

**RTM meeting
Monday, May 3, 2021**

The call

1. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the estimate and recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Town of Westport for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.
2. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Town Railroad Parking Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.
3. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Town Sewer Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.
4. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Wakeman Town Farm Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.
5. To take such action as the meeting may determine, to require that property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, shall be due and payable in four quarterly installments, and to designate the dates of the first days of July, October, January, and April as the dates upon which such installments shall be due and payable, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs, and that all taxes in an amount of \$100 or less shall be due and payable in a single installment on the first day of July, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs.
6. To take such action as the meeting may determine to require that the motor vehicle tax shall be due and payable in a single installment.

The following items will also be considered as time permits as follows on Monday, May 3; Tuesday, May 4, and/or Wednesday, May 5:

7. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, to approve an appropriation of \$101,000.00 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for the engineering design for sanitary sewer extensions to Evergreen Avenue, Evergreen Parkway, Tamarac Road, Lone Pine Lane, Gorham Avenue, Compo Road North & Brookside Drive.
8. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, to approve an appropriation of \$600,000.00 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for the replacement of underground fuel tanks, fuel system, and heating oil tanks at the Sherwood Island Connector Parsell Center.
9. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Superintendent of Schools, to approve a Special Appropriation in the amount of \$1,680,053.00 along with bond and note authorization to

the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for asphalt paving projects at Greens Farms Elementary School, Long Lots Elementary School, Bedford Middle School, and the Coleytown school complex.

The Meeting

Deputy Moderator Jeff Wieser:

My name is Jeff Wieser and I am the RTM Deputy Moderator sitting in for Velma Heller. As many of you know, Velma had a fall last week and broke her femur. She will be out of action for some time. I have been speaking to her and she sounds like Velma, in remarkably good spirits. She is currently in rehab and would love to get your text messages. It's kind of hard to call in to her sometimes but feel free to text her or email her. I want to point out that she is very anxious to get back to this job and to this seat and to all of you. Today she told me after frantic getting ready for tonight's meeting, she said "Don't worry. You'll do fine. Break a leg!" That was her joke. It wasn't even mine! So, I think she's doing okay. So, Velma hopes to be back next month and I'm sure she will be.

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order number 7B, this meeting is being held electronically, live streamed on westportct.gov and shown on Optimum Government Access channel 79 or Frontier Channel 6020 and we welcome those who are joining us from home. Members of the public who wish to have their comments read during public comment for each agenda item may email their comments to rtmcomments@westportct.gov. We will make every effort to read comments if you state your full name and address and they are received during the comment period for each agenda item. Public comments are limited, as always, to three minutes. Please note that meeting materials have been posted and are available at westportct.gov along with the meeting notice that was posted on the meeting list and calendar page. Now for our invocation.

This evening we are happy to welcome Alan Nevas who will provide our invocation. Judge Nevas is a long time Westporter who has been, and continues to be, actively engaged in the town's affairs. He practiced law in Westport for many years, served on and Chaired the Board of Finance and, in 1971, was elected to the Connecticut House of Representatives where he served until 1977. He was appointed US Attorney for the District of Connecticut and then, in 1985, was appointed to the Federal District Court for the State of Connecticut, serving until 2009. Since then has served as Chair of the Commissions investigating the Kleen Energy explosion in Middletown and allocating the funds donated to the families impacted by the Sandy Hook shootings, among other activities. Thanks for being with us tonight, Judge Nevas and welcome.

Invocation, Judge Alan Nevas:

The first public office I ever ran for was in 1961. I ran for the RTM and lost by 16 votes. That was actually fortuitous because the following year, I was asked to run for the Board of Finance and was elected, served for eight years, was Chair for three years and then got elected to the Legislature and went on to the District Court Bench. So my years of public service to not only Westport but the State of Connecticut and to the United States have been long. I always regretted the fact that I lost my first race to the RTM because

I've always admired the RTM. It's such a unique body and I often watch it on television and enjoy watching people who give of their time and their effort. I'm reminded of the most interesting public meeting in Westport that I've ever attended. It was the meeting to determine whether or not to buy Longshore. It was 1960. It was extremely controversial. There were as many people for the purchase of Longshore as there were against. The public hearing was at Bedford Elementary School. It went on well into the night. It was extremely contentious and it got out of hand at times. I think what carried the day for the purchase of Longshore was someone (I can't remember who it was) who figured out that if Longshore wasn't purchased by the town, it was going to be bought by a developer. This person figured out, with the help of a land surveyor, how many building lots in Longshore's half acre zone could be approved if Longshore was subdivided. It was something like 60 or 70. They figured out how many children those 60 or 70 building lots would generate. It was a huge number. The number of children those building lots would generate would necessitate the town building a new elementary school. So, somebody crunched all the numbers and came up with the ultimate number which was staggering and that carried the day. Longshore got approved. Of course, the best decision that any town body in Westport ever made was the decision to buy Longshore. That's my story.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Judge Nevas. Great history and it really reflects the importance of the things we are doing here tonight. And every month that we meet.

Judge Nevas:

I just want to add one thing. When I was Chairman of the Board of Finance, there was no freedom of information. So, when the education budget came up every year, a woman named Joan Schine who was the Chairman of the Board of Education, Joan would invite me for lunch and I would go to her house for lunch and she and I would review the education budget and we'd cut a deal in terms of what the education budget was going to be. She'd go back to her board. I'd go back to my board. She'd sell it; I'd sell it and that's the way the Board of Education budget was approved every year. Today it's not so believable but that's the way the budget got done.

Mr. Wieser:

The good ole days. We can't see Brian Stern but he is drooling right now.

Brian Stern, Chair, Board of Finance:

That's why I wasn't on video because I was drooling. Thank you Alan. It makes me feel good.

Arline Gertzoff, district 3:

I just want to say one thing. Joan Schine's son is still a good friend of mine and I think Jimmy will love it.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you for those remembrances. We will move onto the pledge of allegiance. Judge you are welcome to stay but you are lucky. I mean you are welcome to leave us.

Judge Nevas: Jeff, thanks for inviting me.

Mr. Wieser:

And now we have our Pledge of Allegiance montage put together by Matt Mandell for which we are very grateful.

There were 34 members present. Ms. Kaplan and Dr. Heller notified the Deputy Moderator that they would be absent. Mr. Keenan notified the Deputy Moderator that he would be late.

Announcements

Mr. Wieser:

If there are corrections to the April minutes, please contact Jackie Fuchs, Dr. Heller, Town Clerk Jeff Dunkerton or me.

We send birthday greetings tonight to Peter Gold, Noah Hammond, and Kristin Schneeman. Happy birthday!

The next RTM meeting will be tomorrow evening, May 4, for the Board of Education Budget and there will be another meeting on May 5, if needed. The next regular meeting will be on June 1.

RTM announcements

Mark Friedman, district 3:

Today is World Press Freedom Day. To honor this occasion I would like to give special recognition to Princeton graduate, Maria Ressa, an investigative journalist and media executive based in the Philippines. She gave the Commencement Address at Princeton last spring and she said ‘For the last four years, *Rappler*, her publication, and I have been under constant attack by our own government. The weaponization of the law followed by the exponential attacks on social media, which acted like fertilizer tearing down our reputation inciting to hate and paving the way for my detention and arrest. I posted bail eight times so I could keep working and *Rappler* and I paid more in bail and bonds than Amelda Marcos has been convicted in at least four countries.’ Yesterday, Maria Ressa was awarded the World Press Freedom Prize for 2021 and the Chair of the Prizes Jury highlighted that Maria Ressa’s fight for freedom of expression was an example for many journalists around the world. Her case is emblematic of global trends that represent a real threat to press freedom and, therefore, to democracy. I hope that you will join me in keeping Maria Ressa in your thoughts in the coming weeks and months as well as the many courageous journalists around the world who risk so much in order to share difficult truths.

Matthew Mandell, district 1:

Over the last 10 days, I’ve seen four concerts: two that I produced, that a number of you came to; I saw one in Norwalk and last night I saw a show in the former tennis center in New Haven which is Government Mule with Ann Wilson. Government Mule is a Warren Haynes project. If you don’t know him, he’s the 20-year lead guitar of the Allman

Brothers and Ann Wilson is the singing sister and the voice of the Hall of Fame rock band Heart. It was an amazing show and what did this unlikely duo do? Lead Zeppelin music...and it was incredible. Why am I telling you about this? Because we are coming to an end of what we've been through for the last year and music is back and arts are back. I think all of us can start to embrace this, socially distant at first but we'll be able to get there. That's what I'm experiencing in a socially distant manner and I think we can get there. We do have two more shows coming up in May and watching these shows you realize what a production it is to create these shows. We're thinking with the town helping us to do this, Bill Harmer and I from the library put these concerts on; it took the town to help us do it. We're looking at their budget today. I want to thank Parks and Rec. Department, the Public Works Department, the Police Department, the Fire Department. All of them came together and each one gave a different piece to make these concerts happen. Believe it or not, Conservation and P&Z had nothing to do with them. Thank goodness because sometimes the bureaucracy there can be difficult to get things done. But, the Board of Selectmen, of course, was the main piece and they gave the approval. We've got concerts May 14 and May 15. It's Dark Desert Eagles. They are an amazing band. Help me sell them out so that every single show that we did during the pandemic sold out. This is the end of the line for these. The Governor has opened up the State come the 19th. The underlying concept of a distance concert is no longer needed. We have accomplished our mission by bringing things together for the community. So, if you haven't seen one of these shows, please come the 14th and 15th. See Dark Desert Eagles. They are an amazing show. They also do Joe Walsh. One more announcement: Slice of Saugatuck and the Dog Festival are coming back in the fall if everything continues according to the way things are opening up. So, more to come. Thank you guys and let's do a good job on the budget tonight.

Jack Klinge, district 7:

The Friends of the Westport Senior Center would like to let all of us know that we have reserved one hour a week, Sundays at one o'clock for programming on channel 79. This Sunday, May 9, I will be interviewing Diane Farrell for an hour and we will have further programs throughout the spring. Sunday, 1 p.m. on channel 79, so, tune in. If you can't figure out zoom, many seniors can't, channel 79 is the place to be.

Mr. Wieser:

If there are no further announcements we will move on to the business of the agenda. Please remember to mute yourself so we don't get interference as people are presenting. Our annual budget meetings are a little different from our monthly meetings. On tonight's agenda, we will review the Town Budget, some administrative issues that go along with the financial administration of the Town and, hopefully, two appropriations, if we have time. We will review the Education Budget tomorrow night and vote on the combined Town and Education Budgets along with a joint request of the Board of Education and the Public Works Department and any additional items not addressed tonight. If needed, we will meet again on Wednesday of this week. We have a lot to do over the next two days, and we hope to move things along to avoid that Wednesday meeting! In accordance with RTM rules, no new agenda items can be addressed after 11:30 p.m. unless a 2/3 majority of RTM members present agree to continue past that time.

Here is a brief explanation of the agenda and procedures for these meetings: We will begin with a presentation of the Town side of the Budget, by Board of Finance Chair Brian Stern and member Jim Foster and the administration, then hear from the RTM Finance Committee. At the conclusion of those reports, we will then turn to the public for comment, and then to the RTM for debate and voting. We will vote in two parts on the Town budget. First we will discuss the Operating Departments of the Town and after voting on that portion of the budget, we will turn to the four agencies of the Town: The Health District, The Library, Earthplace and The Westport Transit District. If your comments relate to those agencies, please hold them until we get to that section of the proceedings. Typically, the only committee reports delivered verbally during RTM budget sessions are the Finance Committee report on the Town Budget, which will be presented tonight, and the Education and Finance Committee reports on the Education Budget, which will be presented tomorrow night. Other committee reports have been sent to RTM members in advance as part of the packet and subsequent emails which you've received in the past few days. If other committees wish to report verbally, they may do so when we turn to that section in the budget. When we turn to the public tonight after we hear from the Finance Committee, members of the Westport electorate may address any individual area of the Town budget or the budget as a whole in an email received during the public comment period and including your full name and address which will be read by Brandi Briggs, RTM member from District 7. When Ms. Briggs reads the comments, we will maintain a three minute limit on the comments, so please keep your emails brief. When the RTM begins its review of the budget, if there is a motion with respect to any item in the Budget, I will open the floor back up to the public to comment on that specific item, again with a 3-minute limit. Unless there is a motion on any item, I will be calling out each general budget area in turn. If any RTM member wishes to make a motion or discuss a particular area or any line item as it relates to the budget in that area, comments are limited to 10 minutes. If a committee wishes to report verbally, please raise your hand when we come to that area of the budget. If no one wishes to discuss that area, I will consider all the line items in that area approved and move on to the next section of the budget. If a motion to restore or reduce is made and seconded, we will hear the committee report if the report addresses it, then hear comments from the public, and then turn to the RTM. A word about voting: The RTM may approve or decrease a budget line item by a simple majority vote. The RTM may restore an amount requested of, but not recommended by, the Board of Finance by a vote of 70 percent of the RTM members present and voting, but, in any event, not less than a majority of the RTM, which is 19 votes. The RTM may not increase any budget item beyond the request to the Board of Finance. That's not the role of the RTM and we're not allowed to do that. An abstention is not a vote and is not counted as a vote. I ask the Finance Director Gary Conrad to please keep a running total of the approved parts of the budget. At the end of our review, we will vote on the first Resolution of the Town Budget. Regarding conflicts of interest, I'd like to remind everyone of the Town Charter provision on conflicts of interest. Charter Section C38-2 states that "No Town employee or any member, whether elected or appointed, of any Board, Commission, Agency, Committee, Department or of the Representative Town Meeting of the Town shall participate in any official capacity in the hearing or decision upon any matter in which such person has, directly or indirectly, a personal or financial interest. In the event of such disqualification, such fact shall be entered on the records

