

**TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
ZOOM REMOTE MEETING
June 25, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.**

RECEIVED RECORDS
TOLLAND, CT
2020 JUN 29 AM 8:58
Stacy M Bailey

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tammy Nuccio, Chair; Steven Jones, Vice Chair; Brenda Falusi, Lou Luba, Kurt Schenher, Cassandra York

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Reagan

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Rosen, Town Manager; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records; Michael Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services; Rob DaBica, Fire Marshal; Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent; John Littell, Fire Chief/Director of Public Safety; Michelle Manas, Collector of Revenue;

1. Call to Order: Ms. Nuccio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance - Recited
3. Moment of Silence
4. Public Participation - none
5. General budget discussion and consideration of a resolution to approve the FY 2020-2021 Town Operating & Capital Budget of \$57,182,497

Ms. Nuccio read the following:

The FY 2020-21 Town Operating & Capital Budget of \$57,182,497 reflects a spending increase of \$409,762 or .72% which requires a tax rate of 36.05 mills.

Town Government \$12,372,640
Board of Education \$40,017,290
Debt Service \$ 4,600,000
Capital \$ 192,567
TOTAL \$57,182,497

Approval of the resolution will increase spending \$409,762 or 0.72% but will not increase the mill rate which will be 36.05 mills.

Mr. Jones motioned the following:

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed the Town Manager’s proposed budget and has made certain modifications to estimated revenues and expenditures, the details of which will be properly incorporated into the total budgetary document by the Town Manager and Director of Finance and Records;

WHEREAS, the State of CT Governor Lamont Executive order #71 requires that the local government authority adopt the FY 2020-21 operating budget in lieu of a referendum vote.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby adopts a FY 2020-21 Town Operating and Capital Budget in the amount of \$57,182,497 to be appropriated as follows:

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Town Government	\$ 12,372,640
Board of Education	\$ 40,017,290
Debt Service	\$ 4,600,000
Capital	\$ 192,567
TOTAL	\$ 57,182,497

Said appropriations shall require no increase to the mill rate of 36.05.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion.

Discussion

Mr. Jones expressed appreciation for Mr. Rosen and all of the staff for the hard work they have put into this budget; especially for Mr. Rosen's first budget while going through a global pandemic in his first year and so many other hurdles. Even without the pandemic, it was going to be an uphill battle the first year and steep learning curve. He thanked him for the relationship he has built with the staff and the Council.

Ms. Falusi commented that it is great to see the attention to detail in the budget. It is an unprecedented year with building Birch Grove, crumbling foundations, and the global pandemic. It is unfortunate that they were unable to move forward with some of the goals. One item that has had the greatest impact is the school system – losing 2 teachers and freshmen sports in the fall. She explained that they just learned that school will be open in September and more guidelines will be available on Monday. She knows the impacts will be felt by many students and families. This was a "do no harm" budget to begin with and she understands that with the pandemic they will unfortunately see significant reductions in the schools. She is looking forward to what Dr. Willett does in the fall and does not envy him. She appreciates all the work that has been done.

Mr. Luba commented that everyone is appreciative of all the work Mr. Rosen, the department heads, and others have done to put together this budget. It was a lot of work amongst the Council which approved the budget unanimously. His greatest disappointment is that that budget could not be presented as part of a referendum. This is something they wish they could have presented to the Town for its approval. This is not something they wanted to go forward with unilaterally but given the current situation under the executive order the Council was put in a position where there were no other options. Mr. Luba noted that Mr. Rosen and others put together an outstanding budget especially in a difficult fiscal crisis and unprecedented pandemic when many people are suffering. He believes they did what they needed to do to take care of residents as much as possible by passing this unanimous budget.

Mr. Schenher thanked Ms. Nuccio for spearheading the zero percent mill rate increase. The hard work started with Ms. Nuccio and continued with the great town staff. He is very happy with the budget considering the circumstances. Mr. Schenher added that he too would have liked to have had a referendum but overall he is pleased.

Ms. Nuccio commented that the town staff, all of them, have listened, answered questions, provided feedback, and educated the Council when it either did not know about something or thought it knew about something and the situation was different. As someone with extensive budget experience, Ms. Nuccio knows how much goes into budgets and is very thankful for the town's staff. They do a "bang up job", more than anyone could ever expect, and they do it with a smile on their faces. Ms. Nuccio is happy to support the staff and is pleased with where they ended. She believes the budget is something that is going to help people, albeit not everyone, but it was the best they could do in the time available in an unprecedented time with COVID. She is grateful to have such good people working for Tolland.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Consideration of a resolution to establish a mill rate

Ms. Nuccio read the following:

The FY 2020-21 Town Operating & Capital Budget of \$57,182,497 reflects a spending increase of \$409,762 or .72% which requires a tax rate of 36.05 mills. The mill rate was kept the same as last year. The requirement to set the mill rate is in Section C9-7 of the Charter.

Approval of the resolution will set a mill rate of 36.05 mills and authorize the Town Manager or his designee to mail out tax bills reflecting this final rate with an assigned due date of July 1, 2020.

Mr. Jones motioned the following:

WHEREAS, the proposed FY 2020-2021 budget of \$57,182,497 was approved by Town Council on June 25, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby sets a mill rate of 36.05 mills and authorizes the Town Manager or his designee to mail out tax bills reflecting this final rate with an assigned due date of July 1, 2020.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rosen, on behalf of the town staff, thanked the Council. It has been a difficult budget year and it was his first full year in Tolland, the 10-month mark to be specific. It was an interesting year and he believes this budget reflects what the town needs for next year. They look forward to starting the conversation about the 2021/22 budget soon. The staff is appreciative for all the Council has done and on behalf of the staff Mr. Rosen thanked the Council.

Ms. Nuccio responded that all are very welcome.

Ms. York commented that she jumped into this budget $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through and it has been an interesting journey. She is grateful to be on the Council and is thankful for all of the guidance and support of everyone on the Council as well as town staff. Specifically, Mr. Rosen has been wonderful in getting her caught up and answering questions. She thanked everyone.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Mr. Schenher seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Tammy Nuccio, Council Chair