

MINUTES
WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

SWIFT MIDDLE SCHOOL
AUDITORIUM
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2009, 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Elaine Adams, Vice Chairman
Gary Bernier
David Demirs
Richard DiFederico
Carl Mancini
Raymond Primini, Vice Chairman
Paul Rinaldi
Thomas Winn

ABSENT: Richard Fusco

OTHERS PRESENT: Joseph Apicella, Board of Education
Karen Baldwin, Superintendent of Schools
Gina Calabrese, Chairman, Board of Education
Mary Colangelo, Secretary, Board of Education
Thad Hasbrouck, Director of Curriculum and Professional Services
Kevin Killeen, Board of Education
Tom Lambert, Board of Education
Richard Mazzamauro, Vice Chairman, Board of Education
Frank Nardelli, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director
Janice Pond, Board of Education

1. Convene Public Hearing - 7:00 P.M.

Ms. Adams, Chairman, called the Budget Public Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Adams: Just for informational purposes, the way we're going to run this meeting, we're going to have a presentation by Gary Bernier on behalf of the Town Council, and then we will have a presentation by Karen Baldwin on behalf of the Board of Education. After that we will open up the Council and the Board (inaudible) open it up to public participation on the budget (inaudible). Copies of the Town's budget are up here if anyone wants them (inaudible). After all the comments on the budget, the Council will then close the Public Hearing and the Town Council will hold a Special Meeting to consider the budgets for 2009/2010, consider setting the machine vote for the 2009/2010 budgets, and consider setting the ballot for referendum for fiscal year 2009/2010 and then the Town meeting time and place for fiscal year 2009/2010.

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At this time the Council will listen to public comments on the budget. It's important tonight to also note that there are a lot of staff members here present, department heads from the Board of Education and the Town Council, so if there are any specific questions on the budget, they will be directed to me and then to the appropriate person to answer them.

The Notice of the Public Hearing is as follows:

NOTICE OF BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
FISCAL YEAR 2009/2010 BUDGETS
TOWN OF WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT

The legal voters of the Town of Watertown and those eligible to vote in Town Meetings are hereby WARNED AND NOTIFIED of a Budget Public Hearing to be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Swift Middle School, 250 Colonial Street, Oakville, Connecticut to hear comments on the following Fiscal Year 2009/2010 budgets.

The Town Council proposes:

A.	Town General Fund	\$24,810,584
B.	School General Fund	\$36,247,908
	General Fund Total	\$61,058,492
C.	Town Road Aid	\$ 131,486
D.	Water Operations	\$ 1,379,503
E.	Water Capital	\$ 183,900
F.	Water Extension	\$ 139,157
G.	Sewer Operations	\$ 2,011,691
H.	Sewer Capital	\$ 83,092
I.	Sewer Extension	\$ 131,436
J.	Water and Sewer Debt	\$ 171,250
K.	Crestbrook Golf Operations	\$ 732,854
L.	Local Capital Improvement	\$ 160,121

Copies of the proposed budgets will be available at the Budget Public Hearing and also may be picked up during business hours at the Town Hall Annex, 424 Main Street; Town Hall, 37 DeForest Street; Watertown Library, 470 Main Street; and the Board of Education, 10 DeForest Street. Copies are also available at the Police Department, 195 French Street, at any time.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 13th day of May, 2009.

Elaine H. Adams, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

RETURN OF NOTICE
TOWN OF WATERTOWN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

I hereby certify that on May 13, 2009 I left a duplicate copy of the attached Notice of Budget Public Hearing, Town of Watertown, Connecticut with Virginia Russo its Assistant Town Clerk.

I further certify that on May 13, 2009, I caused a copy of said Notice of Public Hearing to be published in the Waterbury Republican American, which newspaper has a substantial circulation in said Town.

I further certify that on May 13, 2009, I caused to be set upon the signpost or other exterior places nearest the Office of the Town Clerk and all other places and signposts designated by the Town, a written copy of said Notice of Public Hearing signed by the Town Manager of the Town of Watertown.

I further certify that all of the above acts took place at least five (5) days before the holding of the Public Hearing on May 19, 2009.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 13th day of May, 2009.