of the commission or board.” Article 6 of our own RTM Rules of Procedure adds the provision that “All members should be most sensitive to permitting an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest to exist, even though a complete disclosure of all circumstances would show that an actual conflict did not exist in a particular case.” Mr. Mandell will not be voting on the Earthplace budget; Mr. Gold will not be voting on the Transit District Budget and Ms. Talmadge will recuse herself from the Wakeman Town Farm budget in committee. Anyone else wishing to recuse themselves, you can let us know when we get to that point. Finally, while we may move through some areas of the budget rather quickly, it’s important to note that, since so much of the RTM’s work is done in the committee meetings in preparation for these meetings, tonight and tomorrow, RTM members have already spent countless hours over the past three to four months attending Board of Finance and Board of Education meetings and budget workshops (and listening to them on zoom), studying the budget, and conducting RTM committee meetings along with the town and school administrations and department heads, to make recommendations to the RTM as a whole. What you see tonight is the culmination of all that effort, and I thank the RTM members, Committee Chairs, the Town and School administrations, department heads, staff, and Board of Finance and Board of Education members for all of this effort on behalf of the Town of Westport. It has been a lot of work getting to tonight and we are hoping that this will all go smoothly.

The secretary read item #1 of the call - To adopt a budget for the Town of Westport for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

Presentation

Mr. Stern:

Thank you Jeff and thank you RTM members. Jim Foster will be doing the budget presentation. I’m here at the request of Velma who, about a week ago, asked me, because of the difficult year that we’ve had to talk about where we are today versus the budget that we approved this time last year. So, that is the context in which I will spend about five minutes. A little history here...In December 2019, we started this year’s budget process. We did not know much about COVID. We knew it was out there. We did not know much about potential State and Federal aid. It hadn’t even been discussed and we didn’t know that we were going to have a massive storm Isaias. It was not our fault that we didn’t know them but we had a budget and a plan and tax rates to approve. After the budget had been approved by the RTM in May, we set the tax rate and we said this because we knew a lot more in May than we did in December when we started: We said let’s have a business as usual budget and have our reserves adequately funded at the maximum level of our policy which is 11 percent of the total spending. The total spending is around \$213 million. That would be our cushion to the extent that we needed it. We felt, at that time, that that is what reserves are for. Reserves are for the uncertain, the unknown and that was our philosophy at that point. The range of our reserves was nine to 11 percent and we set the tax rate consistent with the 11 percent, the higher end of that policy. Given that context, and remember that our total budget is around \$213 million a year, and let me remind you the year has not finished, we have another quarter to go, this is where our forecast versus plan has

settled down and I'll give some causals and some of the reasons for them. On the revenue side, there was a loss of revenue at Longshore of around \$600,000. That's the rent for the Inn at Longshore. They were closed. Tipping fees and emergency service ambulance fees: Less people used ambulance service during COVID by a lot. Therefore, the fees for those particular events went down by a lot. The total of all that was about \$1.2 million. Parks and Rec.: Less people went to the beach. Less people paid at the entrance to the beach. Less people used the pool and a lot less people used the programs. In fact, many of the programs weren't actually in place. Golf was up a bit, surprisingly. It started the year down a bit but then everybody got enthusiastic and golf fees went up a bit. So, for Parks and Rec., the revenue loss in total with all those pluses and minuses is around half a million dollars. Third, and something that not many people including myself concentrate on during the year, we have large reserves which are in banks. We get interest from those reserves. The interest rate went down even further than it was in 2019 and the impact of that was \$600,000. Again, sizeable amounts given our budget of \$213 million. So, what was the good news on the budget side? And there is good news in our forecast. Versus prior year and with the impact of deferred taxes, deferred taxes are typically those taxes where people defer them on their house because of an age or an income exclusion, when they sell their house, we recapture them and those deferred taxes come in. So, the net of those two actually was an increase in forecast revenue. The revenue is not in yet. A lot could happen in the last quarter particularly with the last payment. It is \$1.5 million. On the expense side, the COVID and Isaias expenses on the town side, not the Board of Ed. side were around \$1.2 million. There it depends how you count because some of the things we might have done anyway and some of the things we just didn't include because people did extra overtime and things like that. But around \$1.2 million was directly related to COVID and Storm Isaias' expenses. At Parks and Rec., because there was less activity, particularly with less programs, there was a savings in expenses because we didn't hire the folks that operate the programs was about 6/10. So, actually, Parks and Rec. on a net basis when you consider the ups and downs was fairly close. It was about \$100,000 less than we thought in terms of the budget. This year, we had more retirements than we thought and so Social Security and health insurance were lower during a health crisis. Less people went to the doctor. Less people had knee surgery. Less people had voluntary surgeries. Less people went to the doctor and I didn't go to the doctor because I didn't think it was particularly safe. We actually had a benefit, of all things, with health insurance during a health crisis. The sum total of those items is about \$400,000. The Board of Ed, and you may ask Elio tomorrow when you see him, that was a difficult one to calculate. There were clearly COVID expenses. Transportation was a huge one. We had to put on more buses. There was a lot of IT associated with remote learning. There was obviously a lot of PPE to keep our classrooms safe when they actually were in the classrooms, etc., etc. Their budget is a complex mix of things, pluses and minuses. To offset that, those increased real expenses, we did get State and Federal grants and we did use in its entirety, \$1.2 million which was in their carryover fund. We haven't had their third quarter results yet. We are expecting the Board of Ed. will come out fairly balanced in the year. Again, there is one more quarter to go with their most significant expense item so we have to be careful to make a judgement as to that forecast. So, in balance, we are on a trajectory, we're not there yet, to be fairly balanced. If we didn't have State aid and we didn't have grants from the

Government, from FEMA, for Storm Isaias, we would be in a little bit of trouble. We would have had to have taken down our reserves by, I guess, \$3 to \$4 million. We have not had to do that yet. We are expecting that probably within one percent of the budget, that's within \$2 million, we will be fairly close to our budget. For me, that is a huge success story. What it means is our staffs, the people who operated the dump, our teachers, our administrators stepped up to the plate and came through at a time of massive crisis for us. To be within one percent of our budget, I think is a complement to all those great people who work for us. If we do that, our reserves should be intact. We should be good. The last question Velma asked me was what's going to happen to the mill rate next year? I don't have a clue. It depends on the RTM today and it depends on any other crisis that happens in the last three months. I'm expecting the mill rate on the old basis, not the new reval basis because if you live in one part of town or another the valuations change, but the old basis, it's going to be close. The reason I say close is because our forecast tells us we will be within one percent and we've only got a quarter of a year to go. That's where my judgment is. Hopefully, that is helpful. Those are high level numbers. If anybody wants any detail, I can go into each of the line items at some point. I don't think I want to bog down the RTM right now because these are forecasts; they are not actuals. As I said, I will not be giving the planned presentation. I ask members of the Board of Finance to rotate those presentations and this year the honor goes to Jim Foster.

Jim Foster, Board of Finance:

Thank you very much Brian. Before I get started, I would like to wish Velma a speedy recovery and to say thanks to the RTM for the opportunity to present the town budget tonight. Additionally, I think, to Brian's comments, we are really blessed in this town to have a great team to manage the town. I want to recognize Jim Marpe and all of the town government that worked hard to build this budget and spent so much time with the Board of Finance, with the committees of the RTM answering questions, etc. With that, I'll start. I'm a little bit more of a sales and marketing than I am a finance guy so I like to tell a little bit of a story but I think it's worth it. I think the biggest headline I could give is that the town of Westport is in a very financially strong position and we know that. If you look at key metrics, we score A's in all of them: strong consistent bond rating; flat/declining mill rate over the last five years; the grand list continues to grow; our disciplined and diligent approach to funding long term liabilities; we also have strong reserves, to the point that Brian just made, to minimize any risk. No need to beat this one up but I do think it's good sometimes to talk about the things we've overcome, one of which is the pandemic, say no more, we had a number of storms including the big one, Isaias, and then last and certainly not least is one that is on a national or global level impacted a lot of folks. I give the town a lot of credit the way we've handled some of these challenges going forward. I think we have room to keep growing but I think the town did an amazing job in these three specific areas. Regarding 2022, this budget will speak to accomplishing a number of specific goals or targets. One of them is to open up the Regional Dispatch Center we'll share with Fairfield. We'll expand the Westport/Weston Health District with the entrance of Easton. We will continue to strengthen our IT and make sure that our cybersecurity is intact so there is very minimal risk of being attacked. We will complete site plans for both Longshore and Baron's South. One of the things that's happened over the last four or five months is this idea of

leveraging both the town and the Board of Ed. expertise when it comes to things like building maintenance and paving that will help us reduce costs and leverage the expertise that we have in both houses. Finally, pressing forward with plans to develop the downtown area. What are some of the risks for 2022? This is a short list but consistent with what you've already seen, some of it is around COVID although it is sounding positive. I loved hearing Matt Mandell's journey out. I have to get my butt out and do the same. I love Warren Haynes. So, I think we feel good about it but there are some things we don't know, 100 percent, today. The cyberattacks will continue so we have to be on guard for that. I think we have continued issues at the State level with regard to taxes and local choice versus State control. So, diving into the numbers: The overall budget comes in with a change of almost 2.6 percent year over year, \$218.5 million. That includes the education budget. The town budget comes in at \$77.1 million which is about 2.2 percent increase year over year. Brian talked a little bit about the Grand List. It will be \$10.8 billion. That is a .9 percent increase. If you look at the reval from 2015 to 2020, it's about a five percent decline but the real grand list which looks at people building new houses or refurbishing and updating their current house. The real Grand List will be up about .9 percent. I think the challenge with not being able to say how the mill rate will play out. You have your cost increase at over two percent and then the real Grand List increasing only .9 percent which is lower, typically, than it has been the last few years. It will potentially put some stress on the mill rate. Looking at the overall budget again, it is \$218,479,214. When you see the breakout by town departments, you see the priorities. I think that starts primarily with educating our youth. It also reflects an 11 percent spend on public safety, public works and then funding our pension and OPEB insurance, etc. That's fairly consistent with where it has been in the past. If you look just at the town budget at \$77 million, consistent with the percentage breakouts that it has been in the past, it is led by public safety at 30 percent, the pension and OPEB at 27 percent, Public Works at 15 percent and Parks and Rec. coming in at nine percent. This next page, I think it's important to look at headcount. It's a big driver overall of the expenses for the town. If you go back to 2012, you basically have been flat to declining through those years. This year, for the first time, we will increase the headcount by three. That will come in the following areas: One is a new hire in the transfer station which an internal audit suggested that we needed to do, so we've gone and done that. The second is a Park Superintendent at Parks and Rec. It was a job that was in the budget a number of years back due to a retirement and then it was not backfilled. We can talk a little bit about that when we get into the specific Parks and Rec. budget. Finally, there is one extra firefighter due to a contractual issue that is on the books that was not there before. That person is used to offset some of the overtime costs. So, I think that actually helps a little bit. The next few slides, I'll walk through each of the departments within the town budget. I'll start with the General Government line item and then flow through them as you see there. What we are actually showing for the General Government is a negative versus the prior year so the costs have gone down. That is taking out the IT Department just to share with you a cleaner look at General Government because the IT Department itself is just under a six percent increase. I'll talk about that and the rationale for that in a second. Overall, the general government, less the IT Department will be down. Going down the department list, I'll go over an increase or decrease of a reasonably high amount. When it comes to the elections/registrar's office, the numbers go down in total because it is a non-

