

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hicks Municipal Center
Council Chambers
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING

7:30 – 10:00 P.M.

AGENDA
September 13, 2017

VISION STATEMENT

To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting – August 23, 2017
Special Meeting- September 6, 2017

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.

D. POINTS OF INFORMATION

E. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT - Alexandra Simon and Mallory Goldsmith.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- F.1 Custodian Contract (No Enclosure)
- F.2 Teacher Evaluation Plan Amendment for Pilot (No Enclosure)
- F.3 2017 – 2018 Budget Update (No Enclosure)

G. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

H. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I. BOARD ACTION

J. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.

K. POINTS OF INFORMATION

L. CORRESPONDENCE

Town Council Meeting- August 22, 2017

Town Council-Special Meeting – August 29, 2017

M. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

N. NEW BUSINESS

O. ADJOURNMENT

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hicks Memorial Center
Council Chambers
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING – August 23, 2017

Members Present: Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Chair; Ms. Colleen Yudichak, Vice Chair; Ms. Michelle Harrold, Ms. Karen Moran, Mr. Jeff Schroeder, and Ms. Susan Seaver.

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Adlerstein called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting – August 9, 2017

Ms. Seaver motioned to approve the minutes of the August 9th regular meeting. Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Correspondence: Ms. Seaver noted the following correspondence was received.

- A resident wrote a letter to the Board of Education and the Town Council requesting transparency in the budget process and included comments and recommendations.

D. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Mr. Adlerstein recapped the August 15th Town Council meeting during which the Council approved the budget for the referendum. He highlighted that there was discussion regarding two options. Both reduced the BOE budget below the 2016/17 level by approximately \$1M. Mr. Adlerstein presented the Town Councils' resolution. The Annual Budget Presentation, a public session, will be held on August 29th.

Ms. Harrold inquired about the Town's "Recommended Budget Plan" that was drafted at the August 9th Board meeting. Mr. Krasusky noted that both parties caucused individually and it was deliberated with the Town Manager. The conclusion was what was voted upon at the meeting.

E. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT - none

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. 2017-2018 Budget (no enclosure)

Dr. Willett noted that it is important at this point to emphasize the Board has worked hard not to be motivated by fear, and the Democratic and Republican budget proposals do not have as extreme measures as does the Governor's executive orders. It is important for the district not to create self-inflicted wounds. The Board and Town have adequately prepared for the potential impact. Legislators are talking and Dr. Willett hopes to see movement at the State level. All of the Board's blood, sweat, and tears are showing positive returns and all need to sit tight and not make decisions that would be damaging

to the Town or the schools. He urged hesitancy and practicality, unity and clarity over the next couple of weeks. He feels positive and the Town Council and BOE have done a good job of mitigating the situation and the Town is in a decent place. The district's staff returned today and there was convocation. This will be a great school year – the projects are underway and the Tolland students from Hartford are joining the district. The items the Board worked hard to actualize are coming to fruition and he is optimistic they are in a place where great things can be done. He reiterated that it is important to act pragmatically over the next few weeks and not do anything to cause harm.

Mr. Adlerstein reviewed the Town Council's resolution and presented a chart indicating the proposed Governor's reductions. The Governor's allocation plan reduces the funding to Tolland by \$8.3M. After deliberation by the Town Council, Tolland's recommended budget plan is for a reduction of \$5,435,521 which includes a 7.17% tax increase and a \$1M budget decrease across the Town and the BOE. Today, based on a town by town run that is being worked on by the Legislature, there would be a reduction of \$1,552,982 which would be better for Tolland in the amount of \$3,882,539. If this were to happen, the BOE would work with the Town Council to address the situation.

Mr. Adlerstein opened the floor to public participation.