Charles A. Frigon, Town Manager
Town of Watertown

TOWN CLERK'S CERTIFICATION AS TO
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND RETURN OF NOTICE

I hereby certify that the attached Notice of Budget Public Hearing and the foregoing Return of Notice of Budget Public Hearing are duly recorded in the records of the Town of Watertown, Connecticut, and that Joe Pawlak was Chairman of the Town Council on the date the Notice was signed and that Charles Frigon was Town Manager on the date the Return of Notice was signed..

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut, this 13th day of May, 2009.

Virginia Russo, Assistant Town Clerk
Town of Watertown

Gary Bernier, Chairman, Finance Subcommittee, Town Council

Mr. Bernier: My job tonight is very simple and that is because of a phenomenal effort on behalf of the Town Manager, Chuck Frigon and (inaudible) all of our department heads who put hour after hour to come back with my request to maintain a (inaudible) budget. Before (inaudible) Carl Mancini, Rich DiFederico, and Rich Fusco who could not be here tonight. With that said, there are 3 parts of the budget and (inaudible) the opportunity to talk to you about 2 parts of it.

As you can see there is no increase in (inaudible) with the exception of (inaudible) school bonding. That bond payment is \$1,400,428 so the total tax expenditure is an increase of \$1,424,438 that represents a 6.09% increase and because of revaluation the current mill rate is 24.35, the revised mill rate is 23.17 which is an actual decrease of 1.18 mills or a 4.85% decrease. Now the reason for this is (inaudible) last year before revaluation (inaudible) that was the revaluation 1 mill now represents \$1,800,000 and that's why (inaudible) a 4.21% increase (inaudible) in the mill rate.

The only other thing I'd like to say (inaudible) is I'd like to acknowledge our (inaudible) department heads, (inaudible) to maintain a lower budget and I'd like to acknowledge them, and thank them for their personal sacrifice (inaudible) and thank you very much.

Karen Baldwin, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Baldwin: I'm here tonight to help you understand the Board of Education's requested budget which tonight is at 2.96%. Many of you here tonight have seen our presentations multiple times from January up until mid April. As you know we started this process very early with the Board, in October, working with our principals, developing a building based and program based budget. (Inaudible) the work of the Budget Development at the Board of Education is probably the single most important task that we undertake because it is the perfect (inaudible) of our resources to help us meet our (inaudible) of educating all children in Watertown. We also (inaudible) develop budget priorities, and you can see them here. I'm very pleased to say tonight that this 2.96% requested increase by the Board of Education does allow us to continue to focus on the budget priorities and implement new (inaudible). 2.96% (inaudible) as well as reductions that the Board decided to take in the areas of Special Education, and also through the work of our Town's Finance Director on our health insurance, those two elements helped us to reduce this budget to the requested 2.96% but focused on our (inaudible) on the priorities and I have highlighted for you, the second item there (inaudible) with respect to class size, support services and learning resources. That's really important to us, to meet the needs of the wide range of learners in Watertown, and to continue to provide reasonable class sizes, (inaudible) professionals that interact with children on all levels of the organization and 2.96% does allow us to do that. We also want to, the 4th bullet there, address strength in comprehensive literacy, being able to intervene with our children at the earliest level, at the John Trumbull Primary School, strengthen our reading program and service delivery model throughout the school system. This budget does allow us to do that. And certainly the resources to maintain our facilities.

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As Mr. Bernier indicated we do have \$1,400,000 in school bonding in this municipal budget and certainly we want to maintain our schools and make sure that the infrastructure is well funded and we need to begin doing that, taking responsibility on the Board's side and also with the work of the Town and hopefully moving forward with the capital improvement plan.

This presents the current reality to the Board as much as Board of Education's budget. You can see that this year, 2008/2009, we are operating with a \$35,200,000. The requested budget is \$36,247,908, so an increase of a little more than \$1,000,000 resulting in a 2.96% increase.

Based upon these revisions, as you all know we started with a requested budget of 5.9%, this pie chart breaks down by expenditure category where this money is going, the \$36,200,000. I've heard a lot over the past several months about how can 81% of the Board of Education's budget go to salary and benefits. And the reason for that is because we are a service industry, we employ over 450 people on the Board and certainly we have teachers, non-certified employees, nurses, computer technicians, secretaries, paraprofessionals, so in order to meet the needs of 3,300 children, we are a personnel intensive industry and so 81% of this is tied up in salaries, wages, and benefits. Benefits are not just health insurance, they are also unemployment compensation, workers compensation, Medicaid, all of that, social security, so benefits take up about 15.5% of the requested 36.200,000 budget.

