

**TOWN OF GRANBY
BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 8, 2013**

PRESENT: Michael Guarco, Chairman; Robert Clark, Frederick Moffa, OD; and Al Wilke. Francis Brady arrived shortly after 7:04 p.m.

Also present: John E. Adams, First Selectman; William F. Smith, Jr., Town Manager; J. Cal Heminway, Board of Education Chair; and Alan Addley, Superintendent of Schools

Board of Finance Chairman Guarco called the public hearing to order at 7:04 p.m. He introduced the Board of Finance members indicating that Mr. Bischoff will not be in attendance and Mr. Brady will be arriving late. He opened the hearing by stating that according to Town Charter this hearing is held on the second Monday in April to present the budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year. The budget referendum will be held on Monday, April 22, 2013 12 noon – 8 p.m. at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Chairman Guarco stated the order in which presentations would be made: town operations budget, school operations budget, and questions and answers or comments would follow.

Chairman Guarco gave a quick overview of the budget. Highlights were:

- FY 2014 combined budget increase is 2.62%
- 2.34% is an increase from the current tax levy. And further division of the increase is 0.34% from additions to the Grand List and 2% from the new Mill Rate.
- The Mill Rate was 30.69 for FY 2013 and increases to a proposed Mill Rate after revaluation of 35.19 for FY 2014.
- With the recently approved capital projects, the Board of Finance foresees the mill rate to be lower than the proposed 2.97% over the next five years as discussed when the projects were approved last year.
- For the last five (5) years, the average mill rate change was 1.3%.

Chairman Guarco commented the Board of Finance's intent was to keep the property tax fairly flat and hold the line on overall spending. The use of reserves is being used to flatten debt service payments.

First Selectman Adams presented the Selectmen's Budget. He thanked the Board of Selectmen, Town Manager Smith, the Administration Finance Officer, and Department Heads. He gave a special thank you to his wife, Cindy Adams, for being understanding and supporting his commitment as First Selectman. First Selectman Adams also mentioned that absentee ballots for the budget referendum will be available at the Town Clerk's office starting April 9th.

Some budget highlights from slides were:

- The Board of Selectmen must first ensure that all State mandated services are funded. Next is to maintain both the town services and assets owned by the town. This includes our buildings, roads and bridges.

- Some of Granby's accomplishments in the last ten years were capital improvements to Wells Road School, Kelly Lane School, Rails to Trails, Cossitt Library Improvements, Canton Road Sewer Extension, and Improvements at Holcomb Farm.
- Our community has grown through significant time and energy put in by many individuals. Some of the accomplishments are Playground at Salmon Brook Park, Dog Park at Salmon Brook Park, Ahrens Park, Granby 225, and Chamber of Commerce Events in SBP.
- Our town services continue to improve through the dedication of our employees who continue to seek accreditations and receive awards for their service to the town, such as Senior Center Accreditation, Police Department Accreditation, Town Manager Accreditation, Financial Services Awards, Evening Town Hall Hours, and Tri-Town TV Committee, and new Departments Heads as others retire.
- Some current capital projects are Pond House at SBP, Granby Library Roof Replacement, Streetscape Improvements and Sidewalk Extension to Salmon Brook Park, DPW Washbay and Storage, Evonsion Land Purchase, Emergency Generators Project, and GMHS Electronics Lab.

First Selectman Adams highlighted the 2013-14 budget request as follows.

• General Government Departmental	\$9,607,425	
• Capital Equipment/Improvement Allotment	\$1,000,000	
• Capital Non-Recurring Expenditure Fund	\$106,000	
• Economic Development Funds	\$10,000	
• Debt Service	<u>\$3,467,543</u>	
• Municipal Services Total		\$14,190,968
• Education Department Total		<u>\$27,762,000</u>
• TOTAL		\$41,952,968

Further detail for the 2013-14 municipal budget of \$14,190,968 along with the percentage change from last year's budget are:

- General Government Departmental - \$9,607,425 or 4.74% increase
- Capital Budget - \$1,000,000 or 9.1% decrease
- Capital Non-Recurring Expenditure Levy - \$106,000 or 11.6% increase
- Economic Development Funds - \$10,000 or 0% change, and
- Debt Service - \$3,467,543 or 4.9% increase
- The general government budget is proposed to increase by 3.7%, totaling \$14,190,968.

