

**RTM Meeting
Tuesday, May 4, 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:

Good evening. This Representative Town Meeting is now called to order. My name is Jeff Wieser and I am the RTM Deputy Moderator. I am filling in for Moderator Velma Heller, our Moderator, who, as I explained last night, suffered a fall about a week ago and is recovering from a broken leg so she will not be with us this month. For those of you who did not hear it, I have spoken to her regularly, as have others. She is in really great spirits. She sounds amazingly just like Velma...optimistic, positive, recovering well, undergoing physical therapy which will no doubt be a little bit painful. So, if you want to text her, she will be pleased to get your communication. She is very much involved and with us but not with us.

Procedures for this electronic meeting: 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 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. We are pleased to have our own Mark Friedman provide tonight's invocation.

Invocation, Mark Friedman, district 3:

Thanks Jeff. It may come as a surprise to some of you, but I am not the tallest member of my family of origin. That honor goes to my father, who is close to a foot taller than I. Unsurprisingly, my dad played basketball in college, and, while I don't believe that he made the Varsity team, he did play some pickup games with Varsity players, including an All-American who later joined the NY Knicks and, after retiring from the NBA, became a Senator from New Jersey. Perhaps because of the way their paths intersected in college, my father spoke periodically of his respect for Bill Bradley, a feeling that caused me to pay a little more attention when I recently came across his 1995 speech about civil society. Written more than 25 years ago, this speech addresses a timeless theme. "Civil society," Bradley said, "is the place where Americans make their home...it is the churches, schools, fraternities, community centers, labor unions, synagogues, sports leagues, PTAs, libraries and barber shops." Now, the RTM is government, and RTM representatives are elected officials. That said, I believe we sit at the intersection of civil society and government while serving as unpaid volunteers in Westport's Representative Town

Meeting; this is especially true, given the extensive volunteer work so many RTM'rs devote to other organizations around town. To me, Bradley seemed to describe the RTM when speaking of "citizens working together" where "words are tools to build bridges between people," and "there are more barn-raisers than there are barnburners." I am grateful for the opportunity to serve in Westport's RTM and to talk and, even more, to listen to constituents and to public servants. I look forward to tonight's dialogue, and out of respect for today's national holiday—and a tip of the cap to my kids and to Star Wars fans everywhere —May the Fourth be with us.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Mr. Friedman. Great words. We now have our zoom-era Mandell Montage Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks to Matt Mandell for creating this video.

Announcements

Mr. Wieser:

Assuming that the business of our meeting is completed tonight, our next RTM meeting will be on Tuesday, June 1.

RTM Announcements

Matt Mandell, district 1:

I might as well pick up where I left off last night. Everything is changing for us. We seem to have turned the corner and are on our way forward. Tonight we are looking at a great change in our town. Many, many people have come in. Why have they come in? Because we offer great services and tonight we are going to be voting on the education system and why? Because we have great schools. People are coming into our town. It looks like we're going to make it out of the pandemic and I want to thank all of the town and people from the Board of Education and the Education Department itself for helping us get there. A quick announcement: We are running one more set of concerts in the parking lot as part of the pandemic relief program that we kind of created for people. So, on May 14 and 15, we are going to have Dark Desert Eagles, a phenomenal national tribute Eagles band. You might as well come on out. We only have two tickets left for Saturday and 10 tickets left for Friday. We'd really like to sell out the concerts in the back of the library and say that every one of our shows has sold out during the pandemic so, please help us sell them out. Come on out and enjoy it. Meanwhile, Slice of Saugatuck will be back on Sept. 11 and the Dog Festival will be back on Oct. 10 as we try to find our normality again. So, thanks a lot guys and I look forward to tonight's discussion.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you Matt for that and for keeping some sense of normality in these crazy times.

Andrew Colabella, district 4:

For those of you who are not aware, five years ago on this day, we lost one of our own from the Westport Police Department. His name was Robert Meyer, Bobby Meyer. He was a Westport native and always dreamed of being a police officer. Unfortunately, we lost him to suicide and I think anyone who has been this town but has also served this

town cannot be forgotten. Even though it's been five years, I feel I would like to request a moment of silence, if possible, from the RTM.

Mr. Wieser: Thank you for that Andrew.

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

Mr. Wieser:

Additions or corrections to the most recently distributed minutes were requested at the previous meeting but if you see any corrections at a future time, you can always contact Dr. Heller, Town Clerk Jeff Dunkerton, Jackie Fuchs or me.

Getting on with the business of the agenda, I'd like to emphasize to viewers on our streaming services, as I did last night, that although it may seem like we are progressing rather quickly through a large budget, the RTM Education and Finance Committees, as well as other RTM committees, have been meeting about this year's budget and discussing it with the Administration and Boards of Education and Finance since January. So, tonight's meeting is the culmination of a lot of hard work. I'd like to thank the School Administration, the Board of Education, the Board of Finance and both RTM committees for all of their hard work in connection with this Education budget. Tonight, we will be addressing the remaining resolutions of agenda item #1, which will include the Board of Education budget and the Town budget as a whole. We then have one appropriation to discuss which is a joint project between the Board of Education and the Public works Department. Just a reminder that, 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. We will first hear tonight from the Board of Education, and then have committee reports from the Education and Finance Committees. Following these reports, we will turn to the public for comments. Members of the Westport electorate may address the Education Budget in an email to rtmcomments@westportct.gov. Comments received during the public comment period which include your full name and address will be read by Brandi Briggs, RTM Member from District 7. As usual, following any public comments, the RTM will address the issue at hand with our comments limited to 10 minutes. If there is a motion with respect to the Budget, I will open the floor back up to the public to comment on that specific item. A reminder about voting: The RTM may approve or decrease a budget line item by a simple majority vote. We do not have any budget items to restore tonight, and it is not in the RTM's ability to increase any budget item beyond the amount of the request to the Board of Finance. 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 so that we know where we are when we get to the end. Finally, I would like to remind everyone of the conflict of interest provision as stated in last night's meeting, but I am not aware of anyone who is planning to recuse themselves from any of the votes tonight.

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

Candice Savin, Chair, Board of Education:

I just want to thank you all in advance for considering our budget request. Also, I want to take a moment to express gratitude and appreciation for our administration, our teachers, our paraprofessionals, our nurses, our custodians, all of our support staff, our secretaries, who really delivered all year in an extraordinary way for our students here in Westport. I just want to say while reinventing schools, everyone managed to work really hard on the budget at the same time. I just wanted to express that appreciation and I will turn it over to Superintendent Scarice and his team to make the budget presentation but of course I'll be here if any Board questions come up.

Tom Scarice, Superintendent of Schools:

Thank you Candace. This is my first presentation to the Westport RTM on behalf of the Board of Education of our budget for fiscal year '21/22. If I can take just a moment, I want to thank Mr. Friedman for his opening comments. I've had the opportunity to pivot my attention toward the horizon beyond the pandemic and start thinking about what schools will look like when we get some more normalcy back but also look long-term for strategic planning. To Mr. Friedman's point, one thing I've noticed in my homework over the past month or two is I and my team and we, as a school system, have the opportunity to stand on some very strong shoulders. There has been long success of our schools over the years, widely recognized in the region, the State and nationally. It's a destination district and I do believe we will see families gravitate toward Westport for a lot of reasons. The schools are proud of being one of those focal points. This year, in particular, they don't teach you this in Superintendent school. There is absolutely no preparation for a pandemic. There's no playbook. We can't look back and say 'The pandemic of 2010, here's what we did.' I am very fortunate to be surrounded by a team of creators, those who are very ingenious, very committed to the work of serving students, the Board of Education that supports, an incredible parent community that supports our schools and parents that make sure their kids come ready to learn. So, it really does take a village but reinventing your profession on the fly when you cannot meet in person in the middle of a pandemic, I don't know how many more obstacles could have been placed in front of our teachers. And in the spirit of National Education Week, which is this week, it is an incredible feat that they've accomplished. It's been a very successful year. We were very conservative the first half of the year. We had no track record with the pandemic and then by mid-year, we were able to look at experience in Westport locally and also some real good tail winds with things going in the right direction with vaccines and so forth and we opened up our schools for all kids at the kindergarten through eighth grade level in late January/early February. We stayed open there and opened up Staples High School in March. And we have stayed open there. We have managed the pandemic with some great support from the local Health District. We've had some incredible expertise from our Director of Health Services and also our medical advisor who has also provided support and the Connecticut Department of Public Health. It was to minimize any spread in our

school and instill confidence in our staff that we could welcome our kids in and little by little school has gotten more and more normal. Today was an interesting watershed milestone because we opened up recess. We've had kids at recess but now we're letting them mix among classes at recess. We're starting to reconfigure classroom space and furniture and kids are getting back to groups, still with mitigating measures and still being cautious but, incrementally, we're getting to a place of normalcy. It's been a great year. I say all that because this doesn't happen without collaboration across the town and the support of the RTM and the other town governing bodies. With that, I would like to present the Board of Education proposed recommended budget for the year '21/22. Elio, do you want to post the slide show, please.