You've heard me talk about does this budget help us to meet the needs of all our learners, I think it's important to recognize who these kids are, the characteristics of our students and we do have diversity in Watertown in many different ways, and 5.3% of our students come from non-English speaking homes. Actually in this community 23 different languages are spoken and so that's part of the characteristics of the 3,300 children who walk into our school system every day. We also have children who come from socio economic disadvantaged situations and 11.9% of our children qualify for free or reduced lunch which is above our district reference group. We are a DERG (inaudible) community and in our DERG they find (inaudible) 10.5% of the children qualify for free and reduced lunch so we are a little more needy than the DERG. We also have (inaudible) 82% of our (inaudible) students arrive to John Trumbull having had an early educational experience. As much as 82% seems like a good figure, I am here to tell you we need to do better, especially when we look at our DERG, at 84%. In order for us to better (inaudible) continue and strengthen our (inaudible) early childhood in this community and find more ways to get children into school with the readiness for kindergarten. Another (inaudible) to help you to understand the work that takes place in our schools is the average class size at the elementary level in Watertown.

Our class size average is between 18 and 24 children, and our DERG, the district reference group is between 17 and 21, and State-wide it's between 18 and 21 and so we are very pleased with the 2.96% budget increase to be able to maintain this. This helps us focus on our original budget priority of maintaining class sizes. This year we are able to stay within this range and not taking a step back and help us incrementally address the needs.

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Again focusing on what we do here, provide children with the highest quality of education possible to prepare them to meet the demands of the 21st century. We still have works to do. We are improving, we exceed our DERG in many respects, but one of the areas that we need to focus on is our scholastic aptitude test. Our children at the High School, the class of 2008, we were below our State average in our math SAT and our reading SAT and we are just at aptitude in writing so all of the work that you will see that we're talking about in terms of learner's resources for children, textbooks, curriculum development, professional development for teachers, learners resources at John Trumbull for level readers so children are learning to comprehend and digest written material, all of that will help us to improve our student academic performance.

When we came forward to you with a 5.9% requested budget increase, and even today at this 2.96% requested increase, it's important for the community to know that a lot of hard work took place in making sure that we had done our due diligence in putting together a lean and reasonable budget request that we could (inaudible) find savings before we went public and I want to make clear that through the work of the Board, not only through contract negotiations with the teachers, but through our working with CL&P and purchasing a computer software program that turns off all our computers, all of this work resulted in over \$790,000 worth of savings before we even went forward with our original 5.9% budget request. I want to highlight also because again being a part of this community and traveled around Watertown and Oakville, I do hear people asking about the teacher's contract, that it seems to be a (inaudible). A couple of points that this slide, I hope can help illustrate is that the Board of Education negotiated a successful agreement with the Teacher's Union this past Fall. We reached an agreement in October and through a very arduous process we were able to achieve significant savings and it truly was a compromised settlement. Through contract negotiations and (inaudible) we saved over \$150,000. The Board took that reduction in our health insurance line when we developed this budget in January and that's through plan design changes. We were able to get either a (inaudible) plan and change copays and the PPO plan and increased the premium cost shared in the next 2 years of the contract. We also eliminated an insurance buyback provision and (inaudible) 2009/2010 the unit agreed to a step freeze in their contract and that results in over \$420,000 at cost of living or cost savings. Step costs for 2009/2010 would have been a 2.65% increase and just so you know, that involves, we have about 265 teachers, (inaudible) contract, 95 are on the top step, so 150 teachers were affected by this step freeze and the Union agreed to it in negotiations so it's important to know that there was, back in the Fall, during some turbulent economic times, a settlement was reached that both sides felt at that time was reasonable and so the Board is very pleased with this settlement and recognizes the challenges that being an employer today represents in this community and we will continue to do our due diligence through negotiations and through other strategies to try and contain costs, but I do want to let the community know that that's the (inaudible) with the Teacher's Union (inaudible).