presidential year versus last year. In the Finance Department, it is a reduction in education. An employee has completed a degree in the last 12 months. In Audit, it is a contractual agreement with Bloom Shapiro. In Town Clerk, there is a change reflected in the recent personnel change there. Personnel has gone down and that is the new staff coming in at a lower rate. The other one that is substantial in terms of percentage is the IT. The reason for the increase there of \$70,000 comes from licenses and annual subscriptions that are increasing. Specifically, there is a \$40,000 increase that Microsoft is now charging us. They are forcing us to eliminate shared accounts. If I remember correctly, I think it was the Fire Department that had a number of shared accounts. They are not allowing those anymore. So, of the \$70,000, \$40,000 comes from that increase alone. Public Safety next. As you can see, the Police had a slight decline year over year. There is a vehicle upgrade that is happening in the Animal Control area of the Police Department. The Fire Department, their numbers go up. Two percent are step increases and that additional firefighter I mentioned earlier. The big increase dollar-wise comes from the other category; that is Aquarion who is increasing their fees for water usage. Next, we'll go through Public Works. The personnel increase at the transfer station is a piece of that 2.28 percent increase. There is also an increase in the tree budget because of the more aggressive strategy to cut back on trees that may cause damage and loss of power, etc. In addition, there have been a lot of projects because of all the issues in the last year. Finally, solid waste continues to increase, as well. Human Services, what a terrific job they did in the year of COVID. With all of the challenges they were faced with, they came through big. One of the things that happened last year, they had asked for the purchase of some software that, in the go-forward years, would allow them to reduce costs so that has been implemented and those costs will be saved in the coming year so you see a 1.26 percent decline for the year over year. Parks and Rec., the increase of 3.9 percent is driven primarily from an increase in the minimum wage. There are two trucks that are being replaced with a leasing situation that is very productive for the town; in addition, as I said earlier, the hiring of a Parks Superintendent. There is going to be a lot on the Parks and Rec. team moving forward especially with the work that is being done around Longshore and Baron's South and other parks in town. With the addition of the Parks Superintendent, it will be critical in making sure the goals of Parks and Rec. are actually delivered. That person will have a key role in that. Moving on to the Pension OPEB and insurance contributions, this is really a huge success. It is 27 percent of the town's budget so it is not insignificant. It is a huge success in that OPEB, going back seven or eight years, there was nothing saved. The town has been very diligent in making sure that we got caught up on OPEB so we're in great shape. The pension contributions: pension liability is \$375 million, and we have assets of \$331 million which means we're funded at about 88 percent. Yes, we've been blessed by a strong stock market over the last few years but, primarily, this has been driven by the contributions the town has made to support the pension plan. It's really the same story with the OPEB contributions. Liability is \$123 million. The assets as of June 30 last year are \$79.1 million. It's actually higher, given what the stock market has been. So, we're in great shape at about 64 percent. Most of the contributions are "pay as you go" for people who are actually spending that money. But \$1.2 million of that is funding the trust. Finally, going into the other organization budget request for 2022, we have the Health District which is flat. We will add Easton to the mix so we will collect fees so that will go down moving forward. The library shows a slight

decline versus the prior year. Hats off to Bill Harmer and his team. It was a tough year, like for everybody else. They have been hanging strong and doing the things they needed to while still providing a great service to the town. As Matt mentioned, there are a lot of great plans to get this town cranking again as we start to hopefully start to come out of the pandemic. For Earthplace, we added \$10,000 to get them to \$105,000. That's the first increase in many, many years. They were a great asset to the town as people looked for places to get around and get outside of their homes in the throes of the pandemic. Earthplace was there so we thought that was absolutely the right thing to do. Last and certainly not least was the Westport Transit District. Regarding the Transit District, the Board of Finance did approve the funding for the door-to-door service for seniors and citizens with disabilities; however, the Board of Finance cut the proposed budget for the Transit District by a little over \$157,000. What I'm going to say is it isn't a very different conversation from what we've had in past years. In the Board of Finance's perspective, the cost per ride is extraordinarily high. If you look at it as it sits today with 20-some riders on a daily basis, it would come out at some \$80 as the cost to service those rides and it just feels that is not the right cost/value relationship so as a result, we cut the budget by \$157,000; again, not different from what has happened in the past. So, with that, I have read all the emails that were forwarded to me and the passion is clearly very strong. I don't sense that there is anything that is going to change what has happened in the past years. By that, I mean the RTM will, more than likely, restore the funding so I am going to speak just for me. This is not me representing the Board of Finance. That is, I challenge the Selectman's Office, the Board of Finance and the RTM to find a way, regardless of what happens tonight, to get out of this cycle that we're in. We have to do it collaboratively. Public transportation is vital to our success as a town going forward. We have to approach it in a different fashion. This never ending cycle that we have is very frustrating. I personally know Peter Gold, Jenny Johnson, Marty, Patty are all outstanding people but they do it for free. We make it hard for them. In the end, I think we should start and look at a blank piece of paper and say what could it look like? I think Peter started on that path with some of his out of the box ideas. I'll just leave you by saying please, please let's find a way to get together and find a different path forward after tonight however that result turns out. I think we owe it to the town. With that Jeff I'll turn it back to you.

Mr. Wieser:

We have a committee report of the Finance Committee. I'd like to thank Mr. Braunstein for taking up this report assignment. I have prepared the report over the last few years and always looked forward to it, but as we juggled around assignments for this meeting to make sure everything ran smoothly, Seth stepped up to the plate. I appreciate his flexibility in being able to jump into the report preparation and presentation.

Committee report

Finance Committee, Seth Braunstein, RTM, District 6.

Thanks Jeff. I will echo Jim Foster's sentiments before I get going. I want to extend my best wishes to Velma for a speedy recovery. I'm going to guess she's sitting at home watching us so Velma hello.

Mr. Wieser:

She's actually in a Fairfield facility so they don't get 79! But she promised to watch a recording so be careful what you say.

Mr. Braunstein:

Let me start off by saying the RTM Finance Committee studies Town revenues and financial policies and practices, exclusive of individual department budgets. The Committee works with Town officials to secure adequate reports for the full RTM. The Finance Committee further studies the Town's current financial position, the financial aspects of the annual budget, capital requirements and long-term financial planning. We started our formal review of the Town's financial position early in this new year along with the Boards of Finance and Education, and other members of Town government and the RTM. We followed closely the deliberation of the Boards of Finance and Education at their various budget workshops and meetings. While individual department budgets have been reviewed and voted upon by appropriate RTM Committees, the Finance Committee met to discuss the aggregate budgets that the larger body is now being asked to approve and that Jim just did such an excellent job recapping. As we move forward to the final steps in this budgeting process this evening, it is absolutely worth taking a moment to recognize that amidst a once in a hundred year pandemic and through some particularly chaotic and uncertain times for our nation, the business of our local community has remained steadily in focus. As we take a moment to look back, before looking ahead to the budget being put before us tonight, I think we can all agree that we've just come through one of the most challenging years our nation and our community (and the world for that matter) have faced. From the Board of Selectman, the Board of Finance, the Board of Education, to the department heads and all of the incredibly dedicated employees and volunteers our town is so fortunate to rely upon, there has been an unwavering focus on attending to the well-being of our community. So, I want to extend my most sincere gratitude for all the work that has been done and I know we all share that sentiment. Specifically, we met with the Town Administration on Thursday, April 22 (on Zoom as we continue to meet remotely as a consequence of the pandemic). First Selectman Jim Marpe and Finance Director Gary Conrad and Operations Director, Sara Harris joined us to review the Town of Westport's General Fund Budget. This report, covering the Town Budget only, is the first of two reports prepared by the Finance Committee. Stay tuned. There will be a second report with focus on the Board of Education budget and presentation which will be submitted by the Finance Committee tomorrow night. Additionally, we met on Tuesday, April 27th (also on Zoom) with Schools Superintendent Thomas Scarice and Chief Financial Officer Elio Longo, Director of Human Resources John Bayers, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Anthony Buono, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services Michael Rizzo along with Board of Education Secretary, Elaine Whitney, to review the Board of Education budget. As mentioned, the report on the 2021-22 Education Budget will be presented to the full RTM on Tuesday, May 4, 2020. I'd like to thank the Finance Committee and Chair Jeff Wieser, along with my fellow members, Cathy Talmadge, Lauren Soloff, Christine Meiers Schatz, Rick Jaffe, Jessica Bram, Stephen Shackelford and Nicole Klein for their time and effort in reviewing the budgets. And as a Committee, we'd like thank all of the individuals, named and not named here, for their patience in helping us deal efficiently with the many intricacies of the budgeting process and for remaining so focused amidst the challenges of the previous year.

The review process is the culmination of a five month exercise involving the Town Administration, the Boards of Finance and Education, and the RTM, among others. The approval by the RTM is the culmination of reviews by the Town, various boards, and RTM committees. Our reviews this year, as always, balanced the many priorities of the Town, namely the maintenance of: 1) our superior educational environment and, this year, adapting the curriculum to an online/hybrid environment as a result of the pandemic; 2) Town Services and Safety (which have required adaptations to handle all of the issues related to the pandemic; and last but not least 3) our modest tax burden. We reviewed 1) the appropriate funding of our future pension and OPEB obligations; 2) the responsible maintenance of the Town's outstanding debt levels and how that impacts our credit rating; and 3) the effect on Town finances of the coronavirus pandemic and the required adaptations that have become current best practices associated with proper social distancing and ensuring our residents and employees are safe. At our April 22 Committee meeting, Jim Marpe presented the Town Budget, as presented to and approved by the Board of Finance. We went through some of the variances that Jim Foster did such a good job detailing so I won't go through those. The total town budget as you heard is just over \$77 million which is just over two percent increase year over year. I think for some additional perspective, the increase in the budget from two years ago, is only 1.12 percent. Also, it is really important to recognize over the last many years, the Town budget has experienced modest operational increases while the Administration has worked aggressively to meet its large OPEB and pension liabilities. It's really important to recognize the effort that has been put in to have a consistent and conservative approach to the annual contributions in order to make sure that these liabilities are appropriately funded. If you look at a little bit of history, if you look at the OPEB account, about 11 years ago, that was a zero. We are now getting close to \$100 million about 64.4 percent funded towards its liabilities. This "catch up" in funding of this liability is one of the Town's great successes of the past eleven years and deserves to be recognized as a source of Town strength provided by smart planning and also the contributions of the taxpayers obviously. I don't want to go through the operational variances because I think Jim did a very good job of that. Just note that the process entails the town budget and these four other organizations which were briefly touched upon. Those other budgets are the Health District, the Library, Earthplace and the Westport Transit District. In total, the "Other Organizations" budget added just shy of \$6 million to the requested budget. On a year over year basis, this represents a 2.4 percent decrease from the 2021 approved budget for these items. One of the more notable elements there is the Westport Transit District. This last item, the Transit District budget cut, is something that we are going to hear more about later in this report and later in the evening. I will summarize the recommendations from the Finance Committee. We voted unanimously, 8-0, to recommend the full 2021-22 Town budget of \$77,103,992 to the RTM. We also voted to recommend to the full RTM approval of the "Other Organizations" budget of \$5,970,459. However, the Committee also moved to recommend a restoration of the Transit District's budget, with a restoration request in the amount of \$157,500. This restoration request was approved by a vote of 7 - 0 with one abstention. The final piece of the approval process, the benefit assessed pieces of the budget. As the name suggests, these are separate accounts that are funded by the users. Those three are the Sewer Fund which saw a 1.8 percent decrease year over year; the Railroad Parking Fund which was down

almost 3.2 percent and the Wakeman Town Farm Fund which did see an 11.2 percent increase. This does not affect the town's budget or the mill rate. Those three budgets are ultimately borne by the user fees that are generated. Trying to wrap all of this up, when the rubber meets the road, the budget is what ultimately influences the level of taxation that our town will experience. Once these budgets are adopted, presumably this evening and tomorrow evening, the Board of Finance will be able to set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year. There are a couple of final amounts to be determined obviously pending the restoration request that we've gotten this evening. Once the final Town of Westport and Board of Education budgets are adopted by the RTM at our May 3 and 4, 2021 meetings, the Board of Finance will then be able to set the mill rate for the 2021-22 fiscal year. At present, the final amounts are still to be determined pending the one restoration request that will be considered this evening related to the Transit District's budget. To recap, the mill rate will use the following inputs; Selectman's Budget for the town of \$77 million, I mentioned earlier; Other Organizations expenses which are roughly \$6 million which may increase slightly by \$157,500 pending the restoration request to be heard presumably later this evening. There is also the Board of Ed. Debt Service of just over \$9 million and an overall Board of Education requested budget of \$125.6 plus Board of Education -related budgets for Program Expenses and Aid to Private/Parochial Schools for a grand total Town of Westport budget of \$218,479,214. These amounts represent changes to last year's final budgets of the Town Budget: up 2.21 percent, Other Organizations: down 2.4 percent or basically flat if the Transit funding is restored; Education Operating Budget: up three percent; Total General Fund Budget is increased by just under one-half on one percent. Finally, there are certain adjustments before the amount needed to be raised by taxes can be determined. There are non-budgeted expenditures consisting of pending labor and litigation settlements which will be somewhat offset by turn backs from individual departments from the current fiscal year. The total amount to be raised in taxes is reduced by non-tax revenue items, including: Prior tax collections; Revenues from the Parks & Recreation Department; Licenses & Permits; State Grants; and Education Programs. As Brian mentioned, some of those will offset some of the expenses. When the Board of Finance sets the mill rate they will ultimately determine whether or not there will be any contribution from the General Fund balance. When possible, the Board of Finance uses this balance to reduce taxes while keeping the fund in a previously set range of 9-11 percent of total budgeted annual expenses. Maintaining this range is an important feature in the Town's discussions with the ratings agencies. It helps them to understand that we are prudent that it is reserved for any unforeseen outcomes. We need to balance a level of available "rainy day funds" with an undertaking by the Town to keep tax rates as low as possible so that current taxpayers are not disproportionately funding future obligations. The Board of Finance will determine in late May the contribution, if any, from the General Fund. In setting the mill rate this year, the Board of Finance will consider the many uncertainties arising from the State's well-known fiscal woes, and the residual impacts that remain as a result of the pandemic. Keep in mind that some of them are favorable in terms of how interest in our town has grown as people have sought to exit New York City, and some items are negative as certain expenses have increased or other specific program revenues have fallen. The Board of Finance will set the mill rate with the factors that are known in mid-May. It is also important to recognize that a revaluation of our Grand List was completed as of