We have some identified objectives for the budget here. I think that, in all, if I could summarize it, this year was a year that we were maximizing our resources, our personnel. We were reassured by the town that if there were COVID emergencies that we would be covered financially. We capitalized on a good deal of State and Federal Grants for this year and also going into next year. But the success of this year is really based on the people. We are a human services profession. Eighty percent of our budget is allocated to salaries and benefits. In our case, in Westport, preserving that reputation that we have is critical. We know the role that we play in serving kids but also as a treasure for our community. We also have to look at security and safety. Over the past eight to 10 years, security and safety have largely been around violent acts and around school intrusions. We're really trying to fortify schools. That's been the case, sadly, for some time now in public schools. Safety took on a whole different meaning this year in protecting safety the health of our staff and our kids and our families with the pandemic. We have to follow State and Federal mandates. There are many of those. Many are, unfortunately, unfunded but we do have to follow those and a number of those over the years have really done wonders for helping kids, especially at-risk kids. Some of the mandates have done wonders for our at-risk learners, in particular, but we have tons of mandates that we have to follow and those do come with a cost. The RTM may be very familiar with the Board of Education's Master Plan Facility Study. It's a maintenance program. It was presented a year or two ago to the community and we started to implement that to take care of our physical plant, our campuses. Currently, maintaining our current services, that's what we're looking to do is to protect this year what we currently have. Our enrollment is going in a very interesting direction. We expected to see a greater decline. There is a decline but it is modest. But I suspect, based on our projections, we're going to see a flattening of that, potentially an increase; although, I know the housing market has a lot to do with that as well. But we certainly have leveled off sooner than we thought. We're keeping an eye on that and we'll continue to update that enrollment demographic information on a regular basis. I think the theme for us right now, I used the metaphor in a presentation, I think it was the RTM Education Committee, that right before you leap, you descend very slowly, you honor the law of physics and then you catapult yourself forward. That pause at the bottom before the leap is kind of where the school system is prior to our next level of work. I think it's a very natural place to be, given that it has been just over a year now in responding to the pandemic, but I do see on the very, very near horizon an appetite to re-envision the work with kids and really insure that we are keeping our A Game forward

so we are preparing every single child for the world that they will enter when they leave our schools.

I'm going to give a brief overview of our financials and I will hand it over to Mr. Longo, our Chief Financial Officer, to take you through the details here. I came with the budget proposal to the Board with an increase of just over \$6 million, just over a \$128 million total, which is about a 4.98 percent increase, a couple of interesting numbers that we will go into greater depth for. About one percent of the increase is strictly related to the impact of students moving into the community as a result of the pandemic. We added about seven teachers as a result of the increase in enrollment. That's not seven classrooms, seven rooms of 20. What it is, is spread out across the system and certain classes hit what we call a tipping point and the class sizes need to be split. So, we hit a number and a class has to be split in two or across a grade level. That happened seven times, I believe six classrooms and we also had some special services we had to provide for. We also started a little bit in the hole because we had a loss of the cafeteria fund which we used to cover custodial services in the amount of \$200,000 and then we did do a draw down in the current fiscal year just shy of \$255,000 for technology equipment so we have to make up that drawdown of the carryover. The Current Services Budget, if you net out those items is 3.42 percent which is probably a little bit more in line with what is considered a reasonable budget increase in this time period.

Elio Longo, Chief Financial Officer:

The detail on the \$1.1 million, straight out of the gate on the first day of the fiscal year, we must fund in the FY '22. These are 16.8 positions in total in the current operating budget that were unfunded and automatically roll to FY '22. Regular teachers, 6.1 FTE, by extension is approximately \$408,000; in special areas, a 0.1 position for \$6,700; Special Education a 4.2 FTE at \$28,000; hearing and speech, .74 at \$63,000; paraprofessionals on the regular education side at 1.5 and Special Education services just shy of 8 FTE's, combined paraprofessionals, approximately \$290,000; related insurance benefits for the aforementioned positions is approximately \$300,000. I'll turn to John Bayers, the Director of Human Resources and General Administration. John, perhaps you could provide a little bit more detail on the Special Areas teachers.

John Bayers, Director of Human Resources and General Administration:

Just an overall, when we're looking at this particular chart, I do want to emphasize what Superintendent Scarice said which is that we did increase overall seven elementary classrooms from what we had budgeted for because of net move-ins over the summer. The increase was only a 6.1 FTE because we had some adjustments in the middle school and high school levels. But, nonetheless, it was a significant increase from what we had seen. When you go down, the most significant jump that you will see is the Special Education paraprofessionals. Mr. Rizzo, our Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services will speak to some of the increases we saw with enrollment that related to those numbers increasing overall.

Mr. Longo:

This next slide, the Board of Education's FY '22 proposed budget was presented to the Board of Finance at \$126.9 million or 4.11 percent increase over the current fiscal year operating budget. In comparison to the Superintendent's proposed budget of 4.98 percent, for a required reduction of approximately \$1,070,000. The breakdown of the current services budget would equate to approximately 4.31 percent. The unfunded positions, if we net out the \$1.5 million of unfunded, the loss of cafeteria fund, we arrive at a net proposed budget just over three percent, 3.04 percent. Detail on the Board of Education reductions to close the gap between the Superintendent's proposed budget and the Board of Education's proposed budget of \$1,070,000: The first phase of reductions came in the form of a 1.0 FTE Communication Specialist as proposed by the Superintendent of Schools, \$112,000 is a combined salary and cost estimate; a reduction of two FTE regular education teachers at Staples High School, salary and benefits \$188,000; a reduction of two FTE regular education paraprofessionals, \$116,000; a 1.0 FTE Assistant Principal at the elementary level, salary and benefits combined, \$189,000; technology equipment, instructional, the alternative here is to pilot new alternative technology for \$200,000. That will leave a balance of \$70,000 for technology equipment in FY '22; for furniture, no new purchases in FY '22, a cost avoidance of \$61,000; equipment, instructional and non-instructional, a cost avoidance of \$160,000; and student athletic equipment, no new purchases for FY '22, a cost avoidance of \$45,000. In total a cost reduction of \$1,070,000.

Mr. Bayers:

The slide you are looking at here represents the overall enrollment shared with us by Malone and McBroom who is one of the organizations that helps us with the demographics in terms of projecting enrollment. One thing that is important to note, when they were with us in late fall, they pointed out that it's a very difficult year to look at trends given the changes that we've seen as a result of COVID and the move ins. Those move ins continue to remain strong right now. One only needs to look at the real estate market in town and, as a result, Milone and MacBroom said be very cautious, particularly when looking at Kindergarten which is always variable when we're looking at numbers. Nonetheless, when you look at the enrollment of K-5, it represents a reduction of two students but I will note that our budget proposes a reduction of three elementary school teachers at this time based on where the numbers shift because we have different class sizes, K-2 and 3-5. We say that it is a reduction in three but we are watching it very closely as a result of the move-ins that are coming in. At the middle school level, you see a reduction of eight. That is very minimal, as well, when you consider the teaming structure at the middle schools. The high school sees the largest potential reduction and that is reflective of the smaller elementary bubbles that have made their way up through the middle schools and are now going into the high school in terms of the classes. As was noted earlier, we are reducing two overall FTE at Staples to reflect that. Preschool continues to have a strong enrollment; in fact, so strong that we have to continue to look for space within the buildings to make sure we can accommodate the needs. When you are looking at this slide, it shows the trends if you follow to the middle of the screen, you'll see where we are in the '21/22 school year. We're starting to level out but these projections were based on normal circumstances, not taking COVID into account. Milone and MacBroom have said that, hopefully, when they come back in the fall they will have

some better data points to work with when we consider trends and enrollment going forward. We seem to be leveling off and, in fact, if we don't see a marked increase because of the net move-ins, we'll see the gradual increase over time.

