is then multiplied by 1,000.

The numerator is \$133.1mm budget less \$11.2mm of non-property tax revenues leaves \$121.2mm of property taxes that the town will collect.

The denominator is a \$8.25bn grand list, less \$43mm of tax abatements for a net grand list of \$8.20bn. This is then multiplied by 98.9% to adjust for the assumed collection rate which produced an adjusted grand list of \$8.12bn.

Divide \$121.2mm by \$8.12bn and then multiply by 1,000 and you have the 15.01 proposed mill rate.

---

\*\*\*\* Return Floor to Moderator \*\*\*\*

---

### **Item F – \$5mm Bonding Resolution**

This authority is part of each annual budget Resolution. It authorizes the Town to make short term borrowings up to \$5mm without the need of RTM approval. This allows the Town to fund the budget in the event that there is a timing difference between tax collections and expenditures. Although the Town has not needed to utilize this authority in recent history, it gives them the necessary flexibility.

The Committee met on May 5, 2014 with 13 of 15 members present, comprising a quorum and unanimously approved Item F.

Thank you.

James Palen  
Chair, Finance & Budget Committee  
May 12, 2014

## Representative Town Meeting

May 12, 2014

Warning 14-13

Good evening I am Cheryl Russell, Chairman of the Park and Recreating Committee.

The Park and Recreation Committee met on May 5, 2014 with 7 of 11 members present to discuss and vote on the Park and Recreation section of the Darien 2014- 2015 budget.

On a motion to approve this section of the budget we voted 0 Yes 6 No and 1 abstention. The motion failed.

There was a significant amount of discussion regarding the request for more man hours that was cut from the operating budget. The majority of the committee felt this may result in continual emergency capital repairs and inability to meet tax payer's demands. The demands on our parks have increased tremendously. Therefore, we believe this cut was unnecessary.

The capital budget discussion was mainly, but not limited to, the absolute need for new sand replenishment at both our beaches. Pear Tree beach has not had new sand in 8 years, Weed beach in 6 years. All present committee members felt that the need for sand is one of the highest priorities for proper maintenance of our town beaches. It was stated that our town beaches are focal points in town and play an important role when potential real estate customers are considering our town. Our beaches should be maintained to the highest standards

for the enjoyment of all our residents. Let us not forget that our beaches and town experienced 2 major storms in the last few years, therefore, the need for sand replacement is imperative.

The one abstaining vote believed the operating budget was acceptable, however disagrees with the non approval of the capital request of \$64,750 for the replacement of sand at both beaches.

As Chairman of this committee for many years, I have never voted against the Park and Recreation budget, I have also never had a committee vote against this budget. The Committee believed it was time to let the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen, and Board of Finance know the Park and Recreation Department can no longer survive on less than 1% of the town budget. The tax payers of this town are demanding and we all deserve better. We look forward to more man hours and new, clean, sand at both beaches next year.

My name is Mark Adiletta, Chair of the Public Works Committee. At our meeting May 5<sup>th</sup> with 10 or 13 members present the committee PWC recapped the 2013/14 budget for the Public Works Department. Overall no extraordinary items were noted. Consistent with past years core services are to be maintained, no meaningful discretionary items are added, and the department continues to operate with lean personnel staffing. It was noted this in the face of extraordinary events like Irene in 2011, Sandy in 2012 and record winter 2013/14. An overall increase of less than 3.9% is reflected.

1. Roadway & Walkway Maint. (56%) was held to a 1.78% increase despite substantially increased cost of materials for paving and for electricity as part of minimum regular road repaving program. Current budget maintains minimum allocation for existing sidewalk rehabilitation.
2. Waste Management (25%) held in check due to the enhanced implementation of single stream recycling by the DPW in conjunction with the volunteers on the Recycling Center Advisory Committee. This saves the Town tens of thousands of \$ in solid waste disposal fees due to less tonnage plus produces increased revenue via the sale of increased recyclable materials. Overall these operating improvements largely offset a 6.7% increase in the facility operating fee per contract and increased Muni waste transport fees, neither discretionary.
3. Parking Operations and Maint. (1%)(which includes snow removal) is basically flat and looks to be under budget for current year. Amazing!
4. Public Building Management (10%) Reflects 12% reduction in salary costs. Offset by 13% increase for heating to reflect higher natural gas prices plus additional security services for the expanded community center.
5. Management & Engineering (8%) Personnel held flat, but a necessary bridge inspection program results in bulk of small increase. Last one done 20 years ago.