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As many of you are aware, the Barack Obama administration moves forward with a stimulus package known as the American Recovery Reinvestment Act, and Watertown, through the Individual with Disabilities and Education Act, we received over \$800,000 and we are able to use some of that money to offset this year's budget request and that is a windfall for us. You will see a slide that demonstrates that we intended to use about \$196,000 of the stimulus package money to help offset or supplement (inaudible) and so we are very appreciative of this and we do also intend to use it to help strengthen, that's the purpose of the Act, to help strengthen some of our programs across the school system in terms of professional development and to provide services to our children.

We started with a 5.9% budget, we are today at a 2.96% budget and again we accomplished this through using the American Recovery Reinvestment Act, \$196,000 (inaudible) excess costs (inaudible) we built this budget in January assuming we would receive just 75% reimbursement from the State on that, most recently we've learned that we'll get 90% reimbursement from the State, that resulted in a \$178,000 in savings. Special Education Tuition, through the course of every year, children present themselves to us in there that we don't have the programs to fully staff (inaudible) in Watertown so we have to provide tuition to provide them with the best quality (inaudible) necessary. We built in contingency placement this year in the budget, because that's been the past practice and if we don't do it you end up spending it and trying to find the money elsewhere, so we built in contingency tuition placement. We're taking that out of this budget to meet the 2.96% and we will deal with these problems as they arise in 2009/2010. Special Education Transportation – we have two contingencies transportation costs. Often we have to transport children to Plainville to a clinic or the (Inaudible) Center in Hartford. There are different tuition places where children receive their education and (inaudible) special education transportation line as well. The IDEA Grant is our regular grant entitlement for special education. We are moving 3 paraprofessionals who are typically funded on the Board's side, we are moving that to the grant and we are also moving some professional development to the grant so we are able to reduce the budget. We have 3 known retirements in the school system as well as one re-employed retired teacher who is working under (inaudible) so when we look at those 4 positions, and we can replace them for less money, it results in a (inaudible) dollar savings. Again it's early (inaudible) the work of the Town's Finance Director and the Board's Interim Director of Operations to (inaudible) appropriate health insurance number so we are reducing our budget by \$246,000 to come up with a 2.96% budget increase.

When we think about where do these budget reductions come in the Board's expenditure categories, \$315,000 is in salaries and wages, \$346,000 is employee benefits, that's the health insurance, professional services is \$57,000, the transportation which I had mentioned before (inaudible) is \$50,000 and the tuition, that's excess cost, and that is also the contingency part and so that is now the Board's budget in terms of (inaudible) that's where all these reductions have been taken.

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(Inaudible) a lot of questions around concessions and the Board met with every bargaining unit in March to (inaudible) for possible concessions, to set the landscape (inaudible). Since April, (inaudible) when we were asked to go and create a scenario of what a 1.5% budget would look like, we knew we would have to aggressively work with our local unions to see what we could accomplish in a concession environment and certainly neither party is required to open an already negotiated contract. Now to the groups credit here, Watertown on the Board's side, people have, each group has entered into conversation with the Board of Ed, we tell our story and the community's story of our challenges this year and in the future and getting a reasonable budget to support public education and so it was not hard for us, working with the teachers and the administrators (inaudible) financial interest, that we're not (inaudible) the Board and the teacher's group and the (inaudible) group (inaudible) to provide a high quality of education to all children and so we defined that financial interest and we understand that it is not a one way street, and I'm here to tell you tonight, that late yesterday the Teacher's Union agreed to a 1 day furlough resulting in a \$86,848 (inaudible). And also that the Watertown Administrator's Association has agreed to a 1 day furlough resulting in a \$4,272 and people should not underestimate the significance of this. The Connecticut Education Association, the C.E.A., has pretty clearly taken a position that we are not interested in concessions and so the teachers (inaudible) broke rank with the Town's organization, they broke rank with the C.E.A.; virtually no other groups in the State are doing this Wolcott, I think, is a C.E.A. affiliate, they, I believe, have achieved a furlough and I'm hearing that (inaudible) but other than that no other C.E.A. affiliated community has been able to achieve a concession, so on behalf of the Board we want to publicly thank the Teacher's Association in Watertown for working with us and understanding our commitment and our mutual interest. (Inaudible) agreement that no positions will be eliminated and so we are here tonight that we can through (inaudible) concession bargaining, we can reduce this budget to 2.7% but we need all of your help to support this and get this passed at referendum, assuming that we won't go any further because if we have to reduce this budget further, then the furlough days are null and void, we don't have an agreement because further reductions could certainly affect (inaudible) positions which could really be, in order to get these furlough concessions, the Board agreed that it would not eliminate positions. So we are very pleased and honored to be working with these groups (inaudible) that we can still deliver a meaningful and powerful educational experience for the children and coming in at a 2.7% increase in education funding.