Mr. Scarice:

Just one comment before we go into detail. We have experienced an enrollment decline which began in around 2013/2014. One of the inquiries that we conducted in the budget season was to take a look back over a six or seven year period and see the staffing rates commensurate to enrollment. What you see is the Board really did an incredibly responsible job at reducing full-time FTE at a rate of about 20 students per FTE which is pretty logical in a school setting, especially when enrollment declines in the elementary setting. It is a little more complex at the secondary level with course choices and electives and so forth. You'll see that the enrollment decline that began in '13/14 suddenly spikes in '20/21 and that's largely related to what we experienced with COVID. We needed to buffer with staffing. But, when you combine the regular education and our specials teachers, specials teachers are teaching all the arts and so forth, and you combine those numbers together, the Board actually reduced almost the equivalent of a small elementary school staff in that time period. So, the footprint didn't contract but, certainly, the staffing levels did.

Mr. Bayers:

Elio, if you could go back to that slide for just one moment. I just want to point out that when we look at the increase, it was at the elementary level and we have to look at those break points between K-2 and 3-5. I've shared this example before but I think it's relevant for the full RTM to understand, when I took over as Principal at Greens Farms in 2008, we had 24 sections. In 19/20 school year, Kevin Cazzetta, the current Principal, has 18 sections. This school year, he jumped up to 22 sections. He picked up four sections as a result of net move-ins over last summer. I think that's illustrative of what we're seeing and those numbers continue to be very strong and robust through the spring right now at all of the elementary schools. I thought that would help to show that little spike you see in the blue line. This particular slide, as Superintendent Scarice noted, is Special Areas (not to be confused with Special Education.) Special Areas refers to art, music, physical education, health and world language and you'll see that noted drop over time was reflected with what we also saw with the regular education teachers, classroom teachers, again, to the point we made earlier, the Board of Education has done a lot of work through the years to right size its personnel relative to the needs with the regular education classes and the Special Areas.

Mr. Longo:

At this time, I'll turn to my colleague, Mr. Rizzo, who is the Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services.

Mike Rizzo, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services:

The next several slides focus on students with disabilities, students receiving Special Education services within the Westport Public Schools. This slide demonstrates the increasing trend of the percentage of students with disabilities both at the district and

State level going back to 2015/16. In fact, if we went back earlier, this trend really began in the year 2000. Both within the district and State level, the percentage of students with disabilities continues to rise. One particular area of focus within this year's budget was our Special Education teachers. You can see the blue line represents our Special Education teacher staffing beginning in 2013/14 where we had 47.5 teachers. That has increased in the proposed budget for this year to approximately 57 Special Education teachers. That increase has more or less kept pace although we need to keep a careful eye on that with the increase in enrollment in Special Education. The dotted red line, 579 students in 2013/14 to 740 students projected for the 21/22 school year. As the number of students with Special Education needs continues to increase, we have increased our staffing over that time period.

Mr. Longo:

On this slide, we see a compound annual growth rate. You see the annual growth rate of the number of students with IEP averaged at 3.15 percent over the course of eight years while the increase in FTE had a growth rate of 2.27 percent.

Mr. Rizzo:

Thank you, Elio. In addition to the Special Education teachers, we also took a close look at our paraprofessional staffing over the past several years. You can see here again as the enrollment has increased from approximately 580 to 742, the number of paraprofessionals within our school system has increased, as well. These two lines are more closely aligned which is really due to the fact that when we are talking about paraprofessionals, they are most frequently working closely with students, one on one, a very small group to meet those individual needs. I will say in addition to the number of overall students from 579 to about 740, we have also seen over this period of time an increase in the complexity of student needs. We are seeing students with more complex learning needs, whether it be social, emotional, Autism Spectrum Disorder or some other learning disabilities including Dyslexia. So, not only has there been an increase in number but the need has increased, as well.

Mr. Longo:

Thank you Mike. At this time, back to Superintendent Scarice for a cost composition of our budget.

Mr. Scarice:

So, as you can see, this is not a surprising slide, I'm sure, to folks who have been involved in the budget process for the Board of Education for years. It is typically about 80 percent of budget in Westport and I can reassure you, just about every budget in the State of Connecticut is dedicated to salaries and benefits. The remainder of the budget is largely locked into contracts, as well. So, a good deal of our budget, it is a challenge for any kind of flexibility or wiggle room unless we are looking at pure head count. That's a big driver but we did do (Elio, I'm going to talk about the compound annual growth if you want to get ready.) a dive into what I call the artificial economy of public school budgets in Connecticut. Our budgets are largely driven by collective bargaining agreements or binding arbitration in those bargaining agreements. So, what we try to do is go back over

an eight year period and look at our peers in the region and see what their compound annual growth in their budgets over that eight year time period. As you can see, on the top table, Westport is up top there and there's Darien, New Canaan, Ridgefield, Weston and Wilton. It's pretty fair to say that about 2 ½ percent is the going rate for your average school budget over an eight year period. By the way, Board of Education budgets, after the recession of 2008/2009 were largely in the one, two, no more than three percent range. When I first got hired in Weston in 2008, I was hired a year after a 5 ½ percent budget was approved. We won't see those any more. But you can see here in the economy of public schools, especially in this region, 2 ½ percent is expected to be the annual budget when you look at our peer districts. We also took other districts around the State, some smaller rural districts and so forth and we found a very similar trend. Two and a half percent is the fairly common compound annual growth rate of public school budgets. It stands to reason that all of our budgets with our peer districts are largely driven by the collective bargaining and binding arbitration settlements which compose about 80 percent of our budget. We do see a little bit of an outlier here with Ridgefield and on the other side with Wilton but, by and large, you are more apt to find a compound annual growth of 2 ½ percent. What's important here is to consider that for about a five or six year period, the Westport Board of Education budget was funded less than two percent. When you look at that over a five or six year period, it does pose a little bit of a challenge and a question of the substantive nature of those reductions where a typical budget is increasing at the rate of 2 ½ percent base on the going rate. So, there's questions to be thinking about in the long-term there that we are studying internally. But this was an interesting piece of data that we did want to share. We shared it with the Board of Finance and now with the RTM. John and Elio, is there anything you want to comment about those last two on negotiated settlements?

Mr. Bayers:

I think when you're looking at the negotiated settlements, particularly for the teachers and administrators, a reminder that those are part of the binding arbitration process and those contracts come directly to the RTM each year. We will be negotiating this coming summer with the teachers. But the numbers themselves are fairly in line with what we see are fairly in line relative to our peer groups.