The Flooding subcommittee reported the Intervale drainage project, a prior year capital item, is delayed while certain easements are pursued. No additional flood mitigation projects are put forth this year

Bottom line with DPW, resources continue to be used efficiently. There are no headcount additions or material increases in personnel. Implementation of improved programs continues to reduce costs and increase revenue. Core essential services are maintained and no material increase in basic service is reflected.

5/12/14

Good evening Madam Moderator, RTM members, fellow Selectmen, elected officials and interested tax payers.

On behalf of my fellow board members and town staff, I'm here to ask for your approval of the proposed \$44,957,974 Board of Selectmen's budget as proposed. Components of this year's proposed budget are as follows:

- \$27.5 million is requested for general municipal operations. This is an increase of 4.7% over FY 2013-14 driven largely by non-discretionary obligations in collective bargaining agreements, increases in healthcare (10%), commodities (electricity 14%), insurance (15% workers compensation/10% property-liability )
- \$3.5 million is requested to support the Darien Public Library. The grant to the library represents 11% of the Board of Selectmen's operating budget.
- \$11.5 million is requested to fund debt service payments for both the Town (\$3.4million) and the Board of Education (\$7.4million)
- \$2.5 million is requested to support capital requests for both the Board of Education (\$797,000) and the Town (\$1.7million). Over \$600,000 of the Board of Selectmen's request is to adequately fund infrastructure and equipment reserves.

There are only a few new initiatives represented in this year's budget but they are significant in their purpose. We plan to hire a professional facilities management company that will allow us to pull the responsibility for facilities management out of multiple municipal silos and provide for centralized, high level planning, capital budgeting, scheduling, and maintenance oversight as well as staff supervision. This is a priority for both the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to support recent taxpayer investments in facilities.

Helping to solve commuter and downtown parking challenges is my highest priority. Funding is requested to undertake a parking garage feasibility study and to look comprehensively at how to better manage our municipal and commuter parking.

Additionally, this budget includes year 1 of a multi-year conversion to civilian dispatch. Civilian dispatch is the best-practice model for emergency response and represents our commitment to the safety of our residents. Testing the new civilian dispatch model for one year is a prudent way to determine if this model works for our community. There are potential long term savings to the town with a civilian dispatch system.

The RTM will be asked to approve a second critical public safety initiative at a future meeting. The Board of Selectmen requested to fund year one of a 2-year project to rebuild our 20-year old emergency responder radio system. The system is no longer reliable. The BOF wisely suggested that the system upgrade be funded out of the general fund balance instead of adding to the tax levy. I urge you to fund this request when it comes before you.

This budget was a particularly difficult budget to draft. My board understands the stress the sluggish economy and the outcome of the October 2013 revaluation has had on our residents and taxpayers. We are taxpayers too.

I'm proud of our transparent budget process. It allows for substantive input from boards, commissions, the RTM and the community at large. Over the past 4 months, the Board of Selectmen has had 1 person come forward to ask for budget reductions. The overwhelming message is for us to provide more services and amenities like improved technology, new sidewalks, tree planting, and bike paths. Spending priorities are set through public input. Going forward, we ask for the public and members of the RTM to join us in the budget process early.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the FY 2014-2015 Board of Selectmen's budget as proposed.

Jayne Stevenson

Good evening, I am Dennis Maroney from district 3, Chair of the Education committee of the RTM

I would like to move 14-13 B, an appropriation of \$88,135,967 in the General fund for the Education operating budget. Do I have a second?

The 2014-2015 Board of Educations recommended budget balances the educational excellence in which Darien prides itself along with fiscal responsibility. The process began in the fall with specifications and requests from each department which were evaluated and then finally presented in the Superintendent's proposed budget in January. This budget was reviewed line by line, item by item over to Tonight's meeting to vote on the budget.