And certainly just to remind everybody of what our work really entails on the Board, we are focusing on achievement for all kids, and in order to do that, there is a list of work that's on-going, this is not (inaudible) prior superintendents have talked to you about the needs and (inaudible) textbooks, we need to intervene early in comprehensive literacy, we need to focus on our English language learners, we need to maintain our class sizes, we need a capital improvement and a maintenance plan, we are going to have by 2011 five (inaudible). We need to be (inaudible) capital improvement plan, a capital maintenance plan, the Board worked this February to develop its own plan in turn but we need help funding that and that requires a commitment to the Town's side as well and lots of dialogue around this process. Again early intervention, helping to identify children who have (inaudible) special learning and provide (inaudible) alternative programs, (inaudible) development, really it's a continuous, focus on continued improved learning throughout the district.

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I believe that was my last slide. Thank you.

Mr. Bernier: (Inaudible) to verify that, but the capital costs is \$24,810,584 that 2.96% for the school general fund is at \$36,247,908 and if my math is correct, (inaudible) total general fund total would be \$60,957,372.

Town Road Aid	\$ 131,486
Water Operations	\$ 1,379,503
Water Capital	\$ 183,900
Water Extension	\$ 139,157
Sewer Operations	\$ 2,011,691
Sewer Capital	\$ 83,092
Sewer Extension	\$ 131,436
Water and Sewer Debt	\$ 171,250
Crestbrook Golf Operations	\$ 732,854
Local Capital Improvement	\$ 160,121

That is the Council's proposed budget as we go forward. Thank you.

Ms. Adams: At this time the Town Council and Board of Education members can go up to the stage and we'll open public participation.

David Minnich, 319 Thomaston Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Minnich: (Inaudible) I guess everyone is real happy and I certainly am too, but I came to you suggesting that the budget for the Town and the School as presented here (inaudible) zero percent (inaudible). Looking at salary issues related to the schools and that certainly has been done and it goes a long way to (inaudible) set for the Town to vote on and to adopt. I have a concern though that I do wish to address with the Council, and I think it's an area that hasn't been discussed yet. When all is said and done with all of the numbers that we have here before us, the question that we all would ask ourselves, as a average homeowner because of revaluation (inaudible), for an average home in this community, what will be the increase in property taxes for that home next year compared to this year? When all is said is done, the question really is how much more am I going to pay. And working with Frank Nardelli and (inaudible) to the Town Council and the Finance Subcommittee. Part of this \$91,000 which will alternate a little bit, the average home in this community will be on that home, a 9.98% increase in taxes and I say to you that is huge and it's kind of (inaudible) I suppose for what we had before, and what the Board has come before you this evening as well as what you have done, and we look at the new increase from the budgetary increase and percent increase it's a 4.05% increase and that (inaudible) really out of line. (Inaudible) but that increase of the 9.98% (inaudible) is a huge number which is due to the revaluation.

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On May 15th of this year Governor Rell signed a bill that's gone through the Legislature of this year that has been proposed by many (inaudible) well receive bill (inaudible) that allows the Town Council or the Aldermen or the legislative body of this community to have for this year and the next two years to have this revaluation not effective, but it would be effective beginning in the 3rd year and beyond. Because of the differences relating to the 9.98% or less and the 4% or thereabouts that we are talking about, I would (inaudible) the Town Council to consider, on behalf of this community, to not have the revaluation effective for this year. I'm not looking into proposing beyond that cause I think there needs to be a review and some discussion and so forth, I don't mean to take this time to go through the proposed (inaudible) I have spent some time on it (inaudible) but this doesn't affect the Town to go forward with the school and the Town one bit, but yet assist the taxpayer to which the Governor and the Legislature (inaudible) for many communities (inaudible) so I implore the Town Council to take up this issue after this meeting, cause you're obviously meeting about the bottom line budget (inaudible) but in terms of what the property taxes are, you obviously don't need to set that until after the adoption of the budget at referendum, but please take a look at this, that will help this community and also the 9.98% would not be 9.98%. My math comes up with something between a 4% and 5% increase, not a 9.98%. Thank you.