Mr. Longo:

At the very bottom matrix, the year to year growth in the certified salaries account is a delta of 2.4 percent. In the current fiscal year, '20/21, the total certified salaries represent approximately 48.9 percent of the total Board of Education budget. The upcoming fiscal year, the total certified salaries are 49 percent so we see a bit of a shift there of salaries as a percentage of the total budget. Next on screen, I would like to present Federal Aid Assistance through the State of Connecticut Department of Education. This fiscal year, we received a grant award known as the Corona Virus Relief Fund for \$947,000 to assist the district with the purchase of personal protective equipment and other COVID-related expenses. We submitted them in a budget for related equipment, received approval and I am in the process, at this time, of submitting all of our invoices to the State Department of Education for their review and acceptance. The max award is \$947,000. The approved budget covers the personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies. We had a PM

elementary bus run during the opening months of the school year and other COVID-related, personnel-related costs. Today there have been three rounds of ESSER grants. ESSER I was an award to the district in the amount of \$141,000; the funds were used to purchase Chromebooks and cameras for distance learning for the pandemic and also to establish a parent/student tech help desk for distance learning. The ESSER II grant for \$692,000. Dr. Bruno, our Assistant Superintendent has submitted an application for summer learning opportunities, tutoring and intervention, social and emotional summer programs, teacher professional development and related technology, for example, smart boards and laptops to assist the district with closing the gap due to learning loss, COVID-related. The most recent announcement is the ESSER III grant. Part of the ESSER III is the American Rescue Plan. We are awaiting a formal award. Word on the street is that we stand to receive \$1.6 million. At this time, we are awaiting guidelines and application. Our working assumptions: 1) It is \$1.6 million award; 2) The award will cover two fiscal periods, 2022 and 2023. We have a working assumption of a 50/50 split per year. The grant will cover qualifying facilities (indoor air quality) projects as well as qualifying technology investments in remote learning. There is a set aside on the grant award, a reserve of at least 20 percent of the funds, set aside for learning loss, for example intervention related programs. So, earlier this evening when the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Scarice presented the Board of Education proposed budget, we closed a gap of \$1,070,000, the gap between the Superintendent's proposed budget and the Board of Education's proposed budget. We delivered the Board of Education's proposed budget to the Board of Finance. In early April, the Board of Finance recommended a Board of Education operating budget in the amount of \$125,594,582 for a three percent increase over our current operating budget forming a funding gap between the Board of Education's request and the Board of Finance approved budget in the amount of \$975,284. In order to close on the funding gap, we will reprogram \$100,000 on planned purchases on technologies, smartboards and laptops, and charge them to the ESSER II grant. We will reprogram \$344,000 for Chromebooks and charge them to the ESSER III grant, \$71,000 on desktops, \$20,000 on document cameras for distance learning, approximately \$41,000 for laptops and two qualifying improvements in our operating fund account 435, our facilities improvement account, \$41,000 in projects, and our 437 account \$122,000. In total, that is \$740,000 of the \$975,000 required reduction. There is a funding gap net of \$235,000. The Board of Education, at the time, decided to request a restoration from the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance chose not to restore the \$235,000. But the good news is that subsequent to the Board of Finance meeting, we were alerted by the State office of the State Comptroller that the State Partnership Plan 2.0 which is to health benefits plan for Board of Education employees on July 1 will renew at an increase of 2.4 percent, not the four percent that was released by the State Comptroller's office. So, during the budget deliberations, I thought the four percent increase based on the preliminary rate increase released by the State Comptroller. It was not until after the April meeting of the Board of Finance that we learned from the State Comptroller's office, the actual increase of 2.4 percent. The difference between the four percent projected and the actual 2.4 percent is a \$285,000 savings, more than adequate to cover the \$235,000 remaining funding gap. For that reason, the Board of Education chose not to request restoration by the RTM.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you for that comprehensive report. We now move onto the committee reports, Education and Finance Committees.

Committee reports

Education Committee, Lauren Karpf, Chair, district 7:

Usually, I try not to read the report and just give a summary. This time, for the sake of clarity and because it's the budget and not just an appropriation but I will not repeat to the best I can what has already been said and try to get us through it.

On April 21, 2021, we met. The list of participants is in the report. In the way of background, to review what Elio just said, the Superintendent proposed a budget of \$128 million amounting to a 4.98 percent increase over last year's budget. The Board of Education presented to the Board of Finance a proposed budget in the amount of \$126.9 million, an increase of 4.11. This amounted to a reduction of over one million dollars from the proposed budget put forth by the Superintendent, and included staff reductions and a reduction in technology and equipment. The Board of Finance further reduced the budget by approximately \$1,300,000 to \$125.6 million, amounting to an increase of three percent over last year's budget. As Elio explained, the Board of Education is able to absorb approximately \$750,000 of the funding gap through ESSER Grants to be spent on technology and learning opportunities to address COVID-related learning deficits. The Board of Education requested restoration from the Board of Finance for \$235,000, but that request was denied. The Board of Education subsequently learned of a reduction in cost of the State Partnership Plan for health insurance amounting to approximately \$286,000 so the Board of Education decided not to seek restoration from the RTM. That brings us up to where we are today. As Jeff alluded to, this has been many meetings of discussions over many months. The Board of Education was meeting almost weekly, for a long time, all day meetings. This is the culmination but a lot of work has been put into this by the Board of Education. This past year, the administration obtained approximately \$1,100,000 in ESSER grant funding and Coronavirus Relief Funds, which covered PPE during the pandemic and the extra bus runs during the hybrid school schedule. It submitted an application for \$691,788 in a second ESSER grant to cover programs to supplement learning loss during COVID. A third ESSER grant has been submitted and administration is hoping to receive approximately \$1,600,000 to be spent evenly over the next two budget years. During the meeting, the administration presented an overview of the 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget and answered questions posed by the Committee. The Committee focused its discussion on changing enrollment, the cost of salaries and benefits, the need to maintain our school facilities, and how grant money will be utilized this year and next year. We talked about the challenges over this budget year: Overall, contractual salaries and benefits comprise approximately 81 percent of the total budget. Buses and transportation amount to 26 percent of that remaining 19 percent really eliminating any discretionary funding. Moreover, enrollment increases over the past year in K-8 combined with distance learning necessitated the hiring of seven additional teachers. They were able to absorb those costs without needing supplemental funds due to savings from school closures last spring (bus savings and other savings associated with facilities closures). It is interesting to note that simply rolling over current services to

next year would equate to a budget increase of 4.69 percent, which is clearly higher than the three percent requested. Special Education costs and staffing also continue to rise in the district as well as the State as more students qualify for special education services and the percent of students with more complex disabilities increases. By way of example, in the 2015-2016 school year, 10.7 percent of Westport students were identified as students with disabilities. During the 2020-2021 school year, however, 13.7 percent of the students were identified. Thus, services and costs, including the number of teachers and paraprofessionals, have increased and are expected to continue to increase. Elio talked about the cafeteria fund and the deficit this year and the projected deficit from the cafeteria fund has decreased from approximately \$600,000 to a deficit of \$400,000. The RTM Education Committee acknowledged the work of the Board Of Education, especially during such a difficult year, including the reopening of CMS and of course the challenge of providing education in the midst of a pandemic. The Committee, the administration, and the Board of Education briefly discussed the importance of a strategic plan going forward to implement structural changes in order to improve efficiencies and decrease costs. This will take shape as the new Superintendent and the Board of Education work through a plan to optimally maintain and utilize our school buildings. While enrollment is projected to be relatively flat at K-8 and decrease at Staples, it will not greatly impact the number of classes needed or the budget at large. Nonetheless, the budget decreases regular education teachers from 265.9 in 2020-2021 to 257.9 in 2021-2022. The Committee acknowledged the continued efforts of the Board of Education to balance quality education and fiscal responsibility. We discussed the fact that the Board of Education removed over one million dollars from the initial proposed budget, and thanked them for acting proactively and in a fiscally prudent manner. Moreover, the Committee thanked the administration and the Board of Education for their hard work over the past year in such challenging circumstances. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend RTM approval of the Board of Education Proposed 2021-2022 Operating Budget.

Finance Committee, Rick Jaffe, district 1:

I am going to try to summarize the summary presentations we've heard while touching on a couple of budgeting points that we, RTM members, as keepers of the keys to Westport, may want to know something about. I apologize in advance for any overlap. I'll try to keep it to a minimum. Before we begin, I want to refer you to the Information Technology report on the IT budget which is in the packet. It is chock full of wondrous accomplishments, clever planning and execution and tantalizing glimpses into the future. You won't be able to put it down. Maybe you will. Just a word about our education budgeting process. It's a back and forth process, discussion, analysis and negotiation which includes the three stages that we've heard of tonight: The Superintendent's proposed budget gets the process started, It gets worked through and becomes the Board of Education's proposed budget which is further worked through to become the Board of Finance's proposed education budget which we have before us tonight. On April 27, the RTM Finance Committee met over Zoom with Tom Scarice, Superintendent of Schools, a number of the executive corps of our school system, Board of Education members, RTM members and eight of nine Finance Committee members all listed in your packet. The purpose of the meeting was to review the Board of Education budget (FY 2022), as approved by the

Board of Finance. There are four budgets, the Board of Education operating budget, the Program Expenses budget, also called the revenue offset budget, Aid to Private/Parochial Schools and the Debt Service – Long Term debt service budget. The total of these budgets as we've heard is 62 percent of the Board of Finance recommended budget for the town of Westport. It's percentage of the total budget has remained steady over the last several years. The Total Education budget is \$135,404,763, up 3.0 percent over the current fiscal year's budget.