First Selectman Adams highlighted the General Government Departmental budget. He indicated that there is a set aside amount of \$52,550 in Contingency for two salary agreements. The budget includes the hiring of a Detective who will also serve as a youth services officer at a projected salary of \$75,000. Also added is \$45,000 to the overtime budget for police as this budget has constantly been underfunded in past budgets requiring end of year transfers from other budget line items to cover these expenditures. There has been an increase in health insurance, pension and FICA taxes amounting to \$83,901. Within the Department of Public Works, approximately \$36,672 of the increases in costs is associated with the upkeep and maintenance of Holcomb Farm and the new Pond House. There is an add back of approximately \$12,000 to library part time services and library hours in an effort to get back to our level of service in 2010. Other notable changes in the budget were Library Connections Consortium – \$29,113 (this up front expense will help reduce the cost of interlibrary collections

within the next two years); SW & Recycling Collection – \$12,500 due to contract increase; and Social-Senior-Youth Grant Fall Off – \$7,000 which the town picks up.

J. Cal Heminway, Jr. Board of Education Chairman gave the school's budget presentation. He thanked the Superintendent of Schools, the Business Manager, the Board of Finance and the community for their continued support of the school system.

One of the first slides mentioned the district's vision, mission, and goals as it relates to creating a budget.

- Vision: Every student educated in Granby Public Schools to graduate on time and be prepared for 21st century citizenship,
- Mission: All students will become thinkers, collaborators, and contributors,
- Achievement Goal: Enable students by 2015 to demonstrate powerful thinking by systemically solving problems through analyzing and synthesizing information and articulating/defending a position.

The Budget Summary slide highlighted the Board of Education budget as:

Operating Budget Request	\$27,762,000
Educational Capital Improvement Fund	\$600,000
Quality and Diversity Fund	\$656,932
Board of Education Appropriation Request	\$29,018,932

Another slide showed the Board of Education's 5-year budget history.

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
BOE	4.5%	1.6%	0%	1.2%	0.8%	2.07%
BOE Annual Return to the Town	\$304,265	\$338,178	\$156,442	\$120,980	TBD	

Some other highlights from the slides were:

- Granby schools have been recognized with several excellence in education acknowledgements
- The projected enrollment in the schools, including grades K-12, shows a decline for the next several years
- Personnel Summary Changes for FY2013-14
 - Net +1.0 FTEs from operating budget
 - Net -12.5 FTEs from Special Education Review
 - Net -1.6 FTEs from Quality & Diversity Fund & the IDEA Grant
- Revenues \$ for FY 2013-14
 - State Revenues total approximately \$5,738,996
 - Local Revenues total approximately \$1,162,156
- Major Expenditure Changes FY14 versus FY13 - \$564,168 or 2.07% increase
 - Salaries - \$95,551 or 0.3%
 - Benefits - \$111,575 or 0.4%
 - Software - \$86,650 or 0.3%

- Books – (\$38,270) or -0.1%
- Special Education (tuition and transportation) - \$223,490 or 0.8%
- Utilities – (\$30,157) or -0.1%
- Severance (\$50,000) or -0.2%
- CCSS & Teacher/Admin Evaluation - \$97,500 or 0.4%
- Other - \$67,829 or 0.2%

PUBLIC INPUT FY 2013-14 BUDGET

Board of Finance Chairman Guarco opened the budget discussion to the public.

There were eight comments from residents. Comments highlighted were:

1. Thanked the efforts of the boards and mentioned that world languages being offered at schools were good and wanted it to be offered as early as possible in the school system.
2. It was noted that school enrollment was declining and steps should be taken to handle it. It was suggested that the school's budget be reduced by 10% in the next two years, eliminate pension benefits, increase employee participation and take no step increases.
3. A clarification was requested in the school's budget increase reported in the *Drummer* of 2.07% and 2.1%. The 2.1% increase represents a rounded number from 2.07%.
4. It was asked if the boards have put any thought into what would happen if the intergovernmental revenues received were to stop. Board of Finance Chairman Guarco indicated yes; budgets are built on current money the town has in place, the history of what the town receives from the state, and consideration on funded or unfunded programs in what can be handled or not in the budget.
5. It was requested that for future debt service, it would be more beneficial if the projects could be separated by school and town projects, and each be responsible in their own budget, instead of the town picking up the full cost in their budget.
6. With the new adopted Charter, this was the first public hearing on the annual budget where there will be no town meeting but a budget referendum instead. Perhaps in the future it was suggested to make a straw vote just to see the outcome of the vote with informed voters. It was also noted there was low attendance at this public hearing.
7. Another suggestion was to consider outsourcing of work. In particular with the Department of Public Works because of a resident's experience and knowledge of work performed by the department in town and other towns like Avon, CT.
8. Another resident disagreed with the above comment and commended the Department of Public Works for the service provided during these economic times.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further public input, Chairman Guarco adjourned the public hearing at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia I. Chieski
Recording Secretary