Christina Plourd, 101 Metcalf Road, inquired what would happen if the State provides more ECS funding than the Town anticipates. Would 100% of that money have to go toward the BOE's budget? *Mr. Adlerstein replied that it did not. Dr. Willett explained that ECS funding goes to the town and then is passed on to apply toward a board's budget. His understanding is that there would be an 80/20 split which is part of the Town Council's budget plan. In any case there will still be an ECS reduction to Tolland but if the loss is not as great as anticipated, the District may look to put positions back. Dr. Willett added that if there were additional funds received the revised budget plan lays out the order in which the funds would be distributed.*

Mr. Adlerstein explained that if there are no changes and the budget goes to referendum on September 19th and does not pass, things will not get better for the schools. Thus, it is important that the referendum be successful. In that regard, the Board and the Town Council are looking to create a simple narrative. He explained that the Leadership Committee (Ms. Moran, Ms. Yudichak, Mr. Adlerstein, Mr. Eccles, and Mr. Skoczulek) met and drafted a narrative (available in the Committee's minutes). This initiated an exercise. Mr. Adlerstein distributed a handout where those in attendance could rank the noted items.

After an allotment of 10 minutes, the following is a summary of those items and the rankings (scale 0 = action not done to 5 = action definitely done):

- a. We have significantly reduced expenditures for town and schools - no rankings of 0-2
- b. We have accurately assumed the amount of state funding reduction - no rankings of 0-2
- c. We have scrutinized other sources of budget funding – no rankings of 0-2
- d. We have advocated for Tolland at every possible turn – no rankings of 0-2
- e. We have built consensus among leaders that this budget is the most appropriate given the circumstances – no rankings of 0-2

Comment in regard to each item:

Item a

- Resident - An excellent job has been done in looking at the budget and what could be cut. The thought process and logic were clear in determining what would be the least impactful on students. "Bravo" to all yet she is sad to see positions gone albeit given the situation it was the best that could be done.
- Jane Pasini, 11 Cortland Drive ranked it as a 5 – the Board did the best it could with what it had and she commended the Board on doing as well as it did.
- Mr. Adlerstein explained that no one on the Board or the Town Council is happy with the situation. On February 8th, the Board passed a budget of 2.14% and it had the support of the Town Council. He gave kudos to the Superintendent and the staff for figuring out a way to make things happen and if there is a way to rectify some items it will be done.
- Dr. Willett explained that the Board has acted responsibly in getting the 2.14% increase to a \$1.8M reduction which shows the dedication of all those who faced the challenge. He hopes that at referendum people realize this is a unique situation that is not caused by anyone at the local level. The state is imposing this and Tolland will either mitigate the damage or go into a react to damage after the fact. He hopes all fully support and recognize the hard work the Board and the Town Council have done to protect the people of Tolland.

Item b

- Resident – A numeric evaluation was not done. If it had, they could have taken this data and gambled the fund balance on being correct with a lower estimate.
- Mr. Adlerstein commented that they were conservative and recognized the financial crisis.
- Mr. Krasusky noted that one cannot bring objectivity to a discussion on an arbitrary situation. One has to work with it arbitrarily.
- Forward thinking, the Town needs to be less dependent on the state. It needs to plan on not having ECS funding.
- Mr. Adlerstein noted that the Town Council's job is to be fairly conservative.

Item c

- Eric O'Brien, 8 Whispering Woods, inquired about the possibility of decreasing the grand list and increasing the mill rate since the ECS equation uses the grand list in its calculations.
- Mr. Krasusky recommended that this suggestion be brought before the Town Council.

Item d

- Ms. Harrold referenced the article in Sunday's Hartford Courant.
- Mr. Adlerstein noted that the Board has had a voice and dozens of communications have been sent to legislators.
- Ms. Moran, on behalf of the Board, publicly thanked residents for sending communications to the legislators as well.
- Fisher Thompson, 533 Buff Cap Road commented that Dr. Willett's updates and transparency on the reductions was necessary and respectable.
- Mr. Adlerstein noted that the Board passed a resolution requesting a phase-in if there was going to be a reduction.