- The vast majority of the total Education budget is the Board of Education's operating budget, \$125,594,582, also up 3.0 percent over the current fiscal year. The table below shows a recent history of operating expenses. Note that the operating budget presented to the RTM does not include the capital costs associated with Education's Master Plan Facility Study. Capital costs are addressed separately from operating expenses.
- The Program Expense budget holds the budgeted revenue for the Stepping Stones Preschool, \$225,854. It's called an offset account because revenues in other accounts are meant to offset expenses in this account.
- Aid to Private Schools, \$507,569, includes pupil transportation, and Special Education and health services support.
- Debt Service, \$9,076,758, up 4 percent from the current year's budget, is a number presented to the Board of Education by the Town, and represents Education's fair share of Town debt service. This year's budget for Debt Service includes funding for the remodeling of Coleytown Middle School, not a low price, offset by pay downs of older debt, and by refinancing a portion of the remaining older debt at lower interest rates. So, it's very good interplay of very good finance people that holds this number down.

The RTM committee members present voted unanimously on a motion by Seth Braunstein seconded by Cathy Talmadge to recommend to the RTM to approve all the education budgets as presented totaling \$135 million and change.

Summary of Key Points: The goals of our Education budget process, exercising fiscal prudence while adhering to federal and state mandates, include the following:

- Maintain our status as a "flagship" district, as exemplified by a recent ranking by U.S. News & World Report in which Staples High School was named, according to Westport Patch, "one of the best high schools in the United States". It's pretty clear that people live here in order to benefit from our excellent schools. We are a community with high expectation.
- Ensure safety and security of our students and staff.
- Maintain and improve our facilities as directed by experts.

The FY 2022 budget details the expected costs associated with the challenges of returning to educating our students in a post-COVID world. We take note of that fact that, with COVID having thrust unheard of uncertainty and upheaval on our school system and its people, Education came in on budget for the year that ended June 30, 2020, and is on track to come in on or very close to budget for year just concluding. What does it mean for our school system to be on budget? What it's not is an accounting to the penny of each cost and revenue center every year. That would be a \$125 million waste of everybody's time. Instead, it is the professionally managed balancing of a multi-year flow of money with some expense dollars being shifted from one overspent account to an

underspent account with a couple of Board of Finance –blessed holding tanks on a relatively small amount of funds that can be carried over from one year to the next. Examples are education’s carryover account and what we’ve heard of tonight as the cafeteria fund. If the students are being held at home because of COVID, the cafeteria isn’t going to be selling a lot of food. So, the shifting of funds and the filling and emptying of these small holding tanks are, in fact, the sophisticated and well-managed set of tools that allow our school system, with help from their financial experts, to run our school system properly without having to look over their financial shoulders every minute of every day or have to come begging to our Board of Finance for small funds to cover cost overruns when nobody wants that. Last year, if you remember, I warned the RTM of a Board of Finance technique of back-stopping. A back-stop was a promise by the Board of Finance to approve a supplemental Board of Education funding request if expenses in a given cost category exceeded a lower budget amount than education wanted. For example, if the schools proposed a budget of \$100,000 for a new roof that the Board of Finance thought should only cost \$70,000, the Board of Finance would back-stop education. It would budget the lower amount, \$70,000, but promise to approve a supplemental request, if necessary, of up to \$30,000. I’m against the use of back-stopping because if it’s ever used, it’s going to paint the RTM into a corner with the Board of Finance having publically promised to support an expense that’s really our job to approve. In contrast with back-stopping, the small Board of Finance-aware holding tanks in education’s revenue and expense account are laudable and useful tools in getting everybody to where we want them to be, cost-effectively running a top quality school system. We’re lucky to have a Board of Finance with not just expertise and dedication to do good work for the town but also the sense to know when to hold the reins tightly and when to let the thoroughbred choose his own path. We take note of balancing the budgets in the midst of COVID times and the upheaval of COVID times, our education folks have taken a tremendous strain as these holding tanks that I mentioned have been drained. So, we can only thank them for their extra effort of having it made it all work and I’d like them to know that we stand by them if they need help in the coming year. The Board of Education budget, as we have heard, was reduced by the Board of Finance by \$1.3 million and change. The Board of Education had the option to request restoration of these funds but, instead, found clever ways to close the budget gap by utilizing the professional expertise of our education administrators. More than a quarter of the funding gap was closed by the State of Connecticut update of what Westport Schools have to pay for health benefits. We just heard Mr. Longo refer to that. The remainder of the funding gap was closed when education administrators carefully selected proposed expenses that qualified to be paid for by these various government grants, emergency grants with nicknames such as the Coronavirus Relief Fund and American Rescue Fund. These grant fund expenditures no longer show as operating budget requests because they are paid for by the grants. The reality of the education budget is that 81 percent of our school system is in salaries and benefits, people costs, most of which is fixed by contract. In our Education budget it is, therefore, very difficult to cut significant cost without cutting staff. In tonight’s proposed budget, we see the result of a concerted effort by our Education planners to hold down on staffing without sacrificing the quality of the education product we offer to the children of our community. Enrollment, which has been trending in a gradual decline, for FY2022 is expected to be down about one percent from FY2021.

Enrollment does not tell the whole story of staffing needs, however, which depend on the age, geography, and special needs of our students. Enrollment is forecast to continue its slight downtrend, leveling off and picking up slightly in fiscal year 2025-2026. Our school system has done a good job keeping the number of teachers in Regular Education in line with enrollment changes. Special Education, the percentage of our students with disabilities continues to rise, as is true in our district, statewide, and nationally. More students with disabilities requires increased Special Education staff in order to meet mandated service levels. Again, our school system gives every indication that they are doing everything reasonable to hold down the cost of Special Education while providing a quality education. Thank you for your time. I hope I haven't burdened you with too much detail. The bottom line is despite strain and requiring a great effort, our school system continues to work with the Board of Finance and other town entities to maximize education quality at minimal cost. It's what we ask for and we thank them.

Members of the Westport electorate – No comments

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education's budget items as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted and the sum of \$135,404,763 for the Board of Education Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

Mr. Wieser:

To remind everyone, that \$135 million is the Board of Education operating budget, the \$9 million debt expense, aid to private and parochial schools and debt expense all in one. We are voting on all together.

Members of the RTM

Wendy Batteau, district 8:

I think that the Board of Education and the School Department and everybody associated with it has done a tremendous job over the last few years and I'm thrilled with it. The challenges that you have had have been Herculean or beyond and rather than herding cats, it's more like you were herding molecules. So, I commend you all. At the same time, I feel like I have to take up the semantic gauntlet that was just thrown down. First of all, it is not cutting a budget to cut an increase asked for from four and a half percent to two percent. The budget is still being increased. We hear this every year. I just think it's silly to pretend that because it makes it sound like the town isn't supporting the Board of Education when I think the situation is really the reverse. My other question really just has to do with the grants, the ESSER grants in particular. You said that you were reprogramming them and repurposing them to make up for the money, I think you said to make up the balance between what you originally asked for and what we were finally able to afford. Maybe I'm mistaken in that. If I'm not mistaken, do you then have to notify the grantor that the money is going to be spent on something else or did I just misunderstand what you meant by repurposing and reprogramming the grants.

