

Board of Finance
Budget Hearing

Wednesday, March 16, 2022
Waterford Town Hall

Present: Chairman Glenn Patterson, Ronald R. Fedor, John Sheehan, Kevin Petchark, Robert Tuneski, Baird Welch-Collins, Joe Filippetti

Elected: Robert J. Brule, First Selectman; Jody Narzarchyk, Selectwoman; Paul Goldstein, RTM Moderator, Thomas Dembek, RTM.

Staff: Julie Watson-Jones, Registrar of Voters; Patricia Waters, Registrar of Voters; Paige Walton, Assessor; Alan Wilensky, Tax Collector; Kimberly Allen, Finance Director; Maryellen McConnell, Secretary

1. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:
A quorum was established and a call to order was established at 7:13 pm, March 16, 2022.
2. Public comment:
3. **Standing Motion:** was made by John Sheehan and seconded by Ronald Fedor to tentatively approve the budget requests for FY22/23 for the remainder of the budget meet.

4. **Registrar of Voters Budget:**

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the Registrar of Voters budget request for FY22/23 in the total amount of \$78,204.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

5. **Assessor Department Budget:**

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the Assessor Department budget request for FY22/23 in the total amount of \$259,344.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

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TOWN CLERK

6. Board of Assessment Appeals Budget:

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the Board of Assessment budget request for FY22/23 in the total amount of \$1,620.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

7. Tax Collector Budget:

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the Tax Collector budget request for FY22/23 in the total amount of \$210,139.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

8. Representative Town Meeting Budget:

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the Representative Town Meeting budget request for FY22/23 in the total amount of \$18,903.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

9. Board of Selectmen Budget:

An opening statement was made by First Selectman Brule regarding the Board of Selectmen's budget. A copy of this statement is attached.

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Ronald Fedor to approve the Board of Selectmen budget request for FY22/23 in the total amount of \$207,605.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

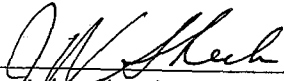
10. Adjournment:

Motion by John Sheehan and **seconded** by Baird Welch-Collins to adjourn the Budget Meeting of the Board of Finance at 8:22 p.m.

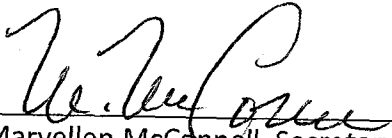
Vote: 7-0-0

Motion: Passed

Respectfully submitted,



John Sheehan, Clerk



Maryellen McConnell, Secretary



First Selectman's Statement to the Board of Finance – Board of Selectmen Budget March 16, 2022

Thank you for Mr. Chairman.

I am proud to present you a budget tonight that features a minimal increase, continued professional development and a commitment to our volunteers and elected officials in town who serve honorably and should be recognized formally by my office.

I am also proud to share that Waterford's Grand List has increased 1.69% and 3.7% over the two past years, the two highest increases in the past 10 years. I would also like to share that CT Magazine recently selected Waterford a Top 15 Hot Spot in Connecticut, due to its red hot real estate market, low taxes, beaches and excellent school system!

As we are all well-aware, the pandemic changed our lives forever. Changed how we worked, how we provide services so no one fell between the cracks. It changed how we assist residents who lose employment and support those who were forced to choose between, feeding their family, or paying for electricity.

The great news, is that we maintained a vibrant Waterford Veterans Coffeehouse 70 members strong, and provided them meals. We delivered food baskets and holiday dinners to seniors in town and checked on them, to ensure they were safe, prior to storms, if power outages occurred.

I am proud to say, Town Hall never closed during the pandemic, Emergency Responders showed up to work every day as did our amazing Department Heads and staff, as well as elected officials. The town held numerous vaccine and testing clinics both for Waterford residents and regionally. We saw our vaccination rate be one of the highest in the state. And yes, when test kits, N95 masks needed to be

distributed, you found us at Waterford Beach distributing thousands of kits and PPE.

I am proud, and honored, to work with Jody and Beth, because of them, the Waterford Board of Selectmen held Food Drives all year, collecting thousands and thousands of dollars' worth of donations. All because we care about our community and one another. I thank them both for working so closely with me over the past year and appreciate them.

I focused on improving our ability to communicate with residents. With your support and the support of the RTM, I purchased the Everbridge emergency communication program, to announce emergencies to residents who register to receive these phone calls. I have encouraged Department Heads to create and utilize Facebook pages to communicate with their constituents, as I do. I have also utilized the town website to make announcements, because many residents don't have Facebook, and have this past year created a Twitter and Instagram page for our younger residents.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the number of positive changes in town that have helped re-shape town government to be more efficient, more specifically, the creation of a town-side Information Technology Department, Facilities Manager and Human Resources Department.

I have listened and worked closely with this Board, the RTM the Superintendent of Schools and Director of Finance over the past year to create an Information Technology Department and a Human Service Department for the town, by separating from the Board of Education and creating a transparent budget for each.

Over the past year, the town saw 8 retirements and 169 years of institutional knowledge leave the town. The town hired a new Police Chief, a new Finance Technician, a new Library Director, two Full-Time Firefighters, a new Assistant Assessor, an Assistant Building Official, a new Recreation & Parks Program Coordinator, a new Director of Fire Services, and the aforementioned, IT Manager and Human Resource Director. All the while ensuring we provided quality services.

Inter-Departmental projects is the new norm, saved money and increased the pride in town employees. The Beach Bathroom and ADA Pathway Project showed Recreation & Parks, Utility Commission, Public Works and the Planning Department

could all work together, and instead of contracting out all the work, they could perform the work, and in the end, take pride in the amazing work they did. The Town Center Park Project could be another collaborative effort!

Has it been easy? No. Have I learned a lot about our amazing town, residents, employees, volunteers and elected officials? I sure have. I have the best job in the world...I get to help people every day, it's hard for me to call that "work".

My goals for this year will be on maintaining a stable Mill Rate, prioritizing public safety, ensuring we deliver high level human services to all residents, creating a more accessible Town Center and continuing to develop a 10-year strategic plan for the town's future to name a few. Again, I would like to thank the Board of Finance for the work you do for our residents and the support you have provided me. It is an exciting time for Waterford and I am excited about our future!

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Brule

Rob Brule

First Selectman