Item e

- Ms. Moran commented that given the circumstances there could have been more discussion and collaboration between the Board and the Town Council. Other Board members agreed.
- Ms. Seaver noted that given the circumstances it was a new situation for everyone.
- Ms. Harrold commented that she believes communication started strong but over the last month it has reversed and the Board and Town Council are no longer on the same page. The budget needs to pass.
- Amy Raccagni, 21 Woodfields Drive noted that she recalls great contention between the Board and the Town Council with divides along party lines in the past. As a resident, it appeared that the Board and the Town Council worked really well together with a lot respectful discussions. The entire Town is a victim of what is happening at the State level.
- Dr. Willett explained that the public saw both the Board and the Town Council give a lot of their own time to forge a way through the chaos. Scores of hours have been spent to come up with the plan in front of us now. While there may be some refining to do, the 7.17% is based on careful examination of the numbers by the people who were elected to make such determinations and who have done their due diligence to ensure the Town is protected as well as possible.
- Dr. Willett hopes that the community will support the budget.
- Mr. Krasusky commented that he believed the Town Council and the Board worked well together. There was a lot of communication and shared ideas although they may not both have reached the same conclusions. The Town Council must look at the Town and the Board and weigh both sides of the equation with what will realistically pass referendum.
- Dr. Willett explained that where there was any confusion between the Board and the Town Council it was over semantics and a good deal of progress was made in the end. He stressed the importance of communication which can unify the Town and it will be important to review where items may have appeared convoluted and lead to difficulty so this can be improved upon in the future.
- Dr. Willett explained that the State feels the Town has too much money and has been banking it. It would be ludicrous for Tolland not to look at all of the available resources. This may need to include the fund balance. The State holds the power so the community needs to be as loud as possible in regard to what it will and will not accept over the next few years.
- Mr. Adlerstein noted that the Leadership Committee recognized that the Town Council and the Board have to work together and have consensus. He is confident that in the next phase they can figure out how to best put the referendum in front of the voters. He recommended a joint BOE/Town Council meeting to recognize the movement to the next phase.
- A resident commented that it has not been about political parties but about caring for the community and the children. She is proud of that.
- Mr. Adlerstein noted that all were very respectful of one another's opinions and the Board strives to do what it best for the Town and the children.

- Mr. Krasusky commented that the Special Meeting was a disaster and there was not enough time for preparation. He was mortified as a member to be part of it. Another meeting was billed as a joint meeting but it clearly was not and he would like to see that improved upon.

Mr. Adlerstein asked those in attendance to review the narrative on the handout and requested recommendations for edits.

The following recommendations were made:

- The narrative is too long; many will not read it; recommendations were made that it be broken into bullet points; prefer a paragraph format; add a link to more information; structure as introductory narrative, visuals, and bullet points
- Too many numbers are presented
- People need to know that taxes are going up but the Town is still losing
- Clarity that the numbers may change before or after the referendum
- Collaboration between the Board and the Town Council as a joint statement is important
- A call to action is needed
- It may be seen as a propaganda piece
- Provide a list of potential cuts including town services
- Encourage people to speak with their peers
- 4th paragraph – clarify whose “budget”
- 2nd paragraph – add that the BOE and people have been attending meetings and events and provide information

Dr. Willett thanked everyone for their feedback. He reiterated that the elected officials have worked very hard and it is a difficult situation. It is not just the community of Tolland deciding on the budget. The State has an agenda and Tolland needs to decide how it will respond with taxes on one end, reductions on the other, and fund balance in the middle. The State has a perspective and the power. Thus, people in Tolland have to push against the most recent executive orders and contact legislators right now while they are in the decision making process. Once the decision is made, the community will need to react. The next phase is that the community will need to make a decision – taxes, reductions in services, and fund balance. The decision this year is different from any other year. If some money does not come from fund balance there will be even more reductions in the schools unless it is offset by taxes. There is no magic answer but one of the three options or some combination will be needed. The Town will come through this but the next phase is coming so being active with the State is crucial. The next step is to mitigate reductions and do it in the best interest of the community.

G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Policy – discussed the charter revision; reviewed three policies which will come before the Board; discussed attendance at events by those who are not Tolland residents.

Negotiations – Dr. Willett noted that the custodians’ contract has been ratified.

CABE – It was noted that the organization really came through for the district.

Town Council – The resolution passed last night and the Council invited the Board to work with them in regard to the State budget.

H. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Mr. Adlerstein initiated a discussion of setting a date for a joint meeting with the Town Council.

I. BOARD ACTION - none

J. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

K. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Ms. Harrold inquired if the TMS and THS schedules would be going out tomorrow. Dr. Willett confirmed that they will be ready as soon as the schools are able to do so but felt it would occur by Thursday.

