

BOARD OF FINANCE
PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 10, 2019
MINUTES

Present: D. Onofrio, A. Maklari, K. Carr, J. Scully Welch, J. Adler, T. Hollinger, O. Nejdl and L. Santos

D. Onofrio called the public hearing to order at 7:00 PM in the Auditorium of the Town Hall.

The public hearing was opened to comments on the Town and Education budget. Speakers were asked to keep their comments to 3 minutes. The following remarks were made.

The board received 6 letters in support of the Senior Exercise Program, 2 letters in support of the library and 1 letter from CERC in support of the Town Planner Position. The board also received a letter from the Park and Recreation Commission. A copy of the letters will be attached to the minutes.

Erica Gelvin, Board of Education Chairman, discussed the education budget and reviewed some of the budget savings with the board. The board conducted a facilities study to look at all of the buildings. The study concluded with an \$800,000 savings for this year due to the closing of Pierson School. The Board of Education is also recommending reducing capital by \$155,050 for a total budget of \$398,971.

Karin Gosselink, Andrea Reu, Laura Colebank, Maria Moran and Charleen Best all spoke in favor of the education budget and asked for no further reductions.

Michael Hughes, 8 River Road, spoke against the education budget.

Mary Gilbert, 45 Pearl Street, discussed the Library budget and asked the board to restore the \$10,000 reduction that was made to the budget.

John Allen, spoke in support of the town planner position.

Joe Schettino, Park & Recreation chairman, asked the board for them to restore funding to the repairs & maintenance budget.

Bob Werner, 13 Leffingwell Street, spoke on doing more with less and partnering with local business leaders.

Bruce Farmer addressed both budgets and spoke against the town planner position.

Helena Erskine, Senior exercise instructor, provided the board with a little history on the class and spoke on the need for the program to continue.

Christina Acampora, Glenwood Road, asked for \$10,000 to be restored to the library budget.

Melissa Yetso, 92 Glenwood Road, spoke on the parking lot near the Eliot baseball fields. The town rents the parking lot every year.

Richard Santanillo asked for \$10,000 to be restored to the library budget.

Phil Sengle spoke in support of the town planner position and the police overtime budget.

Amy Hursh, Founders Village asked the board to help seniors.

Andrea Reu spoke in support of the town budget.

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Pam Fritz, president of the CTA, spoke on surplus funds, tax increases and declining enrollment. Fritz also talked in support of the Town Planner position.

James Connolly spoke in favor of the Town Planner position and restoring funding to the library.

The public hearing was closed at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Schettino

Administrative Assistant

Mary Schettino

From: hartgramma@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, April 4, 2019 7:13 PM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: Attn: Board of Finance.

To Mary Schettino - I am writing in regard to a very urgent situation - the canceling of the Monday and Friday Jazzercise at the Clinton Town Hall - That announcement was met with disbelief, when the instructor, Helena Erskine, shared that possibility - Our most stunned emotion was that ALL OF US - and I repeat ALL OF US are strongly committed to exercise fitness and we could not grasp the message that this cancellation brought with it ! ! ! There are varying levels of fitness in a "senior" class like these but each and every member gets great satisfaction and hopefully, gains a bit each and every class, in maintaining Good Health ! ! As a former fitness instructor myself, I am totally committed to the benefits of regular exercise and cannot - REPEAT CANNOT imagine even the consideration of discontinuing these VERY, VERY beneficial work-out classes. I implore that this situation will be looked at, very, very carefully ! ! Most sincerely, Norma Hart.

Mary Schettino

From: leejacobus@aol.com
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2019 1:13 PM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: SENIOR BENEFITS IN CLINTON

Dear Ms. Schettino,

Joanna Jacobus and I, Lee Jacobus, want to urge you not to cut the Senior Jazercise program. We are age 81 and 83, and find this particular form of exercise especially beneficial to our health. Helena Erskine runs this program brilliantly. We have used this valuable exercise program for more than 3 years and have come to depend upon it.

When cutting services, it is depressing to think that you aim at seniors and limit even further the few services you give us.

Given the extraordinary taxes that we pay Clinton, I think you can find a way to benefit seniors through this program.

Or, perhaps you could justify the reason for depriving us seniors of a reasonable and effective means of contributing to our health and well-being. Town Hall is not just for politicians and employees. It would be nice to think that you had our well-being in mind when you plan your budgets and that you would make an effort to find room for us.