October 1, 2020 which yielded a 5.4 percent decrease in the assessed value of all taxable property in the town. Taxable property equals real estate, motor vehicles, and personal property and currently stands at \$10.8 million. This decline in overall values may complicate efforts to maintain a stable mill rate. The current mill rate of 16.86 has been in effect without change since 2016-2017. So, five years, we'll have to see if it will continue. How does this impact the individual homeowner's responsibility? The historic tax charge on a home with a market rate of \$1,000,000, and a consequent assessed value of \$700,000 would yield an obligation of \$11,802. Again, that number has been stable since 2016. I think, for some additional perspective, it is really interesting to note that mill rate is one of the lowest among similar communities in the State. Apart from a few Litchfield County rural communities, it really compares favorably to Weston 32.37, Wilton 28.54 and New Canaan 18.24, which are above us but only Greenwich and Darien are below us. We have done a really good job to keep that individual burden well managed. The other things to consider as we think about key issues that go beyond taxes: The town has total Debt outstanding of about \$106.7 million. It is interesting to note that that number has come down significantly. If you look at where we were about 14 years ago, we had hit a high point, a high water mark of \$177 million so we have gone from \$177 (million) down to \$106 (million). Let us understand, interest rates have been very favorable for long-term debt that has been issued and ultimately refinanced by the town. In fact, our most recent issuance which occurred in April, offered an interest rate of 1.6 percent for 20 years. That is astonishingly low. The other key thing that we have to always make sure we keep our eye on are the employee pension funds which are revalued every year. So, the pension funds in the aggregate were reported to be modestly under-funded as of June 30, 2020 and the recent stock market gains have improved this position. Total funding for Pensions is at 88.2 percent of the most recent 2020 liabilities valuation, while the OPEB Trust is funded at 64.4 percent. These numbers are a little different from those you heard from Jim. His numbers are as of June 30, 2020 and the numbers I am using here are as of mid-April, 2021. I would just pause here to reiterate that the town has made a truly consistent and concerted effort to address these liabilities and we have been aided by these very favorable market conditions over this last decade plus. But keep in mind that market conditions can and will change but our focus on funding these liabilities appropriately should not change.

As of April 14, 2021 the market value of the pension fund was \$396 million (up from \$301 million in 2020). The value of the OPEB Trust was \$100.8 million (up from \$78.1 million in 2020). It is important to pause here just to reiterate that the Town has made consistent, concerted efforts to address these liabilities and we have been aided by favorable market conditions as well. Keep in mind that market conditions can (and will) change but our focus on funding these liabilities appropriately should not change. In summary, the Town has been impacted this year from some unexpected events, as it continued to suffer from other unexpected events (COVID-19 and Hurricane Isaias):

- The 2020-2021 annual results should end in a modest gain for the General Reserve.
- The Grand List, from which taxes are calculated, declined by 5.4 percent as a result of the latest revaluation.
- Historically low interest rate levels have allowed the town to smartly refinance debt that had higher rates which have helped result in reduced financing costs.

All of these considerations will help impact the generation of the mill rate later this month. As we have learned, a consistently conservative and prudent approach to capital

spending should allow the town to handle the inevitable, unanticipated expenses that are certain to emerge. We must remain vigilant to ensure that we are able to finance our excellent schools at a pace which over the last number of years has far outpaced inflation; be responsible stewards of the town’s infrastructure assets; recognize the challenged condition of the finances of the State of Connecticut; and maintain a vibrant Town that attracts residents looking for the best place to live in the world. I am sure we are up to the task. I want to reiterate that the RTM Finance Committee appreciates the assistance it has received in this budget cycle from First Selectman Jim Marpe, Finance Director Gary Conrad, Superintendent Thomas Scarice, Board of Ed. CFO Elio Longo, all of the Board of Education, the Board of Finance, and all our Town’s Department Heads. This was a long report. I appreciate your patience with it. With that Jeff I am done.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Mr. Braunstein. Ms. Briggs are there any public comments so far on the General Government portions of the Town Budget?

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the First Selectman’s Budget items recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted, and the sum of \$77,103,992 for the First Selectman’s Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures and such sum shall be added to the amount appropriated for the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget and the Board of Education Budget

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Mr. Klinge. It has been moved and seconded to approve the resolution just read.

Members of the RTM

Mr. Wieser:

Before we review the budget by category, are there any RTM members who would like to address the budget as a whole? Seeing none, we are working from the expense summary and I will read each category of the budget one by one. If there are any comments, questions or motions on the category that is read, please raise your hand. If not, we’ll move on to the next one. This is the Finance Department expense summary that was in your budget books and packet forwarded to you and outlined tonight.

General Government	\$ 6,752,644
Public Safety	\$ 23,035,177
Public Works	\$ 11,842,280
Human Services	\$ 1,404,362

Wendy Batteau, district 8:

I’m so proud of our town for coming through this year the way we have and I’m so proud of our community and so proud of our workers. I’m so embarrassed that we are not treating our Human Services Department better. I know that we can’t increase their

budget at this time so there's not a question of restoring anything because there's nothing to restore but these people have worked themselves not just to the bone but to the bone marrow. They had 20 percent increase in cases, maybe more than that. When we had our Human Services Committee meeting, I asked Elaine Daignault if she was seeing more cases and she said three for four new families coming in every week which is a third more. Also, we are trying to increase diversity in this community and, of course, we will be trying to increase affordable housing and we cut their budget. We have put all kinds of little increases into all kinds of other departments in the town and the education side. I don't know what we expect from them. I don't know how we expect them to handle yet more increases; the increase that is going to be left over and continuing from COVID, from new people needing to assimilate into the community no matter who they are. It embarrasses me and I'm very sorry. I hope they will come back for appropriations but we know they won't because they're modest. They ask for donations but this has been a tough year for donations because there has been so much need. There are hardships everywhere so people are spreading themselves thin on donations. However wonderful this community is, that does not, in my opinion, cast a good light on us.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Ms. Batteau. I remind the meeting that was, as the RTM, are not allowed to increase the budget. I also remind committee chairs and committee members that during the year, it is certainly an opportunity to advocate for your interests and discuss them with the administration.

Arline Gertzoff, district 3:

I am on that committee with Wendy and I would just like to support Wendy's comment substantially. Wendy's comment is very well taken. I'm beyond impressed with how the people in Human Services function. Thank you Wendy.

Harris Falk, district 2:

It's not only about Human Services though. Almost every department has overtime, overtime, overtime. They are understaffed. Public Works isn't applying for grants, not because the grants aren't out there, but because they don't have enough people to do the jobs they have currently. It's not just Human Resources. All the departments need more people. We're not going to hire anybody because that will raise the mill rate so that we don't pay an extra dollar a day, we can't do things in this town.

Mr. Wieser:

Again, something to advocate for in our committee meetings and continue that conversation as the opportunity arises.

Parks and Recreation

\$ 6,745,411

Sal Liccione, district 9:

I voted no on the Parks and Rec. budget due to the fact that the Parks and Rec. Commission and this administration have not put locker rooms on the five year forecast. Our locker rooms at the beach, we have tons of people moving from New York. The

leadership on the issue of locker rooms is very disappointing. I hope that we lobby to get more locker rooms at the beach.

Jimmy Izzo, district 5: Can we get back to the budget?

Carla Rea, district 8:

I would like to echo the same comment. I am very disappointed that the five year forecast doesn't have lockers in it. We really don't have a good reason. They say it will be more expensive. They don't have a real number. People in my district, district 8, they are willing to pay more because they really need the locker. We are so far away from the beach. So, just a comment about the disappointment.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Ms. Rea. Again, we're not here to increase the budget. Please advocate in your committees.

Pension, OPEB, Insurance	\$ 20,989,708
Debt service	\$ 3,966,245
Other Financing Use	\$ 2,368,165

Mr. Conrad confirmed the Board of Finance recommendation for the First Selectman's budget of \$77,103,992. **By show of hands, the budget recommendation passes unanimously 34-0.**

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget items recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted, and the sum of \$5,970,459 for the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures and such sum shall be added to the amount appropriated for the First Selectman's Budget and the Board of Education Budgets.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Members of the RTM

- Health District \$ 590,811.
- Library \$ 5,090,148

Dick Lowenstein, district 5:

I don't know if you've had the opportunity to read the various committee reports that have come in to the Town Clerk's Office. The one on the Library Committee is worth a special read. Beyond just the budget, it talks about the remarks of the Committee Chair before the meeting began. At the committee vote, I decided to abstain on the budget for 21/22 because I wanted more information. This Friday I spoke to Ian Bruce, President of the Library Board of Trustees. We had no disagreement on the dollar amounts of the budget requests and the supporting financial materials. We did not agree on which fiscal year the amount in question should be applied. We agreed to disagree; however, I will

vote tonight to approve the town's appropriation for the 21/22 budget. I still have process concerns which are documented in that committee report I referred to. Going forward, I expect better transparency and more timely responses from the library on matters of concern to the RTM and the citizens of Westport.

- Earthplace \$ 105,000

Lou Mall, district 2:

If we were voting individually on this, I would abstain on the Earthplace budget just based upon the fact that Earthplace is a 501(C)3 and it does a lot of fundraising on its own and has that ability where other parts of our budget doesn't allow for that. Also, based on Wendy's comments about Human Services being cut while Earthplace is being increased, I do have a problem with that so I would abstain on that particular vote.

- Westport Transit District \$ 184,500

Peter Gold, district 5:

I would like to move to restore the \$157,500 to the Transit District budget cut by the Board of Finance.

Seconded by Mr. Klinge.

Mr. Wieser:

Mr. Gold is going to make a short presentation counting for the committee report, I believe. Ms. Briggs will tell us if we have received public comment. Before doing that, I will point out that we have received numerous emails in support of this. Those emails were sent to RTM members and each RTM member has received and reviewed those letters of support. Tonight we will be reading new emails addressed to the RTM comments email and if you have submitted an email previously there is no need to repeat those comments because we have already received and read them. Ms. Briggs are there any comments?

Ms. Briggs: There are no public comments at this time.

Mr. Gold:

First of all, I want to take Jim Foster up on his offer to meet and work collaboratively to find the way forward. I'm all for improving the services and doing things in a better fashion. Any time anybody wants to meet on that, I'm more than happy to sit down and talk. Most of you have seen this presentation, one version or another over the past two or three months so I'm just going to go through it really quickly and hit the highlights. If you see anything you wish to talk about, you can ask me at the end. Why do we want to restore the funding? These are services that are desired and appreciated by Westporters. We go over 100 emails, 112, actually, people from all parts of Westport, from all different organizations urging you to restore the money. The last time we faced this in 2019, we only had 60 letters. So, we have almost doubled our output here. Team Westport is new; Homes with Hope is new; the Housing Authority is new. They all wrote letters to you; you've read them. We did two town-wide surveys a couple of years ago.