In regard to TIS, Dr. Willett encouraged families to utilize the bus system as it would be very helpful for all parties. For those who choose to drive their students to school, he noted that they should leave extra time given the construction currently underway. He added that everyone can appreciate and thank the Tolland staff for their flexibility. The school year is ready to open on schedule.

Ms. Moran noted that she and other Board members attended today's convocation. The staff was in good spirits and many expressed thanks to the Board and the Town Council.

Ms. Yudichak inquired if Dr. Willett could update the Board on the status of the SBAC letters to parents. Dr. Willett explained that once received from the State, the scores will be sent to families. In regard to the results in general, Tolland is a competitive district with scores significantly higher than state averages but there is still some work that needs to be done and RTI/SRBI resources are needed.

L. CORRESPONDENCE

- Town Council Meeting – August 8, 2017

M. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- SBAC scores
- Mastery Learning

N. NEW BUSINESS - none

O. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schroeder motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:33PM. Ms. Moran seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk

Budget Discussion Minutes

September 6, 2017

Attendees: Kathy Gorsky, Paul Krasusky, Dave Skoczulek, Michelle Harrold, Colleen Yudichak, Bob Pagoni, Jeff Schroeder, Bill Eccles, Rick Field (left at 7:40), Cliff Vachon, Karen Moran, Susan Seaver, Sam Adlerstein

Began at 7:35 with the pledge of allegiance.

The meeting discussed best practice ideas, looked forward at scenarios and working together and affirmed the press release below.

Best practice ideas discussed

(these were referred back to the Leadership Planning Team for future consideration)

- Communication between the two bodies could be better at inflection points
- Next year, Board of Education make a full presentation to the Council
- Board of Education is an arm of the State. This should not be misinterpreted to impact good communication nor to drive unneeded separation (and sometimes has been).
- Model the flow between Town Council and Board of Education
 - Build joint meetings into the schedule. Had expected some of the meetings this year to be Joint meetings, but they weren't
- Board of Education upload more information to Town Council
 - Often in concise format
 - Program it in, rather than through raising hand during public participation
 - Parity of information provided across Town and Schools.
- Robert's Rules does not necessarily require formality and control. Adhere to requirements while being more inclusive
 - At times, adhere more to the rules. For example, holding speakers to two or three minutes during public participation, especially at some of the bigger meetings
- Consider rotating the Town Council representative to the Board of Education
- Consider dialog as a group as part of the agenda
- Caucusing:
 - Make it more apparent that happened (it may be unclear to public)
 - Reconsider how caucusing is used, to instead have the public debate, balanced against the risk of contentiousness.
 - Consider consensus building in public vs. in caucus
 - Board of Education is more public with the debate, less caucusing
- Tougher discussions: important to design meetings to run well
- Plan the budget timeline for interactions
 - Work backwards from deadlines
 - The budget presentation from schools requires additional dialog, give & take
 - Goal: understand "why" (impact)

About Us

- Town Council and Board of Education have different agendas
- BOE more abstract issues
- BOE learning and communicating, too, about school practices
- TC policy decisions that sometimes require less discussion and debate

- Town Manager and Superintendent different styles

Residents were invited to provide input, along with Members, into best practices, looking forward or the narrative: Deb Goetz, Jon Crickmore, Christina Plourd

Looking Forward

- Scenarios include State Budget passes before referendum, referendum fails (with three days to present new budget) or State budget passes after referendum
- State situation is still uncertain. Democratic and Republican proposals are currently more favorable than the Governor's proposal. Votes are expected the week of September 11. The Governor would still have 30 days to veto.
- If State passes budget, will call an emergency meeting
 - How long needed to halt referendum if State budget passes before September 19?
 - We believe it can be as late as the day before
- Town Attorney should be asked to advise on what can and can't do
- Could the dollar amounts of the expenditure reductions be made clear in the narrative?
 - After seeing the narrative, withdrawn
- What would happen if State budget impact turns out to be lower?
 - How can residents know exactly what approving at the referendum?
 - Some residents truly can't afford a significant tax increase
 - Does all the spending need to be added back, or could we put some away for the future?
 - The scenarios in the budget document are a starting point for negotiation that will happen in public forum
- We all see change coming and desire to plan for the fiscal challenges we foresee being passed down from the State over the coming years. We fail or succeed together.
- Sometimes we don't give ourselves enough credit. We already have some diversity.