The 2014-2015 Board of Education recommended budget is driven mostly by Personnel increases. There is a new proposed Director of Human Resources and 7 new facilitators for Special Education that drive the majority of the increase. We are currently the only system in our DIRG that does not have a Director of Human Resources and with a staff over 700 FTE Darien needs this position. The facilitators are to comply with the State and the Special Education requirements. The mandated Planning and Placement Team meeting or PPT has become rigorous and specialized. The facilitators will have skills dedicated to the PPT and allow the district to abide by the law while freeing up the time of the Assistant principals who were doing the PPT currently.

Also in this increase is something that should come as no surprise to anyone in the room tonight as this body passed the teachers' contract 3 years ago which had a negotiated half step for the first 2 years with a full step for this upcoming budget. This accounts for \$ 1,399,090, 28% of the total increase.

Operating expenses increase is 28% of the recommended budget with 74% attributable to Special Education and legal/consulting expenses.

There is an investment in technology which includes new smart boards, wireless network upgrades, lab upgrades, mobile cart upgrades as well as a pilot for new tablets.

There are also increases due to the implementation of the common core standards as well as updated mandated Teacher evaluation plans.

Also a reorganization of the Special Education department will cost \$418,000.

As an aside the Board of Education will be requesting extra funds due to the investigations by the State Department of Education in regards to the Special Education programs and services along with an independent review initiated by Darien's BOE. The decision to hire various consultants to address and rectify these issues were not in the 2013-2014 budget and will not be in the new budget, but will require additional funds.

Our committee met on 5 May 2014 with 15 of 16 members present. We discussed with members of the Board of Education including President Betsy Hagerty-Ross, members of the administration including interim Superintendent, Lynne Pierson and would like to thank them for their time and patience in answering out<sup>^</sup> questions.

Our questions did not delve into too many specific questions regarding expenses, but questions regarding the educational output those dollars will provide. We asked if we were in compliance with the Special Education laws fully and we are! We discussed the need for the HR director, SRBI Key performance indicators and possible future savings, and the use of facilitators and Asst principal roles and responsibilities.

We would like to thank the members of the Board of Education and the administration for the time and effort they put forth in crafting and developing the budget. This was an especially difficult year and in spite of the difficulties with the Special Education situation and the full step negotiated teacher increase the increase is in line with years past. That can be debated if 5% is normal, but the facts say that over the past 5 years the average has been close to 5% increase. Enrollment has increased 10% over the past six years and the increased state mandates, special education directives, and health care have been put stress on the budget.

The committee voted to approve the <sup>Resolution</sup> request 14 in favor, 13 abstention and recommend to the RTM that they do the same. 13 2

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Maroney

Good Evening, Madame Chairman, members of the RTM, elected officials, and the Community of Darien, as you are aware, over the past year, Darien faced a significant challenge in our school district. In July and September 2013, the Connecticut State Department of Education issued two separate letters of findings detailing multiple violations to State and Federal laws in our Special Education department including:

1. Unlawful systemic procedures and practices
2. Unlawful deprivation of meaningful parent participation
3. Unlawful predetermination
4. Illegal changes to Individualized Education Programs (IEP) outside of the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings
5. Improper Data Reporting

The Board of Education hired Attorney Sue Gamm who independently investigated and substantiated these violations. In the short term, the following corrective actions are in process to address these violations:

1. Review and revision of all district policies, procedures and practices to ensure compliance with IDEA and Section 504
2. Development and delivery of new guidance and training materials to Darien staff
3. Identification of all students potentially impacted by illegal guidance and provision of compensatory services, as required
4. Strengthening of data management, access, analysis and utilization
5. Additional staff including a Special Education Ombudsman, Interim Superintendent and Interim Assistant Director of Special Education

During the 2013-2014 school year, the Board undertook aggressive steps to ensure State and Federal regulatory compliance, provide supervision and support, re-establish parent and public trust, and improve student outcomes. We hired experienced and knowledgeable personnel to determine the appropriate structures and processes to ensure that these violations can never happen again.