Ms. Calabrese: (Inaudible) Mr. Nardelli's exception to Mr. Minnich's statements. Do you agree with Mr. Minnich's assessment that an average homeowner

Mr. Nardelli: Well again with revaluation as you know all the property values were different. I mean the average for the residential people went up 16%. You have to also remember that the motor vehicles taxes will come down because the mill rate is coming down, the personal property taxes that businesses pay in Town will also come down because the mill rate is coming down, and also the industrial properties only went up about 7% so they won't have as much an impact as the residential would. Some people will pay more than the 10%, some will pay less, it depends on the valuation of their homes.

Nadine Savage, 629 Linkfield Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Savage: I came here tonight requesting that you do the right thing and vote for a 2.96% increase in budget but you've been presented tonight with what seems like a better option. (Inaudible) win/win situation for everyone. You are able to present a reduced increase to the taxpayers and a decreased amount in taxes that they thought they would pay, while the parents (inaudible) there will be no reductions in teachers or programs to the children. So voting for a 2.7% increase is really a no brainer situation and the right thing to do.

Heather Macchi, 200 Eaton Street, Oakville, CT 06779

Ms. Macchi: I've come here tonight to voice my concern about the budgets cuts, 2009. Some of you may know I'm a student at Watertown High School and a member of the weight lifting team. Though I'm not old enough to vote or pay taxes, I feel my opinion should be heard. I understand that the economic pressures are affecting everyone, and everyone has to (inaudible) face them, but how you do that is not a reason to vote no. A vote no will (inaudible) your taxes but it will affect the learning quality of the students from Pre-K through 12th grade. (Inaudible) teachers will be cut in the Watertown school district. (Inaudible) students will not be allowed to (inaudible). Mr. McQueeney is not only a valued P.E. teacher but (inaudible). He also volunteers his time (inaudible), assistant coach for our football team and is always there to help when we need it. (Inaudible) Mr. McQueeney and many teachers like him (inaudible) participating in extracurricular activities. (Inaudible) so please vote yes and (inaudible) Watertown educational system. Thank you.

Jennifer Shields, 141 Merriam Lane, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Shields: Years ago our country was founded to provide us with a multitude of freedoms. Education freedom, we fought many wars (inaudible) to keep our country strong and intelligent. In the world communist countries are (inaudible) education. (Inaudible) strength perseverance, and most of all intelligence (Inaudible)a superior education. That means schools. (Inaudible). The most important aspect of our education is teachers and books. (Inaudible). Thank you.

Katie Gordon, 115 Guernseytown Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Gordon: I want to thank the teachers for the effort and sacrifices that you make every single day and again the extraordinary (inaudible) cutting at the last minute to save our budget by (inaudible). Mr. Rinaldi and Mr. Primini, thank you for last week for standing up and being heard and for putting forward a motion for the 2.96% budget instead of the 2.25%. As you mentioned the difference between the two was quite small, but the effects were tremendous. And the fact that (inaudible) that was the right thing to do and that (inaudible) from this point forward at 2.7% which is being recommended tonight. Mr. Bernier, I recognize that you value education and that you (inaudible). I also recognize that you've worked very hard and that it's been a priority to you (inaudible) town and the residents. I understand that you have tried to look for every possible cost saving measure so that you could get (inaudible) as little cost as possible and I think that you've done that, but at this point we cannot cut any teacher. (Inaudible) we support the budget at 2.7%. We can't afford to cut any teachers. (Inaudible) but I think we need to hold it here and (inaudible) for our families, and for our whole Town. Meanwhile it's going to affect on July 1st about (inaudible) and this law could (inaudible) put pressures on our teachers and our schools to provide new services to improve learning (inaudible).

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So again, cuts to this would really hamper our efforts to fulfill the letter of the law as it will be in effect after this Summer, so that's another increase (inaudible). You know that 1 or 2 children are manageable, at 3 or 4 it seems like (inaudible) are getting full, at 5 or more, you feel like it's more crowd control than individual attention you might like to give. Our concern (inaudible) professionals who work every single day, not with 2 children, not with 5 children, but with 18 to 24 children. You need to give them the chance to educate our children in an individualized and differentiated way as they attempt every single day in our buildings. You can't (inaudible). You can't put that added strain on the teachers or the students who so much need the attention that the teachers can give them and do give them at this time. I ask all of you to please approve the new 2.7% that has been requested tonight for the benefit of our children and the benefit of our residents and give us a chance to vote on by putting that number to referendum this year. Thank you.