Both came back supporting the Transit District. In fact, they supported the Transit District even if we had to increase contributions by \$100,000 over what they were at the time which is about where they are today. Transit services are a public service. I think Jim Foster even alluded that they are a public service and a Westport asset. They are not a business. Eighty dollars a ride is expensive per ride but we pay a lot of money for a lot of things in town that aren't used by a lot of people and I think, over time, we will get more riders and if we get more riders, the cost per ride will go down. The Town Plan of Conservation and Development says even those who know that the service is available may have situations when they may need it. The car is in the shop. They have to get to the train station. You have a disability that prevents you from driving. You need to get to the train station. All kinds of situations. We also provide door to door services for the elderly and disabled within town and from town to town. Those are not affected by this. They are provided in any case. We were asked by the Board of Finance last go round for an operating model because the last one was not making any sense. We had seven fixed routes and ran buses around them whether or not there were people there. We came up with a new operating model. Wheels2U Westport is an on-demand group ride service that runs when somebody calls it. It doesn't run routes where there are not riders. It goes to riders when they're there. It is, as you'll see, more flexible than the old service. It is less expensive than the old service. It is a new model. I think it has great potential. Unfortunately, we rolled it out last October in the middle of a pandemic when nobody was going anywhere; so, bad timing. We couldn't account for the pandemic. What is it? It is an on-demand, door to train platform service. It takes you from your house, virtually anywhere in Westport, we don't serve the northern regions and we don't serve Saugatuck Shores, to the train station between six and 10 in the morning and four and eight in the evening for two dollars. You schedule it on an app. You pay for it on the app as you do it. It is very convenient. If you haven't tried it, I suggest you do so. Download the app. Get going. That's that. It currently takes six or seven minutes from the time you request a ride until the time you get it. Our goal is to do it in under 10 or 12 minutes from the time you request an app. It is very flexible. It is very convenient for you guys. Where do we go? This is the old fixed route service here. You can see we now go, this is the border with Fairfield here and this is the other border of town. We can pick up people in the middle here where we never used to be able to pick up people because it was too far from them. So we cover a lot more of the town. Ridership has steadily increased. In October, when we rolled it out, we had 11.7 riders per day. In April, we had 26.5. The trend at the beginning of April was higher than the beginning of April. I fully expect May to be higher than April. The service, as currently structured, goes to and from the train station and is used primarily by commuters. That is not the only thing it can be used for. Even if that were the only thing it could be used for, there are creative things we can do with it, with the current model, to increase the ridership. I remember when my kids were little, we used to take them to the Levitt Pavilion on Wednesdays for the children's night. I would come home from work on the train and I would have to drive up to the Imperial Avenue lot to park my car. My wife had driven the kids in her car so we had two cars there. With Wheels2U, whoever is staying home can take the car. The other can take the bus to the train in the morning and the Imperial lot at night so you only have one car. Levitt parking is terrible and this would make it so much easier. You can take the bus down to Saugatuck and go to a restaurant and not worry about having too many drinks because you can take the bus home by eight o'clock. There are all

kinds of things we can do. Financial benefits: Conversion of a fixed cost structure to a semi-fixed cost structure. The vehicles can be scaled up or down three times a year. Vehicles only go where we need them to go so it's less expensive on fuel. The cost/trip is lower. This is the maximum number of buses that we budgeted for. The maximum number of buses is not the actual number of buses that we're using for the whole period. You'll see on the next slide, we only use the maximum number during the peak periods. The usage is going to be adjusted based upon demand. You'll see, for example, we only use three buses before 6:15. We use more buses between six and eight where there are more riders, fewer buses between nine and 10. So, we can adjust the number of buses that we use to the demand that we have. User benefits: Door to train platform service! It's very convenient. No more walking from remote parking lots, lot 7, lot 8, to the platforms. We cover more of the town so we have more potential riders. We cover more trains than we used to cover. We could only meet certain trains with the fixed-route service. Now we can meet pretty much every train. We take people to private homes, reverse commuters. I don't know who the people are, home healthcare aides, cleaning people, health care workers, all kinds of people. User benefits: Shorter trips because the old routes went around in a circle, it is more efficient than the old model so maybe, for the same money, we can explore the after school service. Extend the evening hours. Permit rides that don't go, begin or end at the train station, which is the rule. I think we can do that relatively easily. It's a step towards door-to-door service. When the Commission on People with Disabilities met to decide whether or not to send the RTM a letter on this, I attended the meeting and pointed out all the things you're hearing and subsequently I went to the drive in at the Remarkable Theater. Excellent thing as was the movie "Singing in the Rain" and several people approached me and said we have children who have developmental disabilities and while we have door-to-door service for the elderly and people with disabilities, it doesn't work for our children because you have to schedule it a day in advance. They give you an hour window (they'll come any time within that hour.) It makes it hard for our kids to learn to be self-sufficient because they can't use it. If we had a service like Wheels2U, we could teach our kids to download the app, order the bus and pay for the bus from their jobs and be more self-sufficient. This is a step towards that. It supports Westport's business and economic development. We take people every day from Riverside to the library, to Parker Harding Plaza, to private homes. It's basically a Main to Train Service at least for the hours we operate it. As I said, maybe we could use it to service restaurants in Saugatuck in the evening. There was something I was going to mention but I forgot what it was. (I'm getting too old for this, guys.) It helps us differentiate Westport from other towns. We are only limited by our imagination and by the availability of buses and by funding. We could really make this into a wonderful, wonderful service. To go back to Jim Foster's comment, to create a new model with a blank piece of paper, again, that's one possibility but you don't want to tear this one down and hope that Phoenix arises from the ashes that's better. This, I think, is a building block for the services that can be there in the future if we want them to be. I think it's important to preserve it. Opportunities: We've got almost 20 percent of our pre-pandemic riders back with us whereas only eight percent of Metro North riders are back with them. We are doing phenomenally well. As commuting ramps up, I think our percentage will continue to increase. The long interruption in commuting during the pandemic, if we are ever going to get out of being a car culture, this is the opportunity to

do it. You should have received some of these emails, one on Friday; Optonline, you might not have gotten it because they have a very rigorous spam filter. We're working on that. If you don't get them, let me know. We'll figure out some other way to get them to you. We have a robust marketing campaign planned. We'll be sending these out every two weeks. We have new posters at the train station. We're working on billboards. We are working on promotions that I hope to announce soon, something along the lines of order six rides in a two or three week period and be entered into a drawing of a \$100 gift certificate in one of five restaurants. Promote the use of the restaurants. So, I think we have grounds for optimism that we can get the ridership up. It will be a useful service to not only commuters but other segments of Westport. And that is the ultimate goal, to integrate the Wheels2U and the door-to-door services into the town's overall strategy for traffic, parking, bicycles and pedestrians to meet the town's transportation goals and needs. It's not a stand-alone thing. We need to look at this holistically and I think we should. Jim's comment that this is a full-time job, I fully concur. I've done nothing else for the past month. If anybody wants to pay me, I'll be happy to take the money. Budget background: Based on the new Wheels2U service, we did the budget back in December. We started with three and a half to four months experience. We now have almost seven months. The pandemic makes forecasting difficult. As I said, ridership has been going up and that's good. Cost inflation is offset by reduced fuel costs. Our State funding formula remains unchanged. The blue portion of the pie [shown] is Connecticut assistance. The red is what Westport pays and the green is fares. This is for both the Wheels2U shuttle and the door-to-door service. The total town funding for the entire Transit District including the door-to-door service for the elderly and disabled is .16 percent of the town budget. It is a miniscule item. By service and source, again, the blue portion is the Connecticut contribution to Wheels2U; orange is the Westport Wheels2U; Wheels2U fares; Connecticut support for the door- to-door; this is the fares for the door-to-door. The Connecticut contribution to the Wheels2U is maybe a quarter of the higher pie. If we just look at the Wheels2U budget, Connecticut, fares and Westport, Connecticut and fares make up about 70 percent of the total cost. The amount that I want restored is .07 percent of the town and education budget. And that's it! Thank you. Did I meet your eight minute goal, Jeff?

Mr. Wieser:

Wonderful. Thank you. And thank you for the passion that you have shown in the last month and number of months. With no public comments at this time, we turn to the RTM for comments on this amended motion for restoration of the \$157,500 to the Westport Transit District Budget.

Members of the RTM

Rick Jaffe, district 1:

I'd like to point out that the Board of Finance, in cutting the Transit District, is doing the job that we elected them to do. Their job has a focus. They look strictly at what benefits the town in terms of costs and benefits. For that, we thank them. Personally, I would pay them much more than the zero dollars that we pay them for their fine effort. The RTM is not constrained as the Board of Finance is in this matter. We can consider the not currently measurable benefits that we heard from Mr. Gold tonight. So, if we can afford it, which I believe we can, we can authorize this additional spending while taking the

Board of Finance up on their very fine suggestion to get everybody together to talk about it. We can authorize the spending on these additional funds and be the kind of town we want to be.

Karen Kramer, district 5:

I don't know why we keep coming back to this. We need that bus. We're trying to make the town more vibrant. We're trying to bring in a lot more families, get people to the library. Of course, we should restore it and probably shouldn't try to cut it again for a while. That's just my opinion.

Ms. Batteau:

Of course, I'm going to vote to restore this. I think Mr. Jaffe's point is a really good one and all Mr. Gold's points are really good ones; however, I represent district 8, the far north, which is farthest from the train stations and farthest from the town and farthest from the library and farthest from the beach and farthest and farthest and farthest. The people have to drive their cars and do something with their cars and we already have a lot of traffic out here. I do hope it will be on your agenda to find a way to extend the routes to the far reaches.

Kristan Hamlin, district 4:

I agree with Mr. Jaffe that it's hard to blame the Board of Finance for what they did. They have very limited jurisdiction. They don't have the power to remake a budget so that they can include things to make it meaningful. I understand the point of view that now we're up to \$80/ride and before it was \$40/ride so I want to explain why I support restoring the budget. The reason I support restoring the budget is because it is up to \$80/ride because of COVID so this is an off year so it's really kind of hard to measure in this year and I also think that the biggest problem here is the Selectman's Office has been leading from behind for the last eight years on this issue. It hasn't really done anything to think about transit in a reformative way, in a way that could possibly include after school rides or other things. I know that Peter really wants to have the opportunity to do that. By November, we will have a new First Selectman, COVID-19 will hopefully be abated, so the reason I'm going to vote to give it another year is because I'm hopeful that in the coming year we might have a First Selectman who will work with Peter and work with the Transit Director to try to create a transit program that is meaningful, that is creative, that considers ways of expanding the use of these buses in a way that will reduce the per ride cost. I think it would be a problem to end the Transit budget this year. Then there are a lot of startup costs associated with starting it after there is a new First Selectman. So, I'm really hopeful for a First Selectman in November who will do something more meaningful with Transit than the present administration has done. So, I'm going to vote to restore.

Christine Meiers Schatz, district 2:

This is an issue that, every time it comes up, leaves me scratching my head because I generally agree on this topic with the Board of Finance. Not too many of my RTM colleagues seem to feel that way. I am going to vote in favor of restoration tonight with some reservations for two reasons. The first is the argument that I find most compelling for having this service is that it can help people who really need it and especially people

in lower income brackets that don't have the ability to get to the train and get around in other ways. But this argument gives me some pause too though because the ridership has still gone down and a lot of those people in those categories have still been commuting to work. Also, there are a lot more people who fall into that category that are using the transit system so, at some point, we have to figure out what means of transportation are these people using and lets subsidize that instead of this if people keep voting with their feet to use other means of transportation. Also, the other thing that bothers me about this a little bit is the section in our Town Plan of Conservation that it's good for us to have the transit system that we currently have just for people who like to know it's there? That bothers me a lot because we're getting money from the State for this, not a lot of people are using it and there are possibly people in need in other towns that could be benefitting from this service and actually using it. So, I do think we need to be careful when it comes to notions like using State funds to have something just because people like to know that it's there. The other reason that I'm going to vote in favor of restoration is that I'm excited about the new possibilities for the way that service can be expanded. As I told Peter, I'm happy to help brainstorm with any of that and I'm looking forward to seeing what can be done with that.

Mr. Izzo:

I'm going to vote for restoration because I know one thing that will happen here. I'm hearing all the politics that a lot of you are bringing in. Thank you Sal and everybody else for your politics. Great. But I'm going to vote for this for one reason. Peter Gold is someone who is going to give this 100 percent. Jim Foster is saying let's get everyone in the room. I think we can make this happen if, even us as the RTM, start getting involved. All of us, we don't get involved with this. We kind of push it away each year. Board of Finance does their job but we have to make a commitment to help Peter and help get something that's going to work because I want to make sure that Sal gets a ride down to the beach to check out the new bathrooms and improvements that have been made.

Ms. Gertzoff:

I want to say a few things because, as Peter knows, I'm a convert. I was not for the previous shuttle thing...too many empty buses. I know some routes were good but too many were not. But I saw the Wheels2U, I've been reading the Norwalk paper for more years than I will say, and when I saw how it was working in Norwalk, I know I mentioned it to Peter and other people. I said, 'Hey, let's give this a go.' And they did. They had the experimental program for Greens Farms. It really makes sense. Yes, we need to increase ridership but I read every single one of those letters and the sentiment was really clear. I support the comments to get together and make something that is going to last. It does not make sense to go through this every single year. It gets cut and then we uncut it. There has to be a better way to do this. Peter, if I can do anything to help this, as such a long term resident, I'd be happy to do that. We're moving in the right direction and I'm voting to support restoration.