Mr. Longo:

Good question. To clarify, by reprogramming, we are removing planned expenditures from the FY '22 operating budget and charging the expenditures and the focus was to identify one time expenditures. These are not expenditures that we're setting the stage for two years down the road where we're just kicking the can down the road. We submitted the applications and budgets to the State Department of Education the pass through agency for the ESSER grants. Certain grants, we have already received approvals and the others are pending at this time. By reprogramming, it's removing expenditures from the operating budget for fiscal year '22 and charging them to a Federal Grant.

Ms. Batteau:

The only other thing I would say is that those insignificant pools of money when added together add up to about \$1 million/year so they are not so insignificant in my humble opinion and I sure am glad you had them this year.

Jimmy Izzo, district 3:

Tom, John, I want to thank you guys. You did a great job this year. Honestly, super work. We couldn't have ever imagined this pandemic. This is a tough audience we deal with in Westport. The expectations are high. Most of us on the RTM and the Board of Finance, our pay is pretty low. You guys put in a lot of extra time too. You're not working 8 – 5. One thing I would love to see, I know the salaries are basically locked in. Not much we can do but I urge everyone on the RTM to listen to what Judge Nevas said last night in his invocation about Longshore and the importance of getting that property for zoning and those extra homes that could have come here. Look at what 1024 is and Sara Bronin and people in Hartford, what they're trying to do to us. We have to be tough as a community. Forget your politics and realize that we have to stick up for our zoning because if we allow all these big houses and big developments to keep coming, I don't really care about what the town looks like. We just simply can't afford to maintain this kind of growth and numbers we're going through with the educational process. We're doing a good job working collaboratively but I just think we have to look at the big picture and the combined budgets on both sides of the equation. That's it. You did a great job, guys.

Lou Mall, district 2:

I'd like to thank the Board of Education and the administration for coming forward with a budget, as I mentioned in our committee meeting, and not asking for restoration and saving us about four hours of discussion tonight. So, thank you for that. I would like to repeat myself from last night to talk about transportation cost and how we have to take a closer look at it. With the school budget, it's \$6.5 million; for private schools, it's \$370,000 for a total of \$6.9 million. Then we add what we added in last night with the transit, we are up to \$7,235,000. What I really want to draw attention to tonight is on page 177 of the private school budget. The transportation costs have gone from \$247,441 in the 2018/2019 year to budgeted \$369,081. That's almost a 49.5 percent increase over a three year period. My question to the Board of Education and the push back that I'd like to make is, it's really a comment more than anything: do we audit this? Are we paying closer attention to what we're being asked to subsidize for private school budgets? We're up over a half million dollars. I think we need to pay closer attention to that. That's my

comment. I do thank you for your time and your service in a very, very difficult year. Hats off to our kids, as well, for being as resilient as they are. They're still happy to go to school.

Christine Meiers Schatz, district 2:

I just wanted to provide a little bit of color surrounding what Lou said about the private school bus transportation because I have a little bit of firsthand knowledge about that myself. I have two kids at Kings Highway and I have two kids at Pierpont School in Westport which is one of the two schools that has the bus service. I'm only going into it with this much depth like I did last year during budget season because in my years on the RTM this has come up every single year with the education budget. People are talking about that line item for transportation costs for private school students. That line item is State mandated and people need to understand that the level of support that we are giving to Westport students whose families pay taxes like everybody else who are going to a private school, that level of school bus service is not the same as the level of service that the kids going to the public school get and in fact I suspect the cost has gone up because kids were not getting to school on time. They were getting to school late and parents were having hearings about it. So, please remember, a school like Pierpont, 50 percent of the kids there are Westport residents. Their parents pay taxes. If they went to the Westport public schools, they would be using resources that are being given to all the other kids that are there. And this is the one thing that they are getting education-wise is this transportation and it's not on the same level as the kids that are going to the public schools. I just wanted to give that background because, like I said, this comes up every year and probably this is something we can see with a less hostile lens next year.

Seth Braunstein, district 6:

I was just hoping we could get a little bit of color from Candace and Superintendent Scarice as well. We've had this issue over the last couple of years with Shipman and Goodwin which appears to have reached some sort of resolution relating to the particular attorney who was suing the town no longer being associated with Shipman and Goodwin. My question is from a slightly different angle. When we look at the DIRG, do we know how many of our fellow DIRG members are represented by Shipman and Goodwin?

Ms. Savin: I don't have an exact figure but a number of them are. I know that.

Mr. Braunstein:

I'm just curious. Again, this is more an effort to understand the point of view of the Board of Education, do we think there is an inherent, I won't say conflict of interest but, let's say, does it potentially harm our position in negotiating with unions if Shipman and Goodwin is representing each of the different districts in their negotiations with the unions. Think about the situation where they're providing advice across each one of those districts and one district may want to do something slightly different. Does it put them in opposition, from our perspective?

Ms. Savin:

I would actually say the exact opposite, Seth. I think it gives us information but I think that's a common misunderstanding of how the system works. In a binding arbitration

system, we're all negotiating with the potential to end up with an arbitrator and one of the main criteria for an arbitrator to decide will be the district's ability to pay. So, we're all similarly disadvantaged in that way. It's not something in the control of any particular attorney. So, I would say the dynamic that you are imagining is not the reality of how the system works; although, I certainly understand how one might presume that. Tom, do you want to add anything?

Mr. Scarice:

I don't want to belabor the point. I think it's a pretty straight-forward point of how the system does work. As I referred to in the discussion earlier, budget related, it's a driver when it comes to the compound annual growth rate of budgets, 80 percent of it is salary and benefits. It is largely collective bargaining and the specter of arbitration always hovers over that. I think Candace captured the point pretty accurately.

Mr. Braunstein: Thank you.

Mr. Mandell:

To stay with Seth's line of discussion here, if we go to the frame that you showed us of other districts, they are all about 2.5 percent: New Canaan, Weston, Wilton, maybe it was Darien and Ridgefield. The question is does Shipman and Goodwin also represent them? In terms of removing the specter of collective bargaining going to binding arbitration, the question is if they represent the other district, how do we get a better price for our teachers compared to when they represent the other schools? Let's take Darien. I'm not sure they represent them. If they get 2.5 percent, how do we get 2.3? We can't because if Darien hears that their same lawyers then got us 2.3, then they are going to start questioning their attorneys, why didn't we get 2.2? So, what we see as a situation is a fixing of the market, essentially, with the single law firm that represents most of them and that we can't get the proper negotiation without them. That's how we're seeing it. So, somehow I think it needs to be resolved. If we look at it and say 'This is 2.5 and this is 2.5 and this is 2.5' but all of them are represented by Shipman and Goodwin, don't we have to scratch our heads and say 'Why?' That's sort of where we have always been thinking about it. I'm thankful we have resolved the past situation of having an adversarial law firm representing us. Now, we don't. They've agreed, I believe, that they won't represent any adversarial situations, Candace, if you could elaborate on that piece. But the other piece needs to be resolved. Where are we in relation to other districts and how we get a better deal? Candace, the question is has Shipman and Goodwin agreed not to be adversarial as part of the package of representing the Board of Education?

Ms. Savin:

Two parts: One is yes. As you know, before we even embarked on the process of the RFP in selecting our attorney for the Board, Shipman made that commitment for the Board. So, that's a non-issue. And, Matt, with all due respect, you're not correct. We are sort of in a price fixing situation not because of our attorney. That's because of State law. That is just a fact. I understand that people don't want to accept that. I can't control that but it is a fact. There is no way in which having Shipman and Goodwin disadvantages our negotiating outcome.

Mr. Scarice:

Mr. Mandell, just to build on that a little bit, Candace alluded to this before and I'll just reiterate that the biggest driver is the ability to pay. When you are talking about collective bargaining and binding arbitration, the ability to pay is the number one driver. You'll see districts in a similar settlement range because of that but I also want to expand the point. It's not just about salaries. There are working conditions that are discussed which have impacts on contracts, you have discussions about health benefits, as well. Salaries are one part of the equation, albeit a big one, but it's much more complex and I think we run the risk of oversimplifying things just a little bit. I just wanted to add to Candace's point there, if I may.

Mr. Mandell: Thank you. Appreciate it.