Lee A. Jacobus
Professor Emeritus, The University of Connecticut
1 Laconia Drive
Clinton, CT. 06413
860-664-8028

Mary Schettino

From: Carole Kehoe <hopecltom@att.net>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2019 12:31 PM
To: Mary Schettino
Cc: ONejl@clintonct.org; Jane Scully Welch
Subject: Senior Jazercise program

My name is Carole Kehoe and I have been a resident of Clinton, Ct. for over 50 years. I love living in Clinton! On great joy for myself, my son and my 89 year old neighbor has been to attend the Senior Jazercise class in the Clinton town hall for over 10 years. What makes this class special is it encourages us to exercise while we freely can adapt to what we each personally can physically do. Because of this freedom to adapt my son who lives at home and is 28 years old with Down Syndrome and others with disabilities attend the classes when they choose to. It is great to be able to say Clinton supports all elderly and special needs together even though we have no specific Senior center as others towns do. Many of us who attend these classes also support and plan shopping at our local businesses after class as we are in the downtown area and thus it is convenient to do so.

I recently volunteered to be on a new Senior task force hoping to help increase activities for seniors in Clinton among other Senior topics. So I am greatly disappointed that two members on the board of Finance want to cut this Senior benefit. It is a very small expense to the total Town budge, at the yearly cost is \$6850 as it has been the same for years. Members who attend this program also contribute to this cost and decrease it by paying at each class. Surely the citizens in the seniors and special needs community in Clinton are worth a few dollars a week per person? Please put the Senior Jazercise program back in the budget for the coming year. THANK YOU, CAROLE KEHOE AND MY SON MARK . 1 HIDE-A-WAY, CLINTON, CT

Mary Schettino

From: Jacquelyn wolf <jackiejmw@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2019 8:41 AM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: Senior jazzercise

Good morning. This is a plea to continue the senior jazzercise and not add it to the list of budget cuts. This program is not only an important source of exercise but promotes a camaraderie for attendees. It is a means to socialize and check on the welfare of attendees. It also helps with strength and balance which can cut down on costly falls and injuries - less emergency calls which saves time and money. In addition, instructor Helena Erskine is dedicated to this program. She not only teaches the sessions but adds humor and happiness which is why so many return each week.

Please reconsider adding senior Jazzercise to the list of budget cuts.

Jacquelyn Wolf

Mary Schettino

From: KARL JOHNSON <kjohnson31@snet.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 4, 2019 1:08 PM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: Jazzercise Program

Dear Mary and other members of the Board of Finance,
I was so sad to hear that you were thinking of cutting the Jazzercise Program at the town hall.
I have really enjoyed it and I know if you tried it you would enjoy it too! Please do not cut
this program, it is such a great benefit to our community.

Thank you,
Cindy Johnson

Mary Schettino

From: Sharon Durham <sfdurham14@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 7, 2019 9:00 PM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: Attention Board of Finance

Dear Board of Finance,

I am writing to ask you to reconsider your intention to eliminate the senior jazzercise program. As a participant, I can attest first hand that the class always is well attended and that every participant benefits from Helena Erskine's tutelage. There are not many programs available to seniors that provide age appropriate exercise. The value of physical fitness to seniors cannot be overstated. It seems like every week a new study is published detailing yet another advantage exercise provides individuals, no matter what their age. In the scheme of things, it is a relatively small amount of money expended by the town, and that sum is definitely worth every penny for the good it provides to so many people.

Please do not cut the program from the town budget.

Sincerely,

Sharon Durham

Mary Schettino

From: MICHAEL JOHN VALENTI <djmichaeljohn@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 11:04 AM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: To be read to the Board of Finance April 10th, 2019

Good Morning Mary and our Board of Finance this evening,

I am a Henry Carter Hull Library Board of Directors member. I have great concern over the Board of Finance not giving weight and importance to the financial needs of the Clinton library. We shouldn't be shrinking. We should be growing! To cut monies that provide a number of educational, entertainment and business programs for adults and children would deprive thousands of Clinton residents that visit the library every year, the services they currently receive and enjoy at no cost, thanks to you. It's our tax dollars working every day for us, as attested by just driving by HCH at any time and witnessing an almost full parking lot. Those folks are taking advantage of materials and programs that would otherwise cost them hundreds if not thousands of dollars if they didn't go to the library for them. e.g. Consumer Reports, Ancestry.com, Roku and Classes on Tech Support and Self Improvement to mention just a few. In addition, many residents don't realize that the library also functions as a Senior Center.