Fran Palmer, 220 Middlebury Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Palmer: I just wanted to say that I support the budget as presented and I hope later when this part of the meeting is closed and (inaudible) Town Council that it's presented as (inaudible). We had a little math assignment today in my class. My taxes increased to 15% (inaudible) \$427.00 so it sounds really impressive and I'm sure the more expensive your home is the higher that will be, but 15% sounds like oh My God, but it's \$427.00, I can manage, so just to give you a little input there.

Ms. Adams: Did you do the cars in that?

Ms. Palmer: No, just the homes.

Denise Russ, 135 Porter Street, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Russ: (Inaudible) the proposed mill rate, of 23.17 (inaudible).

Ms. Adams: For your information, you came in late, the Board of Education came back with a giveback from the teachers, furlough days, so we don't have yet the recalculation. We do?

Mr. Nardelli: Instead of a 1.18% decrease in the mill rate, it's now a 1.23% decrease in the mill rate, that's \$91, 120 that equates to, so the new mill rate would be 23.12.

Marcia Moriarty, 41 Pine Street, Watertown, CVT 06795

Ms. Moriarty: I'm the President of the Watertown Education Association. I really have to thank Karen Baldwin for giving us the credit that we deserve. The decrease (inaudible) in the 11th hour the teachers came through, again. Gary Bernier talked earlier about the personal sacrifice on the department heads side of the Town budget, and I totally agree with that, but remember we've been sacrificing since October and now once again we sacrificed a furlough day to save the budget. I'm just saying that the time is now, we need to pass the budget as it is, we cannot exist with less programs and less staff in this system. We have given as much as we can give. I cannot go back to my teachers one more time. They have given up a lot of money this year, for next year, a furlough day, (inaudible) 2.67%, I think that it's really time to pass this budget and move on. Thank you very much.

Heather Messina, 264 Pond View Drive, Watertown CT 06795

Ms. Messina: I'd like to thank all the Town employees who (inaudible). I will support this budget and I think we have a long way to go unfortunately though (inaudible) next year if the grant money is not here so keep that in mind for next year when we are here again. Let's get this budget passed. Thank you.

Mr. Locke, 147 Pepperidge Tree Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Locke: I'd like to address the issue of the (inaudible) and thank you for not using the word cuts. I'd like to make clear that we are talking about an increase here. I got inundated by my children for your campaign to go to the parents through the children (inaudible) me. The hysterical teachers and all the cuts, the words that were used, the strongness, the (inaudible) and the devastation and destruction. I'd like to ask you to be more careful with that. There are enough things for my kids to worry about, they don't need to be worried about the schools being closed down and having teachers laid off and that sort of thing. I attended the last presentation 2 weeks ago and (inaudible) the ext day in the newspaper it was all about cuts so I guess my point is we're talking about the Board of Education is saying for a 6% increase in (inaudible) they're going to make it look like they're cutting and they really are not, we're still talking about an increase. My next question (inaudible) future, we got to this point, I think it's a reasonable budget now but I worry about how much we're going to pay next year. These concessions, are they going to come back, (inaudible) much bigger budget next year, is this a one time thing just for this year because the economy is so bad, are we going to get hit next year? Also the capital, we passed the budget for the referendum for the school improvement, and it was mentioned again tonight that this is more future capital improvements I know in the future there will be more (inaudible) budget increases so keep that in mind as you go to the polls. Thank you very much.

Frank Brevetti, 20 Mallory Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Brevetti: I really don't get the gist of a lot of this. I hear teachers are giving back and if they are I'd like to know if any other workers in the Town are giving anything back, including our leaders, from Mr. Frigon down.

Mr. Bernier: Yes.

Mr. Brevetti: Can you (inaudible) like how many unions and how many other people are giving something back?

Mr. Bernier: 34 people or 34 groups of persons.

Mr. Brevetti: Just 34, out of the whole Town?

Mr. Bernier: Well it's anybody who has (inaudible) chief director, executive.