Ms. Karpf:

My question is on totally something else. I raised my hand before so I'll just go down this path. I just wanted to make a quick comment because I thought we were wrapping up. I know there was a lot of talk last night about making sure that crucial services and programs aren't cut from the town budget and I totally agree. Hopefully, we can abide by that on the education side too. Each year we enter the budget process and I hear year after year programs being discussed being cut during the budget cycle. I am of the belief that if a certain program within the schools isn't working, during the school year, you should all talk about how it can be improved, how there can be cost savings, not for the first time during the budget (and I watch Board of Education meeting so I know they are brought up for the first time during the budget) and are being on the cusp of being cut. So, I am hoping that doesn't continue and if a program needs to be improved, you work on improving it rather than for the first time, 'let's just cut.' That's just my two cents. As we all said in the committee meeting, we are all looking forward to a non-COVID year and taking some efficiencies not only with utilization but savings with the town and across the board. Again, thank you guys very, very much for a really tough year.

Kristin Schneeman, district 9:

Good evening. I will also pile on my thanks to everybody in the administration and on the Board for your service and all the hard work to get here tonight. In some ways, this follows some of Lauren's comments. In one way, by returning to the discussion of the \$700,000 in grants, we're using in part to cover the Board of Finance's reduction in the budget, even though, as Elio pointed out that will be aimed at some one-time expenditures that we were budgeting for anyway. I just want to make the point that we are setting the baseline for the school system's budget at \$125 million for our discussion next year. I want everybody to remember that \$700,000 of that is coming from Federal Grants. There will be other one time expenditures that we will need to put into the budget next year. They come up every year. It's not free money coming from the Federal Government and I know that next year we'll probably have another \$800,000 potentially to have expenditures that we want to make. But I want everyone to remember that we are setting the bar down lower for the Board of Education budget and that is in part because we are receiving a chunk of money from the Federal Government and that will not continue to be the case. I know we have a

strategic planning exercise coming up soon. I assume and I hope in that process that forward looking budget ideas will be a part of that. I feel like the years that I have been on the RTM, there is this annual exercise of trying to take a scalpel to excise some things from the budget to get to a number that we collectively agree that we need to get to. I know that taking on the big costs is super-challenging. But I hope there will be some creative thinking. I know there already is. I will raise the issue of Special Education and we while we all understand that while we are not only required to provide services by law but it's what we want to do. It's what we like to do and we do it extremely well in Westport. But, if you look at it purely as a numbers game, you see those lines of regular education students declining and teachers declining and the Special Education students and teachers and costs going in the opposite direction. I know, Mike, you've talked about a special initiative to find ways to keep students in district who, currently, we're not able to serve and end up going out of district and costing us a lot of money. I think people would prefer to keep their kids in district, if possible. I hope that creative thinking about some of those as we're moving forward, how are we going to be able to craft our budgets in such a way that doesn't cause us to have this surgical exercise every year in finding the one teacher here...and maybe transportation is one of those issues for the public schools. Maybe there are, I know there are people in town who want to have conversations about whether we can provide regular bus service in ways that are more efficient and reflective of the number of students who are using the service. Anyway, I just wanted to put in a plug for trying to do some creative thinking or bigger thinking around some of these issues as we move forward. But thanks again for all that you have done.

Ms. Meiers Schatz:

It seems like we're at that point in time where we're being aspirational about next budget season. I just wanted to give my thoughts on how I'm really excited about the strategic planning phase that we're moving into. As a member of a funding body, I'm really looking forward to it and hoping that our budget for next year is going to show us how the funds we're putting into the school district are going to those long-term strategic goals. I think there are some other districts that lay out their budgets in a way that really do a good job of showing this. It's a good internal check to make sure that we're putting our resources towards the things that we are striving to do. That's lost a little bit in our budget which seems to just build on whatever last year's budget was. Obviously, it was something we couldn't work on this year because we were treading water. It's an exciting time and we'll pull for that in the coming years.

Mr. Braunstein:

There was one thing that I felt we would be remiss if we didn't identify it. It seems to me, having gone through it now a number of times, that this year, in particular, there was a much, much greater effort or success I should say in collaboration between the town and the Board of Education. Whether that's on the facilities maintenance or on the paving project and I would say that we have all kind of talked about this in the past but it seems to be showing up in a much more concerted way. I want to just say thank you because I think, it was Kristin's comment that prompted this thought. When we so think about ways that we can become more efficient, as one entity, instead of thinking about it as the Board of Education or the town, we really can find ways working together, hopefully, to continue

driving some additional savings and really benefit from that collaboration. I really did want to echo what everybody else has said, truly amazing accomplishments both by the Board of Education and the town, for that matter to come through the period that we've come through and really stay on budget and focused on the business at hand. So, thank you everybody from the administration, the Board of Education, the people who work so hard day in and day out. Obviously, it's greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Jack Klinge, district 7:

This is probably the final evening for all of this but this is my 24th education budget meeting and I only tell you we've evolved from 1998 to tonight and we've been getting better and better and better every year. The interaction is terrific. The planning gets better every year. The future planning, the evolving. You should be very proud of yourselves. I am proud of being part of it. Congratulations after a tough COVID year. I'm looking forward to next year and how we plan to once again deal with Coley Middle School/Bedford Middle School enrollment challenge and move on from there. Anyway, it's been a great two dozen years and you all do a great job. Congratulations. Thank you.

Mr. Wieser:

We are voting on the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education's budget items as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted and the sum of \$135,404,763 for the Board of Education Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

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

Mr. Wieser:

We are moving on to vote on the whole town budget but I want to echo everything that Seth said. Especially, on the Finance Committee, we complement Elio every year for putting the numbers in a form that we can recognize but I wanted tonight to especially complement Mr. Scarice on his first year here and just say, that word *collaborative* is so important and so helpful and it is a spirit of collaboration which I think from a little bit of a distance I see much more powerfully and despite anything you might have heard and how you feel, it is truly appreciated so thank you and your A Team for being with us tonight and bringing this all together. So thank you.

Mr. Scarice:

Very much appreciated. It has been a rigorous process which is a testament to the work of the community here which has been incredibly supportive community and supportive comments really do go a long way after a very long year. I'll be sure to share them with everyone. Thank you so much.

Ms. Savin:

I'd also just like to thank everyone. It was a great discussion and we really do appreciate your support other very positive budget years in the future.

Mr. Wieser:

I didn't mean to discount the Board of Education, Candace. You guys have been terrific and it has been a different sort of feel, a great feel from all the town bodies. The Board of Education and the administration have been terrific so, thank you.

Ms. Karpf:

I just want to be clear. I thought we voted on the different parts of the education budget separately. Did you tie in the other two line items?

Mr. Wieser:

The \$135 million includes the debt service and private and parochial schools. I actually followed the minutes from last year's meeting when we similarly had a non-controversial meeting and so we just put it altogether. I appreciate the confirmation.

Ms. Briggs read the resolution and it was seconded.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Town of Westport General Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of the Board of Education Budget, the First Selectman's Budget, and the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget in the amount of ~~\$218,479,214~~ \$218,636,714 is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures and that for the purpose of raising a tax on the Grand List of ~~2020~~ 2022, the sum of \$218,636,714 is hereby appropriated.

Mr. Wieser:

I'm sorry. I gave Ms. Briggs the wrong date. 2022. Mr. Conrad, can you confirm those numbers.

Mr. Conrad:

The number that you are reading is before you restored the Westport Transit District. The correct number is \$218,636,714.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Members of the RTM – no comments

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

Mr. Wieser:

We are ready to move on to # 9 of the call. I have already said my thank you's to the Board of Education and the administration. Again, thank you.

The secretary read item #9 of the call - 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.