Press release: Members affirmed the narrative below as a Press Release (also attached)

- Remove the names from the bottom
- Adhere to any limitations we learn from the Town Attorney. As of the time of this meeting, we believe we are within our limits to voice the following;

TOLLAND'S BUDGET: MAKING THE PIECES FIT

What does the future hold for Tolland? And what do we need to do to continue to be a thriving, vibrant community that attracts and retains our families and businesses?

Given the level of speculation and uncertainty about the state budget, and its impact to education funding, your elected town leaders have been faced with weighing many scenarios to help ensure the short-term and long-term health of our town.

Let's face it. No one likes to pay more for less.

That's why the Town Council's and Board of Education's goal has been to bring stability to a very unstable situation, guided by the following:

- ✎ We have significantly reduced expenditures for the town and schools.
- ✎ We have made informed assumptions about the amount of State funding reduction.

- ✓ We have scrutinized other sources of budget funding.
- ✓ We have advocated for Tolland at every possible turn.
- ✓ We have built consensus among leaders that this budget is the most appropriate given the circumstances.

Taking all of this into consideration, if the state passes its budget **BEFORE** referendum, our budget will be adjusted. If the state passes its budget **AFTER** our referendum, we will adjust our budget in public forums with public participation highly encouraged.

This is an unprecedented time for Tolland. We are all faced with difficult and challenging decisions in our own households and in our town. We hope that you remain engaged, that you talk to your friends and neighbors, and that you seek and rely on facts to inform your decisions at upcoming opportunities to participate in Tolland's proposed budget.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45. Motion by Bill, second by Jeff, all in favor.

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOLLAND, CT

**TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
6th FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM
AUGUST 22, 2017 – 7:30 P.M.**

2017 AUG 24 AM 8:28

Shirley M. Bailey

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Field, Chair; William Eccles, Vice-Chair; Robert Green and David Skoczulek

MEMBERS ABSENT: Paul Krasusky; Kristen Morgan and Joseph Sce

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Werbner, Town Manager; Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services; Lisa Hancock, Director of Finance and Records; Heidi Samokar, Director of Planning and Development

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Rick Field called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited.
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed.
4. **PROCLAMATIONS:** None.
5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (2 minute limit)

George Eldridge of Fish and Game Road: He thinks Tolland needs to take a bolder action. We have to take the next big step, which is to look at the population of our schools and our projections. He thinks a school should be shut down. He went to school in Tolland, and the average class size was 28 kids, and it was just the teacher. Although, he realizes some students don't have the help they need from their parents that they used to have. If you look at the salaries of the principals and everyone else there, you are looking a millions of dollars. He realizes this can't happen now with school starting soon, but it needs to be addressed. We are not going to get the money out of the state. We need to figure out how we are going to get out of this. He doesn't see the budget passing. They are just going to keep going around and around in circles. He thinks it should be the old high school that is closed, due to the capacity in there currently.

Sam Adlerstein of 164 Pine Hill Road: He responded to the previous comment. The BOE realizes that a lot is going to change with regard to education. Looking at closing a school has been on the radar screen. There is some savings that could be had from that, and that is an option. Nothing is status quo. They do need to be pro-active. He thinks they need to keep their focal point on what is going to happen to the residents (tax increases and service reductions). He said he got confused at the last meeting. If there was a compromise offered and the BOE rejected it, nobody told him that. He wasn't part of that discussion, and unless it was part of a meeting he missed, he doesn't believe the Board was part of it. He asks that the Council to just say what they mean. If they are taking \$1m from the BOE, just say it. Keep the focus on the residents. He did say that the Council is in a difficult position. He will support them.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:

- 6.1 Consideration of a resolution to repeal Section 132, Subdivision Fees and amend Section A173-9, Planning and Zoning Application Permit Fees and A173-10, Zoning Permit Fees of the Code of the Town of Tolland.

