

**APPROVED BOARD OF FINANCE MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2017**

The Public Hearing of the Board of Finance was held on Monday, March 27, 2017 in the auditorium of the East Ridge Middle School at 7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Dave Ulmer, Chairman, Jessica Mancini, Vice Chairman,
Marty Heiser; Mike Raduazzo; and Sean Connelly

Town Officials: First Selectman, Rudy Marconi; Dr. Karen Baldwin, Supt. of Schools
Power Point Presentations Attached to These Minutes and made a part thereof.

A G E N D A

- Proposed Town Budget (First Selectman, Rudy Marconi)
- Proposed School Budget (Dr. Baldwin)
- Board of Finance (David Ulmer)
- Public Comments

Mr. Ulmer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

TOWN BUDGET/FIRST SELECTMAN, RUDY MARCONI PRESENTING

Please see attached presentation.

BOARD OF EDUCATION/DR. KAREN BALDWIN PRESENTING

Please see attached presentation.

BOARD OF FINANCE/DAVID ULMER PRESENTING

Please see attached presentation.

Voters/Taxpayers who spoke:

Joseph Adams – 44 Langstroth Drive

Noted that senior residents are not able to pay for a tax increase. Social security payment increase was taken away by the increase in the medicare premium deducted, resulting in a net decrease in social security income. His pay as a para professional at the Ridgefield schools has not increased in eight or nine years. He suggested that Town/BOE employees be made to pay a greater share of the cost of benefits. Also suggested reducing expenditures. Mr. Adams asked Mr. Marconi 1) if the Town has three ambulances (Yes) 2) is there is a plan to increase the parking at Founders Hall (Yes, we just haven't done it yet)

Cynthia Conti – 560 North Salem Road

Ms. Conti is Ridgefield's Deputy Democratic Registrar of Voters and spoke in favor of restoring the cut the selectmen made to the Registrar's budget.

Cynthia Bruno – 355 Bennetts Farm Road

Ms. Bruno is Ridgefield's Democratic Registrar of Voters and spoke in favor of restoring the cut the selectmen made to the Registrar's budget.

John Early – 92 Fieldcrest Drive

Cited data for the last thirteen years: BOE has increased by \$33MM (a factor of 50%, \$3.8k per household); \$8,210 increase per student in the school system (75% increase in 13 years, 40% increase when you allow for inflation); SAT scores have not changed. Ridgefield is not getting the return in terms of measureable results.

Kevin Clarkin – 69 North Street

Supports the BOE budget as presented.

Phil Rosengren – 4 Washington Avenue

Moved to Ridgefield ± seven years ago for the quality of the schools. Supports the BOE budget with no cuts.

Radya Krell – Worcester Heights Drive:

Supports the BOE and adequate and fair pay for our teachers.

Stephanie Anderson – 3 Barrack Hill Road

Supports the BOE budget as presented.

Sandra Mahoney – 18 Wild Turkey Court

Supports the BOE budget as presented

Amanda Mason – 17 Wooster Hts Drive

Supports the BOE budget as presented

Ed Tyrell – 17 Pond Road

The BOE's request makes no sense given the continuing decline in enrollment. Recommended that the Board of Finance ignore the BOE's 3.48% budget request and begin its deliberations at the 2.5% increase recommended by the Board of Selectmen.

John Querillo – 14 Linden Road

Spoke about the quality of education and improving the health of the population.

David Pope – 39 Aspen Mill Road

Use it or lose it.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Karen Rodgers

Recording Secretary