Ms. Rea:

I am in support of this restoration. I have been, all these years, and I really feel strongly, like everybody else that we need to do something about it and figure it out and make it

work. As a real estate agent, this year, because of the COVID, it was really not an issue but all the other years, when you go to sell a home and they find out that they have a two-year wait to park at the train station, the only way that I can salvage that sale is by saying 'Oh, we've got the minibus that can take you there and take you home.' They say 'That's wonderful' because usually when they come from New York City, they have one car. In the morning, the mother has to pick up the kids, put them in the car and drive them. So, I think, even for the sale of our homes, it's important to have it plus it's very important to have it for the handicapped, for everybody who needs it, for the elderly. And I'm really tired every year having to restore it. I can understand why the Board of Finance is doing it; although, I don't because they know we are going to restore it. So, it's time to do something about it. Peter, if you need help there are many of us ready to help you out.

Mr. Mall:

When I started looking at these figures in the budget, one of the things that struck me was transportation costs. For our schools, we have \$6,523,000 for school busing. We pay another \$370,000 for private school busing. Then, we add to that Transit District request for \$342,000. That is a total of \$7,235,000 of transportation costs for the town of Westport. I'm feeling like Jim Foster. I think we need to start over with a clean slate and rethink how we do quite a few things in the transportation area. For example, it's \$4/day to take the shuttle versus \$5/day parking. There really isn't much of an incentive to take the shuttle. So, let's increase the single day parking 60 percent to eight dollars. Make it twice as much as what it costs to ride the bus. In that way, 200 spaces, with that extra three dollars, \$600/day times five days is \$3,000/week times 50 weeks is \$150,000. There is your budget cut. So, we have to put our heads together. We have to do things differently. So, I am going to vote no to restoration so we start doing something and addressing this. Otherwise, we kick the can down the street again to next year. We've done this about four or five times in the 10 years I've been on the RTM saying the RTM is going to restore. I think we need to take a stand and say the Board of Finance has made the cut, we have to come up with alternatives. Let's do something about it. So, I intend to vote no to the restoration. No offense to Peter Gold who I think is doing a fantastic job with the Transit District. So thank you, Peter, for your hard work. I truly admire what you're doing.

Mr. Mandell:

This is not the year to cut the budget. You don't kick an organization or a person when they're down. We have no real basis for making a decision here because of COVID. We just don't. We need to wait to see how things pan out, how things change. That being said, the Governor, two weeks ago said that the paradigm has completely changed in terms of commutation. He believes it's never going to come back to where it was prior to the pandemic. So, that means our transit system, based on that, may not work but we shouldn't cut it now; in a year or two years, we should look at it then because it may come back. I'm in favor of restoring just so we see what happens because it's a system that people like and it's useful. I read the emails and there were three different areas that came up. One, it helps people in need because it helps people get to the train where they otherwise couldn't. It helps them move around when they needed to move around. That was one of the emails. The second email said it was environmentally

friendly, which it is. If we can get a few more people on the bus instead of putting them in cars and taking them to the train, we're saving traffic; we're saving fuel; we're saving air for us to breathe because it won't be as polluted. Those are the strong reasons why we should move forward. There was a third reason which concerned me. It came from an email from the Coalition of Westport. It said we should be doing this for some of those other reasons but also we need to start looking at the alternative to large lot single home development. What does that really mean? It's not about affordability because densification is what they are talking about, not necessarily creating affordable housing. Westport has done a good job of creating affordable housing. We've got a moratorium, just recently approved Ancillary Dwelling Units (ADU's), diversity of housing which could create some affordable units for people to live in. But what is this concept about an alternative to large lot single family developments? It is the code that people are using at the State level for all the bills that we've seen; that I've been talking about and other people have been talking about, the Chairman of our P&Z, our First Selectman, going and speaking at State hearings about creating density and not really being our choice. So, I think it's something we should be looking at. I'm not condemning them for their letter but I'm saying it was used in their letter and it was used in another letter as well from another member from that organization talking about multi-family housing, not necessarily affordable but multi-family. The question is where are we going as a town? What are we doing? We had one of the largest influxes of people in the State of Connecticut in this past year. Why? It was people who were fleeing density, finding solace in what we have here in a community that we find to be a small town. I'm not looking to densify our town. I'm not looking to make this place a small city. I think we're doing a great job with what we have. I think we're approving a budget today, that the people working for us are doing a phenomenal job and we need to watch what we're doing as a town. When we emerge from COVID, we need to take stock. We shouldn't be doing anything stupid or anything out of the ordinary until we know where we're going. Let this pass and let's see where we're going. Let's be very wary and very thankful for the community that we have.

Jack Klinge, district 7:

I was very happy when Peter asked me to second his motion to restore because I'm one of those people over the years, as many of you know, who think that this is a flawed business model, the Transit District. But now I believe that the time has come to make it better, make it work, make it efficient, make it effective. I'm willing to be another year's restoration that if we're sitting here next May, we'll have a better program with more proven results, hopefully post-COVID, and we'll look at it and say we've now got a model that works; let's just build it to be more and more sustainable. So, I'm going to vote to restore and hopefully we can see a much brighter future 12 months from now.

Jessica Bram, district 6:

I was very impressed by Jim Foster's illustration of when we were thinking of buying Longshore, which cost a lot of town funds. It was also looked at separately as to what would be the cost if we don't do that and the cost of all these additional school children because we'll have to build a new school. So, there can be indirect costs that very, very much affect the cost versus savings of this. I can see that in a very, very short narrow way, this is a very low benefit to high cost; however, looking at it in a larger way, we

would need this step up to a town-wide transit system and what a town-wide transit system would do is get people into our downtown. Years ago, when I lived in Chappaqua New York, a friend of mine wanted to shop and she said 'Let's go to Westport Connecticut. They have different stores. We can have lunch there.' The alternative was the malls in White Plains. So, we drove pretty far into Westport Connecticut and they had this nice little downtown. Well, look at downtown right now. I would say that every third store is empty. We have vacancies. It's not such a cute little downtown any more. For now, I think we have to do whatever we can to support it. If we were to get rid of this right now, let it die, then there would be no opportunity to have it step up to the next level which is to put in place a town-wide transportation service.

Mr. Braunstein:

I just want to follow up on something that Jack said. I don't think we should be looking at this in terms as how it functions as a business model because any way you look at it, it is, in fact, a failed business model. In all likelihood, we will never be able to equate the cost of providing this service to the revenues it will generate. What I think we really need to do though is to understand that we're providing this as a public service and the value of that public service, quite frankly, far exceeds the cost that the town incurs to provide it. There are a laundry list of reasons which we've heard from the many different people who have been responsive to us through email on this issue. Some of those responses have to do with the environment. Some of those responses have to do with the economic requirement of public transportation. By the way, I understand why the Board of Finance looks at this and inevitably comes to the conclusion that they want to cut the funding. I also understand why the RTM sort of intuitively understands that this is a service that adds value across multiple constituencies and we want to furnish this regardless of the cost at this point. So, I'm going to vote to restore the funding but I sincerely hope that Peter and Jim Foster and the Board of Finance can, in fact, get together because we've heard in many different ways this evening that a more sensible plan that may improve the efficiency vis a vis cost versus revenues and potentially improve the level of service that we can furnish to people, that is something that we should all spend time on and try and understand is there a better way. But I don't think we should be limiting the service first. I think Peter's right. We can't hope for the Phoenix to rise from the ashes. We have to make sure that those people that are relying on this can continue to while we figure out a better way to provide it.

Lauren Karpf, district 7:

Actually, Seth, you said a lot of the comments I was going to make. But I also had to be a convert with this. After speaking to Peter and seeing his really thorough, good presentations, to me, this became very clear. I think that the issue is looking at it as cost per ride. It's like when we look at the education budget and it is cost/pupil. Every year I say you can't look at it as cost per pupil. That's not the appropriate way to look at it. It's the same here. So, while the cost divided by rides, cost divided by day, however you want to look at it, it's a town service. It's a benefit for people. It's something we need right now, this year. So, I agree and Seth, you said it very well right before me.

Mr. Liccione:

I have to say I do agree with Mr. Foster. Can I ask a question, Jeff?

Mr. Wieser: Yes. Please.

Mr. Liccione:

This is to Mr. Foster or Mr. Marpe. To have the town take over public transit, would you guys agree it needs to be done?

Mr. Wieser:

Not that question. I think that's a bigger thing than we have to deal with tonight on the budget.

Mr. Liccione: Okay. I am going to vote for restoration though.

Ms. Meiers Schatz:

I just wanted to put a little bit of a sense of urgency on these discussions across the funding bodies and with the town administration. I don't have a crystal ball but I do think that eventually we are going to be in a situation where there are self-driving electric cars that are doing the same type of drop off service that this large bus is doing right now and that will be much more economically efficient. The days of this particular system are probably limited so if we're going to make something out of this, hopefully, we can start doing that in the near future instead of having this same forward looking discussion year after year after year and not making the most that we could with the money that we put into it.

Mr. Lowenstein:

I hope I'm not repeating a point that was made earlier. There have been a lot of points made. But at the Board of Finance meeting that was held to cut the budget of the Transit District, Mr. Gold indicated that he would not spend money unless he needed to. So, the response from the Board was 'If you need more money, just come back to us and we'll give it to you.' The Board of Finance doesn't turn on a dime nor does the RTM. I think we have the assurances from Peter Gold that if he doesn't have to spend the money, he won't. He wants to be prepared so when the COVID crisis ends he is ready to move rather than having to come back to the Board of Finance and the RTM and maybe other offices, as well, to request more money for more buses so he can serve the public. I think that's a very important point. When this discussion started, I was saying the RTM should listen to the people and not to the Board of Finance. What I have found very interesting in the conversation we've had tonight that more and more RTM members are saying 'Listen to the Board of Finance. Listen to what Jim Foster said.' What he said was not complete in the sense that we still need the budget for the current Transit District. The concept of going forward is only good and I heartily endorse it.

Mr. Gold:

In response to some of the points that were made:

- Wendy, we do cover part of district 8. The problem with covering the far northern stretches is that we have to get the commuters to the trains on time. If they miss the train, we don't want them to have to wait for the next one. The run times from

the far northern borders are so long that it's hard to do that without more buses. If we had more buses, we could certainly do that. It's hard.

- To Kristan Hamlin's point about \$80 is due to COVID, she's absolutely right. As commuting picks up and we find other pockets of need that we can serve, the cost/ride will go down. So, we are working very hard to do that.
- To Lou's point that we need to do something different, Wheels2U is something different. We changed from the old fixed route system to the Wheels2U which is a shared group ride, very much like Uber. It's basically state of the art at this point.
- To Christine Meiers Schatz, if something else comes along like electric self-driving vehicles that are even better, sure. We'll adopt electric self-driving vehicles. We're not wedded to any one particular thing. If anyone has a better idea, we'll be more than happy to incorporate it.

As far as changing the structure of the way this operates, whether the town takes it over or not, again, that's fine. If that's a better way to do it, that's fine but so far the town has shown no inclination to do that. It would have been easy enough to put it in the budget but it wasn't even though we've been talking about it for years and years and years. So, until that better structure is determined and funded, because if we are going to hire somebody from the town, it's going to take more money than the money I've requested to pay for that person, we're doing the best we can. To that point, we're entitled to have two Transit Directors so if anybody would like to step up and volunteer, I'm more than happy to have the help.

I also want to thank all you people for the nice things you've said about me. Those are my comments.

Mr. Wieser:

If there are no further comments on the restoration request, we turn to the resolution, which is increased to include the proposed restoration of \$157,500:

By roll call vote, the motion passes 32-1. Mr. Mall opposed. Mr. Gold recused himself.

Gary Conrad, Finance Director:

Westport Transit District will now be \$342,000/year. The total for the four agencies is \$6,127,959.

Mr. Lowenstein:

I want to personally thank Peter Gold for what he did. It was a remarkable effort on his part to get 112 people, most of whom offering unique differing and not copycat comments on the budget. He is the hardest working unpaid employee in the town of Westport right now. It is a shame that the town has not stepped up to the fact that it should be paying somebody to do the administrative work that he is now doing. Peter did not take this job with enthusiasm. He did it reluctantly, knowing that someone had to do it. I'm very glad he did and I think the entire RTM owes him a great vote of thanks for what he did.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Mr. Lowenstein. Thank you Mr. Gold.

A vote on the four agencies budgets totaling \$6,127,959 recognizing Mr. Mandell recused himself from the Earthplace budget, Mr. Gold Recused himself from the Westport Transit District budget and Mr. Mall abstains from the Earthplace budget.

By show of hands, the budgets are approved unanimously.

We have now reviewed the Town Budget exclusive of the Board of Education budget. What is the total, Mr. Conrad?

Mr. Conrad:

The total Town General Fund Budget including the outside agencies equals \$83,231,951.