Heidi Samokar said the Town Council, back in 1993, opted to set the Planning & Zoning and Building fees. She has reviewed Tolland's fees due to the current budget situation. For the most part, most of Tolland's fees are already on the high end, but she did find other situations where they are incurring costs. She also cleaned up some regulations. She is not recommending an across-the-board increase in fees at this time, but does have some suggestions:

1. Eliminate Chapter 132, Subdivision Fees.
2. Update subdivision fees in Chapter A173-9 to eliminate fee based on percentage cost of public improvements.
3. Adopt a fee for road and drainage acceptance.
4. Update fee for "Additional Costs" to cover zoning amendments and zoning change applications.
5. Amend wording in site plan and special permit fees to cover applications where no new buildings or building additions are proposed.
6. Clarify that a fee is not required for a change in occupancy.
7. Increase fee for a zoning permit for accessory dwelling unit.

Ms. Samokar provided an additional amendment prior to the meeting:

8. Remove A173-9.D and renumber accordingly.

Bill Eccles moved to open the public hearing; Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

No public comment. No straw poll was conducted.

Bill Eccles moved to close the public hearing; Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

Bill Eccles motioned to accept the following resolution *as amended (to include #8 above)*:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby repeals Chapter 132, Subdivision Fees and approves the attached amendments to Chapter A173-9, Planning and Zoning Application Permit Fees, and A173-10, Zoning Permit Fees of the Code of the Town of Tolland.

The amended fees are effective September 8, 2017.

Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

7a. **REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL:** None.

7b. **REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS:** No reports.

8. **NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**

- 8.1 Consideration of a resolution to assign all delinquent tax liens as of May 9, 2017 on the property located at 1394 Tolland Stage Road to Caya Realty, LLC for eighty-five percent (85%) of the true and actual value, including interest and fees.

Mr. Werbner said the motion is basically the explanation. There is authorization requested, at the recommendation of the town attorney, to sell the tax lien for 85%, which would bring in about \$33,000. The full amount is about \$38,000 in terms of back taxes. The town attorney feels that the cost of litigation to try to foreclose on a lien will exceed the amount that Tolland could get by selling the lien for 85%, and it would take many months before seeing payment. Doing it this way, payment will be seen this fiscal year. Ms. Hancock said the monies will go into the Delinquent Tax Revenue account in the General Fund.

Bill Eccles motioned to accept the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council, pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 12-195h and Tolland Code § A176-20, authorize the Collector of Revenue to assign all delinquent tax liens as of May 9, 2017 on the property located at 1394 Tolland Stage Road to Caya Realty, LLC for eighty-five percent (85%) of the true and actual value, including interest and fees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the consideration for such assignments shall be \$33,120.74 if the assignment occurs on or before September 1, 2017. If the assignments occur on or after September 2, 2017 and before October 1, 2017, consideration for such assignments shall be \$33,445.11.

Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

8.2 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions.

8.2.a. Appointment to Tolland Public Library Foundation, Inc. – *No vacancies will remain.*

David Skoczulek motioned to appoint **Michael Byam of 70 Woodfields Drive** to the Tolland Public Library Foundation, Inc. for the term of 10/31/2016 – 10/31/2018; and **Toni Moura of 42 Center Road** to the Permanent Celebration Committee for the term of 11/9/16 - 11/6/19. Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

9. **OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):** None.

10. **REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER (A WRITTEN REPORT SHALL BE PROVIDED THE 1ST MEETING OF THE MONTH ONLY):** Mr. Werbner said they will be hosting a meeting of the Ad Hac Crumbling Foundation Committee tomorrow at the Fire Training Center at 3:15 p.m. Senators Murphy and Blumenthal will be in attendance. They will have an opportunity to discuss with them the need for federal assistance, along with State and private assistance, to address the crisis that this area has with crumbling foundations. They are hopeful that the State will do something in regard to the crumbling foundations. They have a Bill that has been prepared, but hasn't been released. It is being held up by the budget process. The Department of Housing has set aside \$1m for core testing, not visible inspection. As of today, no one has applied, so Tolland is going to. HUD is a complex program in terms of requirements imposed, but they are going to try to work through them. In order to qualify, you need to be in the category of low to moderate income, and there are financial disclosures that you will need to make in order to prove that. If anyone is interested in going through that process, and they feel they may qualify or want any information, he said they can apply through the Human Services Department. They intend to send a Letter of Intent next week to the Commissioner asking to reserve \$100,000 for the Town of Tolland. It is up to \$4,000 per residence. They would have between now and June 30, 2018 to use the funds.

