

# Town of Marlborough

## Board of Finance Members

Michael Nastri, Chairman  
Karen Pakulis Paul, Vice Chairman  
Jeffrey Plourde, Secretary  
John (Jack) H Fidler  
Will Guzman



## Board of Finance Alternate Members

Christopher Barella  
Sal Senna  
Baird Welch-Collins

## Board of Finance Special Meeting Agenda Budget Workshop

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

7:00 PM

### Marlborough Elementary School Media Center and Zoom

*All minutes are considered 'DRAFT MINUTES' until approved at the next meeting.*

#### 1. Call to Order, Alternate Appointment

Present at the meeting were Michael Nastri, Karen Pakulis Paul, Jeffrey Plourde, Jack Fidler, Will Guzman, alternates Baird Welch-Collins, Christopher Barella, and Sal Senna.

Michael Nastri called the meeting to order at 7:04PM.

#### 2. Public Comment

Kerri Barella, 16 Hidden Woods Drive

The Elementary school is one of few districts recognized for outstanding current reading program. 12 other districts observed last week.

Letter read: Speech language pathologist at Bolton School: observations were all the rage at school. Family would love to move there to attend MES.

Christine Peach, 20 Kellog Road

Parent of two boys, educator, instructional coach. Aware of the reality that education faces. Support is needed. Opportunities at MES have served children very well. There have been changes in education, social media, and technology. Education needs support and provide for the educators so they can provide for the students.

Wendy Paggioli, 16 Carriage Lane

Two adult sons who went through the school district. Encourage the board to support a reasonable budget as a school psychologist in neighboring town. Enrollment is down, but the needs are up. In a neighboring school, the number of students with needs are tremendous. Aggression, teachers are being hurt in elementary school. Kids are in crisis, families are in crisis and now teachers are in crisis. Supporting the budget would support the needs.

David Porteus

Will be submitting a letter to the editor to the River East. The letter elaborates on the background on why schools today are in a different situation than they were 20 years ago.

1. East Hampton school district – number of transfers of certified/non-certified staff from 2014 to now, teachers going from regular classroom to special education, is 20. Regular classrooms lost those teachers
2. Big picture – worse off than the NISA, 34<sup>th</sup>. Almost all European countries are ahead of us. Along with others. Support a reasonable budget.

Carmen Howe, 65 Emily Rd

Mom to three boys. Former high school teacher. PTO co-president. Support proposed budget. Main concern – class size. With the passing of the budget, 4 sections would be able to be kept. Reducing class sizes is important for fostering relationships between teachers and students, promoting socioemotional learning. Budget proposed is reasonable and one of the lowest in the state. Urge in investing in our children.

Jamie Smigel, 52 Roberts Road

Mom to three children. The Pre-K program at MES has allowed for growth for her children is remarkable. Fully funding the budget will support the MES Pre-K program that has been beneficial to all children. It allows for specialized attention and opportunities to grow. The funding of the RBT is important for children with disabilities/challenges to early intervention. Reports of “top-heavy” budget is not an accurate description of the budget.

Pamela Farrington, 95 Jerry Daniels Road

Provided the following statement to be read at the meeting:

*Teacher at Marlborough Elementary School speaking as a member of the Marlborough Community.*

*I am writing this letter to be read into public comments at the 2-28-24 BOF meeting. I am a citizen of Marlborough and the Co-President of the Marlborough Education Association. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend tonight's meeting however, I felt it necessary to share my thoughts on next year's budget.*

*I am writing this letter in support of the 2024-2025 Board of Education budget. Next year's budget is a 2.72% increase and one of the lowest increases in the state.*

*Some members of the community questioned the increase and the need to continue to have two administrators. As some of you may recall, many years ago we also had a full-time superintendent and understood that this position could be managed as part-time as long as there were two full-time administrators on site.*

*We have also gone far too long without a pupil services director. This addition to the budget is crucial to managing our special education population. This is far too important of a population, with specific needs, to have gone underserved for this long.*

*You may also recall that during some of our state's more challenging economic times, the BOE budget took huge hits. There were years when our budget was negative or a zero percent increase. As you know those types of budgets are not sustainable nor are they responsible.*

*Our superintendent has a plan to slowly rebuild what was lost during those years. As you can see, she is doing so in a very fiscally responsible way. I urge the BOF to adopt the budget as is and allow the BOE along with Dr. Hageman to oversee what is best for*

*the children and families of Marlborough. No matter how you look at it, this budget contains the necessary resources to support what we are aiming to do for children.*

*Once again, I urge the BOF to approve this budget.*

### **3. New Business**

#### **a. BOE Operating and Capital Budget analysis and discussion by BOF**

Board of Finance (BOF) members discussed the local BOE numbers. Locally, no one has increased a lot. Discussions are not attacking the school, children, etc. The increase total expenses to all tax payers. 69% of Marlborough's households are without children. Over 20% of Marlborough's population is over 65 years of age. Current tax base remains flat.

The cost of hiring 2 Principals vs. 1 Principal and 1 Assistant Principal

- The difference in pay for a principal and a VP for 2024/2025 is \$12,658
- Plus FICA/FUTA/SUI, 10.2% Total: \$13,950

Mill impact – increase of approximately 1.4 mills if no budgets are revised.

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#### **b. BOS Revenue analysis and discussion by BOF**

Board of Selectmen (BOS) Proposed Revenues discussed by David Porter – Town Manager. Topics included the State of CT Education (ECS), State of CT, local, transfer from other town funds, use of unassigned town fund balance, back taxes, tax levy. Total increase proposed revenue: -2.53%

Proposed Expenses – RHAM operating, RHAM capital, audit surplus, local BOE operations, local BOE capital, town operations, capital town operations.

Contingency and Debt.

Total increase proposed expenses: 3.82%

Further details to be discussed at 2/29/24 meeting.

### **4. Public Comment**

Kerri Barella, 16 Hidden Woods Drive

Urges BOF to support the BOE budget. The children need it. The town needs it.

### **5. Adjournment**

Michael Nastri adjourned the meeting at 8:12PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathryn Overturf Nohelty  
Board Clerk