The secretary read item #2 of the call - To adopt a budget for the Town Railroad Parking Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

Mr. Wieser:

We will not have a formal presentation but if there are any questions we can ask them of Deputy Chief Arciola.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the Town Railroad Parking Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of \$1,886,101 is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

Members of the RTM - no comments

Mr. Wieser:

Deputy Chief, thank you very much. That was a remarkable presentation. Thank you for being with us for three hours!

By show of hands, the budget of \$1,886,101 for Railroad Parking is approved unanimously.

The secretary read item #3 of the call - To adopt a budget for the Town Sewer Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

Members of the Westport electorate – No comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the Town Sewer Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of \$5,091,859 is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

Members of the RTM – no comments

By show of hands, the budget of \$5,091,809 for the Town Sewer Fund is unanimously approved, 34-0.

The secretary read item #4 of the call - To adopt a budget for the Wakeman Town Farm Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the Wakeman Town Farm Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of \$391,395 is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

RTM Comments

Mr. Mall:

I would just like to take a moment to recognize former RTM member Liz Milwe and current RTM member Cathy Talmadge for the wonderful work that they do at Wakeman Town Farm. It is one of the best offerings our town has along with the Senior Center. I just can't say enough good things about Wakeman Town Farm and all the wonderful work that those two have done there. So, thank you Cathy and Liz.

Mr. Wieser: Thank you Mr. Mall for that very appropriate acknowledgement.

By show of hands, the budget of \$391,395 for the Wakeman Town Farm is approved unanimously 33-0. Ms. Talmadge recused herself.

The secretary read item # 5 of the call - To require that property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, shall be due and payable in four quarterly installments, and to designate the dates of the first days of July, October, January, and April as the dates upon which such installments shall be due and payable, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs, and that all taxes in an amount of \$100 or less shall be due and payable in a single installment on the first day of July, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs.

Members of the Westport electorate – No comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 shall be due and payable in four quarterly installments and the dates upon which such quarterly installments are to be due and payable shall be the first days of July, October, January and April, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs ; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That all taxes in an amount of \$100.00 or less shall be due and payable in a single installment on the first day of July, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs.

Mr. Wieser: It has been moved and seconded.

RTM Comments

Mr. Gold:

I don't know if Gary can answer this. Is the \$100 a statutory maximum or could we raise it if we want?

Mr. Conrad:

I'd have to defer to Eileen Flug. I haven't read that statute lately. I don't know if there's any flexibility in it.

Mr. Gold: It's got to cost us to collect small payments. I just wondered.

Mr. Wieser:

That's a good point. We could follow up with that Gary, maybe tomorrow but, if not, before the next Finance Committee meeting.

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously 34-0.

The secretary read item #6 of the call - To require that the motor vehicle tax shall be due and payable in a single installment.

Members of the Westport electorate – No comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the motor vehicle tax shall be due and payable in a single installment, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs.

Members of the RTM – no comments

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously 34-0.

The secretary read item #7 of the call - To approve an appropriation of \$101,000.00 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Sewer Fund Account for the engineering design for sanitary sewer extensions to Evergreen Avenue, Evergreen Parkway, Tamarac Road, Lone Pine Lane, Gorham Avenue, Compo Road North & Brookside Drive.

Presentation

Pete Ratkiewich, Director of Public Works:

The appropriation is for the Sewer Fund Account not the Municipal Improvement Fund.

This is an appropriation for the design of sewer contract #75. That goes in the sewer shed that covers Evergreen Avenue, Evergreen Parkway, Tamarac Road, Lone Pine Lane, Gorham Avenue, Compo Road North and Brookside Drive. This is a pretty big contract, 124 properties. It will cover approximately 9,000 linear feet of gravity sewer line. We out for bid on the engineering on this with a favorable bid from A.I. Engineers. I'm going to share my screen to show you the appropriation request real quick. The engineering fee is \$46,500. Because we have 9,000 linear feet of sewer, we are going to be doing a lot of borings. That is estimated at \$35,000; easement appraisals another \$10,000; a 10 percent contingency of \$9,150. That brings us up to \$100,650 rounded up to \$101,000. This will be wrapped into the benefit assessment for the project once we get to a preliminary benefit assessment hearing. The benefit assessment will include both design and construction and construction administration so, basically, the total cost of the project. As I said, it's a fairly large area and there is, I believe, 75 percent participation on the petitioners for this. With that, I'll take any questions.

Committee reports

Public Works Committee, Jay Keenan, district 2:

The Public Works Committee met on April 14 to review the petition of the residents of the streets that Pete mentioned. The participation of the properties is approximately 75 percent. The system will be approximately 9,000 linear feet of conventional gravity sewer system that will discharge into the Imperial Avenue Pump Station #1. Upon completion of the design, in accordance with our sewer policy which was adopted a few years back, the residents will be presented with an "Opinion of Probable Cost" prior to proceeding. The total cost will be benefit assessed to the 124 properties over a 19 year period. The committee discussed the concept of benefit assessment. As with all sewer discussions, we talked about the blue line and Matt did bring up potential legislation from Hartford which may have an effect on our sewer system long term. The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval to the full RTM.

Finance Committee, Ms. Meiers Schatz:

I am presenting the Finance Committee report which has really been covered in whole by Mr. Ratkiewich and Mr. Keenan who presented the salient points. That committee voted unanimously that the RTM approve the appropriation request.

Members of the Westport electorate – No comments

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, the sum of \$101,000 along with bond and note authorization to the ~~Municipal Improvement Fund~~ Sewer Fund Account for the engineering design for sanitary sewer extensions to Evergreen Avenue, Evergreen Parkway, Tamarac Road, Lone Pine Lane, Gorham Avenue, Compo Road North and Brookside Drive is hereby appropriated.

Mr. Wieser:

I am pretty sure that this is an okay way to do this. We are doing this from the Sewer Fund not the Municipal Improvement Fund. If we did have to vote to approve the correction, I'll have Eileen Flug slap my hands and hopefully we'll be okay.

Members of the RTM – no comments

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously 34-0.

The secretary read item #8 of the call - To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, to approve an appropriation of \$600,000.00 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for the replacement of underground fuel tanks, fuel system, and heating oil tanks at the Sherwood Island Connector Parsell Center.

Presentation

Mr. Ratkiewich:

This is an estimate of probable construction costs for the fueling station that you all approved design funds for last fall. That has been fully designed. This is from the engineering firm that we use, Salamone Associates. As you can see, there is quite a bit of work here. We have three underground fuel tanks and one underground heating oil tank, all located at 300 Sherwood Island Connector. This is to fuel our diesel trucks and equipment and to keep the building heated. Those tanks are a little bit over 25 years old so they are beyond the point that the DEEP wants us to keep them in the ground and instead of putting new tanks back in the ground, what we're going to do is make these all elevated above ground. That reduces our liability. The tanks that are above ground are double lined and if, for some reason, they spring a leak, we would know it right away. Whereas, when the tanks are underground, we can't do that. We have to have all sorts of monitoring systems. We have a lot more liability and, if they do leak, we have a major cleanup. So, the proposal is to replace all of those tanks, bring them in above ground and reconstruct the fueling station which is the same age, 25 or 26 years old and is in great need of repair. The total cost is about \$570,000. We added some construction administration costs as well that will be built into this appropriation. So, total construction administration cost is \$27,500 and a 10 percent contingency of \$2,750 plus 10 percent contingency on the construction of \$51,650 all totals out to \$600,000, right on the money. We did go out to bid for this. The bid came in close to the \$600,000 with contingencies. I don't have that number in front of me. I believe \$470,000 was the bid. That's for the contractor. Then we have the administration and sometimes we find

things underground that we don't expect so I think the \$600,000 is a good number. It has enough contingency to take care of anything we encounter in this project.

Committee reports

Mr. Keenan:

This was the same meeting as the prior item. Public Works is requesting an appropriation of \$600,000 to replace the underground fuel system and the heating oil tanks at the Public Works Center. The existing tanks were scheduled to be replaced in accordance with DEEP regulations and installation of above-ground tanks will reduce the town's environmental liability. The project is in the five-year capital forecast. The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval to the full RTM.

Finance Committee, Stephen Shackelford, district 8:

The Finance Committee met on April 22 to consider this request for \$600,000 appropriation for the removal and replacement of the underground fuel system and heating oil tanks. As has been discussed, Mr. Ratkiewicz presented explaining that in November 2020, the RTM had approved design funds for this project. We went over the environmental benefits of removing the underground tanks as Mr. Ratkiewicz said earlier in this meeting. He told the Finance Committee, in response to questions, that there is a substantial contingency built into the appropriation request. Also, the bids on the project range from approximately \$500,000 to \$900,000 which confirmed the appropriateness of the \$600,000 request. In addition, Mr. Ratkiewicz was asked about the difference between the \$400,000 capital forecast and the \$600,000 request for appropriation. He explained that the forecast had been made based on the best available information several years ago. Material costs have recently increased quite a bit, in some cases, exponentially. The Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve the request.

Members of the Westport electorate – No comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, the sum of \$600,000 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for the replacement of underground fuel tanks, fuel system, and heating oil tanks at the Sherwood Island Connector Parsell Center is hereby appropriated.

Members of the RTM – no comments

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously 34-0.

Mr. Wieser:

Before we call our meeting to a close, I want to give our thanks to the First Selectman, all of the Department Heads, especially Pete for sticking with us and Sam for so much of it, all of the people on the Board of Finance, all of the committees who have worked so hard because you really have done a very thorough job. Again, I say this looks perfunctory but so much work has gone into getting us here tonight and it's all good

hard work with all of you. It's also worth noting we have saluted Peter Gold for his great service to the town. We have saluted Cathy Talmadge for her work at Wakeman Town Farm, for Liz Milwe, former RTM member, for her work at Wakeman Town Farm, for Matt at Earthplace for recusing himself and doing lots of good stuff. We all do good stuff for the town but it happens to be in the news, Jimmy Izzo's Facebook post of Sal out at Homes with Hope collecting food over the weekend to be donating food. So we all do good things and it's a great body to be a part of. I just want to end by saying Velma sounds in very good shape and is very cheerful. Send her good thoughts and good wishes. Send her a text or get in touch with her and give her support. I can tell you, I think she's probably a little bored and ready to do something because it's hard to keep a good woman down. Also, Amy Kaplan is out for the night down in North Carolina on family issues. Give her your good thoughts too. So, have a great night. We'll see you in less than 24 hours. Thank you for a lot of good hard work tonight.

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey M. Dunkerton
Town Clerk

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacquelyn Fuchs".

by Jacquelyn Fuchs

ATTENDANCE: May 3, 2021

DIST.	NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	NOTIFIED MODERATOR	LATE/ LEFT EARLY
1	Richard Jaffe	X			
	Matthew Mandell	X			
	Kristin M. Purcell	X			
	Chris Tait	X			
2	Harris Falk	X			
	Jay Keenan	X		X	Arr 7:50 p.m.
	Louis M. Mall	X			
	Christine Meiers Schatz	X			
3	Mark Friedman	X			
	Arline Gertzoff	X			
	Jimmy Izzo	X			
	Amy Kaplan		X	X	
4	Andrew J. Colabella	X			
	Kristan Hamlin	X			
	Noah Hammond	X			
	Jeff Wieser	X			
5	Peter Gold	X			
	Dick Lowenstein	X			
	Nicole Klein	X			
	Karen Kramer	X			
6	Candace Banks	X			
	Jessica Bram	X			
	Seth Braunstein	X			
	Cathy Talmadge	X			
7	Brandi Briggs	X			
	Lauren Karpf	X			
	Jack Klinge	X			
	Ellen Lautenberg	X			
8	Wendy Batteau	X			
	Lisa Newman	X			
	Carla Rea	X			
	Stephen Shackelford	X			
9	Velma Heller		X	X	
	Sal Liccione	X			
	Kristin Schneeman	X			
	Lauren Soloff	X			
Total		34	2		

Appendix I – Item #7

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, the sum of \$101,000 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for the engineering design for sanitary sewer extensions to Evergreen Avenue, Evergreen Parkway, Tamarac Road, Lone Pine Lane, Gorham Avenue, Compo Road North & Brookside Drive is hereby appropriated.

A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$101,000 FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ENGINEERING DESIGN OF AN EXTENSION OF THE PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, the Town of Westport, Connecticut (the “Town”) hereby appropriates the sum of One Hundred One Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$101,000) for costs associated with the engineering design of an extension of the public sanitary sewer system along Evergreen Avenue, Evergreen Parkway, Tamarac Road, Lone Pine Lane, Gorham Avenue, Compo Road North and Brookside Drive including related administrative, financing and other soft costs (the “Project”).