Not only do I propose keeping the budget status quo, but putting back in Ten Thousand Dollars to reopen the library on Sundays and to have adequate materials that so many have discovered are there for free or low cost for them, thanks to you. Let's keep the prestigious rating we have of being one of the top ten libraries in the country for a town our size. More importantly, consider that supporting the education of a child today will result in that child one day finding a cure for that disease you'll get!

Stop in for a tour sometime. You'll be amazed at what we offer. I'll even bet you become a member if you're not one already. Remember, did I mention it's free.

Thank You Board of Finance in advance to do the right thing.

Respectfully Submitted by proud resident and Library Board Member,

Michael John Valenti

97 Airline Road

Clinton, CT

Mary Schettino

From: Michael Brochu <mbrochu22@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 7:50 AM
To: Mary Schettino
Subject: Reinstate Library Funds Cut By BOF

To the BOF,

My name is Michael Brochu and reside at 50 James Vincent Drive. I am a long time resident of Clinton and currently serve on the Library Board.

The Clinton Library is a very important resource to the town especially to our youth. It is the place that people of all ages go to and feel safe. The resources provided by the Library are for people with no discrimination of age. The HCH Library is one of the best if not the Best in the state of CT.

Through discussions with various people in town I constantly hear total support for the Library and praise for the services and programs it provides. It is for this reason I sought to join the Library Board last September.

The Library Board developed and presented to the town a thoughtful and lean Budget for 2019/2020. Please consider Reinstating the Library funds cut by the BOF. This will allow the HCH Library to continue to provide the First Class services that the people of the Town of Clinton wants and deserves.

Thank You for your consideration.

Michael J Brochu
50 James Vincent Drive
Clinton, CT 06413



Board of Finance Members:

The Connecticut Economic Resource Center supports towns and cities retaining professional planning staff to assist with the guidance of appropriate growth and development in the community. Over 100 of Connecticut's 169 municipalities have a planning function on staff. Using the Plan of Conservation and Development as a guiding document, local planners in the State of Connecticut help to review applications with the POCD goals and objectives in mind. They assist the volunteer land use board and commission members in their activities to approve or deny these applications accordingly. They also offer amendments to the zoning regulations to solidify what a community does and does not want regarding certain types and levels of development.

Planners prevent towns from disorganized growth by keeping the community values at the forefront of these critical land use decisions. These actions help make a town more economically efficient and environmentally friendly.

For a town the size of Clinton with the level of its commercial tax base, it is unusual not to have a planner on staff. With Clinton ushering in a new form of government (town manager and town council), the community seeks professional leadership and a town planner is a critical component of that professional leadership. The land use process is key to successful growth in Clinton and having a staff resource dedicated to the appropriate types and locations of development will ensure that this growth remains true to the community's character. Streamlining the land use regulatory process to maintain a robust business environment can be best accomplished with a planner. This will set the new Town Manager up for success.

Best,

Courtney Hendricson
Vice President of Municipal Services
Connecticut Economic Resource Center

To the Members of the Clinton Board of Finance:

We are writing this letter asking you to reconsider the cuts you have made to our proposed budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020.

For the number resources and facilities in our care and charge, the number of people our department services and the value of those services to all the people of our town, our budget is quite prudential and economical. Moreover, our department combines both frugality and practicality when using the funds entrusted to us. We cannot recall a time when we have returned to your board to request additional funds. Our department accomplishes much with what we are given and encourages the community to do even more (saving tax dollars along the way).

The cuts you have proposed would not just be burdensome but would prevent us from maintaining and cleaning facilities at a minimal level as well as prevent us from doing the job we are mandated to do in serving the public and fulfilling our duty to the town. For instance, you have cut our general supplies budget by \$2500.00, leaving us with just \$1000.00. The beach passes alone cost \$600.00 to produce. We are left with only \$400.00 to run and supply an office and staff for an entire year!

Our repairs and maintenance budget is required to maintain the facilities in a safe and clean condition and is required beyond the infrastructure repairs or projects planned for the long term through DPW. As a result of the cuts made to our repair and maintenance budget this year, we are unable to treat the lily pads at Heser's Pond. With this budget you are guaranteeing that they won't be treated for two years consecutively.

If field lights need repair or playground equipment fails, it is up to us to correct the problems immediately for safety sake. The alternative is a shutdown. DPW has never been required to respond and they are not prepared to do so.

Our general maintenance budget was cut by \$3000.00. You have left us with \$800.00 to cover supplies and general maintenance of the buildings not covered by other department (e.g. painting, small repairs, paint, brushes, batteries, locks, chains, etc.)

Respectfully submitted

*Joe Schettino
Chairman, P & R Commission*

*John H. Potter Director P&R.
Bo Potter*