Presentation

Mr. Longo:

On screen, we have our filing with the Board of Finance and tonight with the RTM. In summary, it is for a paving program at Greens Farms Elementary, Long Lots Elementary School, Bedford Middle School, and the Coleytown school complex. It is a collaboration of town and Board of Education departments, specifically, the Department of Public Works under the leadership of Pete Ratkiewich and the Board of Education Business and Facilities Office. A capital request in the base amount of \$1,527,321 and a contingency of 10 percent to arrive at a total of \$1,680,053. The paving project was bid by Mr. Ratkiewich on behalf of the Board of Education and the Business Office. To put it in perspective, the pavement at Greens Farms School is approximately 25 years old. We are looking to reclaim all the parking areas, the entrance, drives at Greens Farms School. At Long Lots School, we reclaim the common parking lot entrance areas and small parking areas. Existing pavement is approximately 28 years old. At Bedford Middle School, the pavement is 20 years old. We propose to reclaim the main entrance drive and the Wakeman Farm Road. At the Coleytown Schools complex, we propose to pave all of Coley El and repave the parking area between Coley El and Coleytown Middle School. The pavement is approximately 24 plus years old. A quick summary, the subtotal is approximately \$1.5 million with a contingency arriving at a grand total of \$1,680 million. This request is being made tonight to the RTM in an amount not to exceed. I'll turn now to Mr. Ratkiewich who can give a status update on the bid process. Again, the request is for an amount not to exceed.

Pete Ratkiewich, Director of Public Works:

We have taken this project to bid. We're going to be using a couple of paving contractors on this project because we need to do ancillary items such as sidewalks and pave areas that don't get done by the general milling and paving unit that comes through and does roads and parking lots. Right now, we are at a level of about \$1.2 million, just the raw paving project and traffic control as well as items such as striping which, if anybody has driven through a school lately, you'll realize there's a lot of striping involved. We have not bid that out yet but we feel that this \$1.6 million, not to exceed, price is certainly going to cover our cost. Again, we're doing four schools. This is a collaboration between myself and Director of Facilities, Ted Hunyadi. We walked all of the pavement of all of the schools earlier this spring, evaluated the condition, along with the data we received from the five-year forecast from Antinozzi Associates plus new street scan data that was used as supplementary data to go through all of the parking lots. This is the same system that we use in town to evaluate our roads at this point so now we have a comprehensive view of all the school parking lots and all the roads. The result of that is that the five year forecast is now two years old and we wanted to accelerate the process a bit. So, we decided we wanted to do all of Greens Farms School, all of Coley El School, the entrance to Bedford Middle and Wakeman Town Farms which are reaching 20 years old. These are all heavily used pathways that we're driving heavy buses over and they're showing signs of aging.

They're beyond their useful life and we need to maintain them. My engineering staff did some estimates on this and we came up with the \$1.6 million budget.

Mr. Longo:

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the great effort that Peter and his staff put into this. On the Board of Education side, the Antinozzi Report, which is our 10-year capital forecast, had a cost estimate of approximately \$2.2 million to \$2.4 million for the paving programs. We're coming in at a base of somewhere around 50 cents on the dollar. There are some ancillary costs that still need to be settled and we avoid having soft costs which can range anywhere from seven to 10 percent of the project. The original estimate of \$2.2 million, that can be anywhere from \$150,000 to \$200,000 plus of additional costs. I just want to publically thank Peter and his staff for partnering. There are economies that benefit both the town and the Board of Education by coming together on any large scale project. Thank you Peter.

Mr. Wieser:

Thank you both. It's great to hear a report by the Board of Education and the Public Works Department.

Committee report

Finance Committee, Mr. Jaffe:

I'd like to thank Deputy Moderator Mr. Wieser who is my boss on the Finance Committee for bestowing upon me the honor of writing and presenting all these reports. The RTM Finance Committee met on April 27, 2021 to consider this funding request. Seven of nine members of the Finance Committee were present. They are recorded in your packet. Other Town Officials Present were Elio Longo (Westport Public Schools CFO), Gary Conrad (Westport Finance Director); Elaine Whitney (Secretary, Board of Education). All pavement scheduled in this funding request to be replaced has exceeded its expected useful life. In his presentation in support of the funding request Schools, Mr. Longo noted that this proposed project is a collaboration and partnership between the town and the school system. This is really good news because we suspected for years that there were untapped efficiencies that come from greater collaboration and they are starting to come to fruition. This is good news. By planning and executing this project in partnership with our town Department of Public Works the school system saves money on project administration as we've heard, reaps benefit from taking advantage of our DPW staff's notable paving project experience, and saves additional money by joining the advantageous volume pricing the Town can negotiate. School administrators worked with our town Department of Public Works Director Ratkiewich to plan the project and to produce the cost estimates. It's worth noting that the money for this project is an appropriation and, as such, no money is transferred by the town to the school system. The school system simply draws from the Town up to but not to exceed the amount of the approved funding request. A motion in favor of recommending to the RTM in support of the requested appropriation was made and seconded and passed unanimously, 7-0.

Mr. Wieser:

Mr. Keenan stated that the Public Works Committee did meet on this but did not vote on it because the dollars were out of the Board of Education budget but the review was positive.

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 Superintendent of Schools, the sum of \$1,680,053 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 is hereby appropriated.

Members of the RTM

Ms. Karpf:

I don't need to read my report but the Education Committee also discussed this when we went through the budget. We met on April 21 and it passed unanimously 7-0.

Ms. Gertzoff:

I am all for it, nothing negative but I just want to know if the shelf life is going to be similar for this paving.

Mr. Ratkiewich:

Perhaps I should answer that? Generally speaking, we are going on a range from 15 to 25 years depending on the traffic. An average, 20 years, would be an expected life. Most of these pavements are over 20 years old.

Ms. Gertzoff: It's fine. I was just curious.

Mr. Izzo:

I just want to say Jeff, you and Brandi did a great job over these last two nights. Nothing to do with the appropriation. I just wanted to give you two a shout out.

Sal Liccione, district 9:

Pete, are you going to be doing the paving at the schools at the same time? How is it going to work out with the schools in session?

Mr. Ratkiewich:

The contract that was let for the paving on the town side has started so the library actually started today. The Senior Center will be tomorrow but the schools will not start until school is closed which I believe currently is around the 22nd of June. It should take us that long to get through both parking lots and five miles of road.

Mr. Wieser:

Speaking of the start date of that, Ms. Savin, we had an email exchange about a possibility of an appropriation in early June. Is that still in flux? The roofing bid. I only want to bring it up as a possibility of an amendment for the date of our June meeting.

Ms. Savin:

I think the idea was that in order to do the Saugatuck Elementary School roof this summer, we need to have a very efficient approval process and because your meeting is before the Board of Finance meeting, yours is June 1 and theirs is June 2.

Mr. Wieser:

So, not to get into too many details, it's still a possibility to have the RTM meeting June 8 if necessary.

Ms. Savin: That would be very helpful.

Mr. Wieser:

I just bring that up so everybody could watch your emails in case we take a poll and make sure we can make that happen.

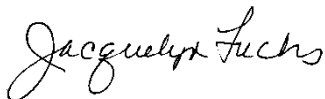
By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously, 34-0.

Mr. Wieser:

Thus ends another budget cycle. Thank you everyone for your time and attention these past many months and these past few nights. In closing I would ask you to recycle your budget books. Get them in to Town Hall over the next several weeks or whenever. Thank you everybody for being so helpful in this process and thank you administration and Board of Education and department heads if you are still with us.

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey M. Dunkerton
Town Clerk



by Jacquelyn Fuchs

ATTENDANCE: May 4, 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			
	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 #9

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Superintendent of Schools, the sum of \$1,680,053 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 is hereby appropriated.

A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$1,680,053 FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PAVING PROJECTS AT GREENS FARMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LONG LOTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BEDFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL AND THE COLEYTOWN SCHOOLS COMPLEX 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 Million Six Hundred Eighty Thousand Fifty-Three and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,680,053) for costs related to paving projects at Greens Farms Elementary School, Long Lots Elementary School, Bedford Middle School, and the Coleytown Schools Complex inclusive of design, materials and oversight, as well as, all related administrative, financing, legal, contingency and other soft costs (the “Project”).

Section 1. As recommended by the Board of Finance and for the purpose of financing One Million Six Hundred Eighty Thousand Fifty-Three and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,680,053) of the foregoing appropriation, the Town shall borrow a sum not to exceed One Million Six Hundred Eighty Thousand Fifty-Three and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,680,053) 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.