

**Minutes of the Town of Suffield FY 23-24 Budget Public Hearing
Suffield Middle School Auditorium - Wednesday, April 26, 2023**

Members Present: Chris Childs, Eric Harrington, Dr. Ann Huntington, Brian Kost, Mark Sinopoli **Members Absent:** Michael Haines **Alternates Present:** Mark Englander, Arthur Christian II, Tom Frenaye **Alternates Absent:** None.

Also Present: First Selectman Colin Moll, Board of Education (BOE) Chairwoman Maureen Sattan and Suffield Public Schools Superintendent Timothy Van Tassel, Finance Director Eric Remington, Treasurer Kacy Colston, and Business Manager Bill Hoff

First Selectmen Colin Moll called the hearing to order at 7:00 pm. He thanked all who got the town to this point in the budget. This upcoming fiscal year budget was more challenging due to higher costs. There will be no increase in the mill rate. First Selectman Moll then introduced Chair Harrington to begin the presentation.

Budget Presentation:

Takeaways from Chair Harrington's presentation is that the expenditure increase of 4.05% is driven by general wage increases, loss of grant revenue in BOE budget, and higher prices due to monetary inflation. Higher interest rates, grand list growth, and incremental ARPA funds explain the strong revenue growth offset these increases. The proposed mill rate will remain flat year over year. Balance sheet is strong and Capital needs are being funded.

First Selectman Moll presented the Budget Drivers for Departments and summarized the ARPA projects.

Superintendent Van Tassel shared that, after nine years, this would be the final budget presentation for Business Manager Bill Hoff. Superintendent Van Tassel introduced Board of Education Chair Maureen Sattan. Chair Sattan stated that the proposed Board of Education budget for FY 23-24 is \$38,533,892 reflecting an increase of 5.69%. This is an increase of \$2,073,232 over FY 22-23. Transportation, Special Education Transportation, and Special Education are items greatly increased with this proposed budget. There is over \$800,000 loss in grants that now need to be paid through the operating budget. Key takeaways are in personnel changes due to smaller class sizes in the middle school and the hiring of Reading Interventionist and Safety & Security Specialist. Kindergarten classes are coming in larger than projected. There are currently 2,029 students and that number is leveling off. Suffield School received a National Music Award for 2023.

Citizen Questions/Comments:

Given there were no questions, First Selectman Moll reminded everyone that the Town Meeting would be held on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 and the public hearing was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Irwin

These minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.