Section 1. As recommended by the Board of Finance and for the purpose of financing One Hundred One Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$101,000) of the foregoing appropriation, the Town shall borrow a sum not to exceed One Hundred One Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$101,000) and issue general obligation bonds for such indebtedness under its corporate name and seal and upon the full faith and credit of the Town in an amount not to exceed said sum for the purpose of financing the appropriation for the Project. As part of the final sewer construction costs, the Town expects to levy a benefit assessment for the Project costs upon the properties bounding the Project which are especially benefited thereby.

Section 2. The First Selectman, Selectmen and Finance Director are hereby appointed a committee (the “Committee”) with full power and authority to cause said bonds to be sold, issued and delivered; to determine their form, including provision for redemption prior to maturity; to determine the aggregate principal amount thereof within the amount hereby authorized and the denominations and maturities thereof; to fix the time of issue of each series thereof and the rate or rates of interest thereon as herein provided; to designate the bank or trust company to certify the issuance thereof and to act as transfer agent, paying agent and as registrar for the bonds, and to designate bond counsel. The Committee shall have all appropriate powers under the Connecticut General Statutes including Chapter 748 (Registered Public Obligations Act) to issue the bonds and, further, shall have full power and authority to do all that is required under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and other applicable laws and regulations of the United States and the state of Connecticut, to provide for issuance of the bonds in tax exempt form, including the execution of tax compliance and other agreements for the benefit of bondholders, and to meet all requirements which are or may become necessary in and subsequent to the issuance and delivery of the bonds in order that the interest on the bonds be and remain exempt from federal income taxes, including, without limitation, to covenant and agree to restriction on investment yield of bond proceeds, rebate of arbitrage earnings, expenditure of proceeds within required time limitations and the filing of information reports as and when required and to execute Continuing Disclosure Agreements for the benefit of holders of bonds and notes.

Section 3. The Bonds may be designated “Public Improvement Bonds” or “Sewer Bonds” series of the year of their issuance and may be issued in one or more series, and may be consolidated as part of the same issue with other bonds of the Town; shall be in

serial form maturing in not more than twenty (20) annual installments of principal, the first installment to mature not later than three (3) years from the date of issue and the last installment to mature not later than twenty (20) years therefrom, or as otherwise provided by statute. The bonds may be sold at not less than par and accrued interest at public sale upon invitation for bids to the responsible bidder submitting the bid resulting in the lowest true interest cost to the Town, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the Town from rejecting all bids submitted in response to any one invitation for bids and the right to so reject all bids is hereby reserved, and further provided that the Committee may sell the bonds, or notes, on a negotiated basis, as provided by statute. Interest on the bonds shall be payable semiannually or annually. The bonds shall be signed on behalf of the Town by the First Selectman and the Finance Director, and shall bear the seal of the Town. The signing, sealing and certification of said bonds may be by facsimile as provided by statute. The Finance Director shall maintain a record of bonds issued pursuant to this resolution and of the face amount thereof outstanding from time to time, and shall certify to the destruction of said bonds after they have been paid and cancelled, and such certification shall be kept on file with the Town Clerk.

Section 4. The Committee is further authorized to make temporary borrowings as permitted by the General Statutes and to issue a temporary note or notes of the Town in anticipation of the receipt of proceeds from the sale of the bonds to be issued pursuant to this resolution. Such notes shall be issued and renewed at such times and with such maturities, requirements and limitations as provided by statute. Notes evidencing such borrowings shall be signed by the First Selectman and the Finance Director, have the seal of the Town affixed, which signing and sealing may be by facsimile as provided by statute, be certified by and payable at a bank or trust company incorporated under the laws of this or any other state, or of the United States, be approved as to their legality by bond counsel, and may be consolidated with the issuance of other Town bond anticipation notes. The Committee shall determine the date, maturity, interest rates, form and manner of sale, including negotiated sale, and other details of said notes consistent with the provisions of this resolution and the General Statutes and shall have all powers and authority as set forth above in connection with the issuance of bonds and especially with respect to compliance with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and regulations thereunder in order to obtain and maintain issuance of the notes in tax exempt form.

Section 5. Upon the sale and issuance of the bonds authorized by this resolution, the proceeds thereof, including any premium received upon the sale thereof, accrued interest received at delivery and interest earned on the temporary investment of such proceeds, shall be applied forthwith to the payment of the principal and interest of all notes issued in anticipation thereof or shall be deposited in trust for such purposes with a bank or trust company, or shall be applied or rebated as may be required under the provision of law. The remainder of the proceeds, if any, after the payment of said notes and of the expense of issuing said notes and bonds shall be applied to further finance the appropriation enacted herein.

Section 6. In each fiscal year in which the principal or any installment of interest shall fall due upon any of the bonds or notes herein authorized there shall be included in the appropriation for such fiscal year a sum equivalent to the amount of such principal and interest so falling due, and to the extent that provision is not made for the payment thereof from other revenues, the amount thereof shall be included in the taxes assessed upon the Grand List for such fiscal year and shall not be subject to any limitations of expenditures or taxes that may be imposed by any other Town ordinance or resolution.

Section 7. Pursuant to Section 1.150-2 (as amended) of the federal income tax regulations the Town hereby expresses its official intent to reimburse expenditures paid from the General Fund, or any capital fund for the Project with the proceeds of the bonds or notes to be issued under the provisions hereof. The allocation of such reimbursement bond proceeds to an expenditure shall be made in accordance with the time limitations and other requirements of such regulations. The Finance Director is authorized to pay Project expenses in accordance herewith pending the issuance of the reimbursement bonds or notes.

Section 8. The Town of Westport, or other proper authority of the Town, is authorized to take all necessary action to apply to the State of Connecticut, and accept from the State or other parties, grants, gifts and contributions in aid of further financing the Project. Once the appropriation becomes effective, the First Selectman, or other appropriate official of the town, is hereby authorized to spend a sum not to exceed the aforesaid appropriation for the Project and is specifically authorized to make, execute and deliver any contracts or other documents necessary or convenient to complete the Project and the financing thereof.

Section 9. The Committee is hereby authorized to take all action necessary and proper for the sale, issuance and delivery of the bonds (and notes) in accordance with the provisions of the Town Charter, the Connecticut General Statutes, and the laws of the United States.

Appendix II – Item #8

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Director of Public Works, the sum of \$600,000 along with bond and note authorization to the Municipal Improvement Fund Account for the replacement of underground fuel tanks, fuel system, and heating oil tanks at the Sherwood Island Connector Parsell Center is hereby appropriated.

A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$600,000 FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REPLACEMENT OF UNDERGROUND FUEL TANKS, FUEL SYSTEM, AND HEATING OIL TANKS AT PARSELL PUBLIC WORKS CENTER AT 300 SHERWOOD ISLAND CONNECTOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, the Town of Westport, Connecticut (the “Town”) hereby appropriates the sum of Six Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$600,000) for costs of the replacement of the underground fuel tanks, fuel system, and heating oil tanks at the Parsell Public Works Center at 300 Sherwood Island Connector including site preparation, tank removal and replacement, mechanical, structural and architectural work, and related consultant, administrative financing and other soft costs (the “Project”).

Section 1. As recommended by the Board of Finance and for the purpose of financing Six Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$600,000) of the foregoing appropriation, the Town shall borrow a sum not to exceed Six Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$600,000) and issue general obligation bonds for such indebtedness under its corporate name and seal and upon the full faith and credit of the Town in an amount not to exceed said sum for the purpose of financing the appropriation for the Project.

Section 2. The First Selectman, Selectmen and Finance Director are hereby appointed a committee (the “Committee”) with full power and authority to cause said bonds to be sold, issued and delivered; to determine their form, including provision for redemption prior to maturity; to determine the aggregate principal amount thereof within the amount hereby authorized and the denominations and maturities thereof; to fix the time of issue of each series thereof and the rate or rates of interest thereon as herein provided; to designate the bank or trust company to certify the issuance thereof and to act as transfer agent, paying agent and as registrar for the bonds, and to designate bond counsel. The Committee shall have all appropriate powers under the Connecticut General Statutes including Chapter 748 (Registered Public Obligations Act) to issue the bonds and, further, shall have full power and authority to do all that is required under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and other applicable laws and regulations of the United States and the state of Connecticut, to provide for issuance of the bonds in tax exempt form, including the execution of tax compliance and other agreements for the benefit of bondholders, and to meet all requirements which are or may become necessary in and subsequent to the issuance and delivery of the bonds in order that the interest on the bonds be and remain exempt from federal income taxes, including, without limitation, to covenant and agree to restriction on investment yield of bond proceeds, rebate of arbitrage earnings, expenditure of proceeds within required time limitations and the filing of information reports as and when required and to execute Continuing Disclosure Agreements for the benefit of holders of bonds and notes.

Section 3. The Bonds may be designated “Public Improvement Bonds,” series of the year of their issuance and may be issued in one or more series, and may be consolidated as part of the same issue with other bonds of the Town; shall be in serial form maturing in not more than twenty (20) annual installments of principal, the first installment to mature not later than three (3) years from the date of issue and the last installment to mature not later than twenty (20) years therefrom, or as otherwise provided by statute. The bonds may be sold at not less than par and accrued interest at public sale upon invitation for bids to the responsible bidder submitting the bid resulting in the lowest true interest cost to the

Town, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the Town from rejecting all bids submitted in response to any one invitation for bids and the right to so reject all bids is hereby reserved, and further provided that the Committee may sell the bonds, or notes, on a negotiated basis, as provided by statute. Interest on the bonds shall be payable semiannually or annually. The bonds shall be signed on behalf of the Town by the First Selectman and the Finance Director, and shall bear the seal of the Town. The signing, sealing and certification of said bonds may be by facsimile as provided by statute. The Finance Director shall maintain a record of bonds issued pursuant to this resolution and of the face amount thereof outstanding from time to time, and shall certify to the destruction of said bonds after they have been paid and cancelled, and such certification shall be kept on file with the Town Clerk.

Section 4. The Committee is further authorized to make temporary borrowings as permitted by the General Statutes and to issue a temporary note or notes of the Town in anticipation of the receipt of proceeds from the sale of the bonds to be issued pursuant to this resolution. Such notes shall be issued and renewed at such times and with such maturities, requirements and limitations as provided by statute. Notes evidencing such borrowings shall be signed by the First Selectman and the Finance Director, have the seal of the Town affixed, which signing and sealing may be by facsimile as provided by statute, be certified by and payable at a bank or trust company incorporated under the laws of this or any other state, or of the United States, be approved as to their legality by bond counsel, and may be consolidated with the issuance of other Town bond anticipation notes. The Committee shall determine the date, maturity, interest rates, form and manner of sale, including negotiated sale, and other details of said notes consistent with the provisions of this resolution and the General Statutes and shall have all powers and authority as set forth above in connection with the issuance of bonds and especially with respect to compliance with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and regulations thereunder in order to obtain and maintain issuance of the notes in tax exempt form.

Section 5. Upon the sale and issuance of the bonds authorized by this resolution, the proceeds thereof, including any premium received upon the sale thereof, accrued interest received at delivery and interest earned on the temporary investment of such proceeds, shall be applied forthwith to the payment of the principal and interest of all notes issued in anticipation thereof or shall be deposited in trust for such purposes with a bank or trust company, or shall be applied or rebated as may be required under the provision of law. The remainder of the proceeds, if any, after the payment of said notes and of the expense of issuing said notes and bonds shall be applied to further finance the appropriation enacted herein.

Section 6. In each fiscal year in which the principal or any installment of interest shall fall due upon any of the bonds or notes herein authorized there shall be included in the appropriation for such fiscal year a sum equivalent to the amount of such principal and interest so falling due, and to the extent that provision is not made for the payment thereof from other revenues, the amount thereof shall be included in the taxes assessed upon the Grand List for such fiscal year and shall not be subject to any limitations of expenditures or taxes that may be imposed by any other Town ordinance or resolution.

Section 7. Pursuant to Section 1.150-2 (as amended) of the federal income tax regulations the Town hereby expresses its official intent to reimburse expenditures paid from the General Fund, or any capital fund for the Project with the proceeds of the bonds or notes to be issued under the provisions hereof. The allocation of such reimbursement bond proceeds to an expenditure shall be made in accordance with the time limitations and other requirements of such regulations. The Finance Director is authorized to pay Project expenses in accordance herewith pending the issuance of the reimbursement bonds or notes.

Section 8. The Town of Westport, or other proper authority of the Town, is authorized to take all necessary action to apply to the State of Connecticut, and accept from the State or other parties, grants, gifts and contributions in aid of further financing the Project. Once the appropriation becomes effective, the First Selectman, or other appropriate official of the town, is hereby authorized to spend a sum not to exceed the aforesaid appropriation for the Project and is specifically authorized to make, execute and deliver any contracts or

other documents necessary or convenient to complete the Project and the financing thereof.

Section 9. The Committee is hereby authorized to take all action necessary and proper for the sale, issuance and delivery of the bonds (and notes) in accordance with the provisions of the Town Charter, the Connecticut General Statutes, and the laws of the United States.