The Board of Education and the Administration, now under the leadership and expertise of Dr. Lynne Pierson, our interim Superintendent, and Mr. John Verre, our Special Education Ombudsman initiated a short-term action plan to address the corrective actions required by the State. A majority of the work included in the short-term plan will be completed before year-end, which sets the foundation for the next few years. Detailed recommendations for medium and long-term action plans, which focus on service quality and student outcomes, are under development and will be finalized by the 2013 school year-end.

The Board of Education also engaged NESDEC (New England School Development Council) who has started the nationwide search for a new superintendent for the Darien Public Schools. Tomorrow night, at the Board of Education meeting, we will be addressing the operating deficit for the current school year that will come before this body in June as a request for a special appropriation. These are only the first steps; the rebuilding of our school district's infrastructure will take many years.

The Administration and Board of Education developed a comprehensive 2014-2015 recommended budget to address the needs of all students and to restore the infrastructure of the Darien Public School system.

On behalf of my colleagues on the Darien Board of Education and our Administration, I submit to you for your approval our 2014-2015 Recommended Budget of \$88,135,967, an increase of 5.9% over the Approved 2013-2014 Budget. This budget includes many initiatives for all students, including required state directives:

1. Implementation of the Common Core
2. Implementation of the new teachers and administrator evaluations
3. A comprehensive facility study to address enrollment concerns and building issues
4. Long-term strategic plan for the school district.

The Board of Education has charged Dr. Pierson with reviewing the current structure of the district at all levels. Dr. Pierson has begun the search for a new Director of Special Education and Student Support. She has all ready identified the need for a Director of Human Resources who will be responsible for recruitment, hiring, training, and retention of staff.

Dr. Pierson and Mr. Verre have completed their review of the Special Education and School Services Department and their recommendations were incorporated into the 2014-15 budget. This restructure includes elimination of one Assistant Director and the addition of 6.6 new Special Education and Student Services Facilitators (SESS). These facilitators will provide the required guidance and technical support at the school level for the processes and procedures in special education and 504 to ensure regulatory compliance with links to accountability and performance to make sure that these violations can never occur again. In addition to chairing and facilitating the PPT/504 meetings, these facilitators will support parental engagement in the planning process and monitor school accountability for student outcomes. A question that continues to be posed is the role of the Assistant Principals in our Elementary schools. These positions were funded in the 2006-2007 school year. Their primary responsibility at that point in the schools had been to grow and integrate curriculum and instructional technology for our elementary students and teachers. With the growth of teachers and direct service providers in our schools, the introduction of the state mandated teacher evaluation system and Common Core the role of the Assistant Principals has greatly expanded. In shifting the primary Special Education role to the facilitators, our Assistant Principals will be able concentrate on their ever-expanding duties while continuing to be one of two individuals responsible for running the day-to-day operations for almost 500 elementary students and the implementation of all of the recent unfunded state mandates.

The Board of Education's capital project Budget for 2014-2015 is \$797,000. At the High School, with growing enrollment, there is a need to convert locker pods into two additional classrooms and upgrade of security camera software. Other capital projects include much needed digital heating controls at Royle and Ox Ridge Elementary schools, additional security cameras that were identified after the initial safety review last year. Hindley requires some masonry

restoration and an update to its fire alarm panel. Holmes is in need of blacktop replacement and in our vehicle replacement program; the replacement of a truck is included. As requested last year we are including the generator at Ox Ridge.

Thank you for giving us time tonight to recap the events and impacts from the 2013-2014 school year and highlight some of the important items in the 2014-2015 budget. We would like to thank the members of the Board of Finance, RTM-Education, Finance & Budget Committees, and especially all of our parents who have spent countless hours with us in our many meetings, listening to presentations, preparing for and challenging the Board of Education on the best way to serve our most important population, our students. The Darien Public Schools, under the leadership of Dr. Pierson has begun to rebuild the infrastructure of our schools. We have only just started our work but with your support of the 2014-2015 Darien Public School budget progress will continue toward the healing that has begun to take place in our District and Community.