Mr. Brevetti: I'm talking about workers too, I'm not just talking about (inaudible), like the Police Department, are they giving anything back?

Mr. Bernier: Yes.

Mr. Brevetti: Not just the Chief of Police, but the regular police.

Mr. Bernier: Police matrons, minute keepers, Annex highway department custodians, so man of the custodians, coordinators.

Mr. Brevetti: Where did that 34 number come in?

Mr. Bernier: Well it's 34 people or groups of people. In some cases we have more than one minute keeper, I can't tell you how many there are.

Mr. Brevetti: (Inaudible) Unions? They have to vote on these things so you have to have numbers, these are all Union people.

Mr. Bernier: These are not Union people, but this represents a little over \$45,000.

Mr. Brevetti: Yea, but like I said, the police are Union, if they give back they have to give back through their contract, a representative would have to be here to give back.

Mr. Bernier: These are not rank and file police officers.

Mr. Brevetti: So the police aren't giving nothing back.

Mr. Bernier: No, that's not true. Sir, the police department has delayed hiring 3 detectives, replacing 3 officers.

Mr. Brevetti: You call that a giveback? We're getting less workers. That's not a giveback to me. That's (inaudible). I'm talking about givebacks. The whole department should be giving a day or something, that's a giveback. (Inaudible) cutting. It's like okay, let's lay off 10 teachers, that's a giveback. (Inaudible.)

Mr. Bernier: I understand, we'll take that under advisement.

Mr. Brevetti: I want to talk about the building that's being built up at Veteran's Park.

Ms. Adams: That is not part of the Budget Hearing tonight.

Mr. Brevetti: It's part of the budget, ma'am.

Ms. Adams: No, it's not.

Mr. Brevetti: Yes, it is.

Ms. Adams: No, it's not.

Mr. Brevetti: Well you're talking about next year's revaluation, this is going to be in next year's budget, so if the revaluation can be talked about, I can talk about this building.

Ms. Adams: The revaluation is pertinent to this budget and (inaudible) taxes.

Mr. Brevetti: So is this building, it's a tax increase for us.

Ms. Adams: Is there a line item in this budget, Frank, for the building at Veteran's?

Mr. Brevetti: I didn't say building, I said maintaining it, keeping it (inaudible).

Ms. Adams: Is there a line item for the maintenance of the building at Veteran's Park?

Mr. Nardelli: Not at this particular time, no.

Ms. Adams: No. It's not in this budget.

Mr. Brevetti: I didn't say this budget, I said next budget.

Ms. Adams: Well then that would be the time to (inaudible).

Mr. Brevetti: What's this revaluation for? Next budget or this budget?

Ms. Adams: This budget.

Mr. Brevetti: The revaluation? We just had one 2 years ago.

Ms. Adams: 5 years ago was the last revaluation.

Mr. Brevetti: And in 2003 revaluation, am I correct?

Ms. Adams: That was the last one, in 2003.

Mr. Brevetti: It was in 2003?

Ms. Adams: Was the last one and we had the big one in 2008, to be effective October, 2008 (inaudible).

Mr. Brevetti: (Inaudible) had another one you said.

Ms. Adams: In 2013 there will be another one.

Mr. Brevetti: There isn't one scheduled now?

Ms. Adams: This will be implemented this budget year from the grand list of 2008, October.

Mr. Brevetti: I can't talk about this building because it's not in this budget.

Ms. Adams: It's not in this budget, yes sir. (Inaudible) budget, absolutely (inaudible).

Mr. Brevetti: Thank you very much.

John Frohock, 95 Barnes Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Frohock: We all know this is an important decision that you make tonight, parents, teachers, administrators and the students but this Town has been (inaudible) budgets for several weeks in an effort to encourage, to approve the much needed increase put forth by the Board to just maintain our current educational program and preserve our class sizes. As representative of the voters, please don't let all these other (inaudible). I implore you to approve the increase (inaudible) as requested and let the voters decide if they want to save their teachers and programs, let the voters decide if they want to save the sports programs, physical education, let the voters decide if they want Pay to Play to be reviewed. Please make the right decision and let this budget go to a full vote.

3. Adjournment

Ms. Adams, Chairman, Closed the Public Hearing at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine H. Adams, Chairman
Town Council

Approved: _____
Lynn M. LaForme, Clerk