Mr. Werbner advised that there is a budget rally at the South Windsor Town Hall tomorrow, August 23rd, at 5:30 p.m. He was asked to speak by the Mayor, so he will be there to state our case.

11. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- 11.1 August 8, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes: Bill Eccles moved to adopt the minutes; Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

12. **CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL**

- 12.1 Letter from CCM re: a Contest for the students (what do you like about your local government).

12.2 Letter from AA Asphalt re: pricing.

12.3 Flyer – Mohegan Way.

12.4 E-mails from the following residents:

Beth Daitch re: use of the reserve budget this year only;

Sarah Farrell re: supports using some the General Fund balance;

Shay Belair re: asks that they provide more money to the BOE;

Diane Clokey re: don't use the Governor's budget as a base;

Amanda Doyle re: maintaining a robust public school system, use the General Fund balance;

Jan Rubino re: concerns regarding the deep cuts to the BOE;

Deb Goetz re: fund balance use;

Kate Vallo re: in favor of a recommendation that the BOE move forward with a 0% increase;

Janice Sennick re: in support of an increase to taxes;

Michael Butterworth re: disagrees with the town manager's reluctance to use more of the reserve fund;

Carolyn Grant re: supports reasonable use of the town's fund balance;

Christina Plourd re: meeting with Nancy Wyman;

Laura Cassenti re: supports the latest budget;

Jane Pasini re: supports the Town Manager's budget rolled out on August 2, 2017;

Mary McCarthy re: supports Werbner's proposed budget;

Deb Goetz re: revised budget plan;

Bob Tamiso re: tax increases; and

Mary Schrijn re: cutting vehicles for town staff.

12.5 Connecticut Town & Country magazine.

13. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mr. Field reported on the following:

~Reminder, next Tuesday is the Council's presentation / public hearing for the budget. The following day at 12:30, there will be a budget presentation at the Senior Center.

14. **COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS:** Mr. Field read the following statement into the record:

August 22, 2017

We have long felt it is part of our job as councilpersons to keep national politics out of these chambers. We engage in bipartisanship, non-partisanship and apolitical practicality and humbly believe this entire Council has found a good balance.

It was incumbent on all of our leaders to denounce the hate and violence we saw in Virginia last week with clarity and certitude. And to go further in denouncing the cause and precipitant of that violence.

We denounce without qualification and without false equivalence; violence, hate, racism and anti-semitism in all its ugly forms. And we denounce those who traffic in false equivalence and moral indifference.

In his 1986 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Holocaust survivor Elie Weisel said, *"I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."*

As residents and leaders we accept our moral duty to speak out for ALL of the people in our community. We must strive to be *upstanders*, not simply bystanders.

Signed,

Rick Field, Bill Eccles, Robert Green, Paul Krasusky, Kristen Morgan, Joe Sce and David Skoczulek

15. PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council)*
(3 minute limit)

Sam Adlerstein – He had a question regarding the minutes from the last meeting. He thought the resolution focused on the numbers that were going to be approved. Now, he is confused reading it. He wanted to know if their vote last week approved the 14 page proposal with all the terms and conditions. The resolution reads, in part, *“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”*.

Mr. Skoczulek said there was a lot of math that went into that, but he didn’t feel that they passed 100% of that document in the vote specifically.

Mr. Werbner said the document contained his recommendations. It was his understanding that those recommendations were not changed in terms of the way that they were presented. Although, they have discretion as the Council, if at the point in time they have to act on any of those, to change their minds. They are not locked into anything. Those recommendations were the starting point, and they will work from there once the numbers were known.

Mr. Eccles said he is of the opinion that he voted on the four pages in the packet. He understands and hears Mr. Werbner’s recommendations as to what the rest of the process looks like. The budget as he understands it is per the resolution and the 4 pages. The other Council members agreed with him. He is good with it being a starting point. They can work from it when further money comes in or if no money comes in. Further discussion will be had.

Mr. Field said once they have a budget, they will pull up the recommendations and review them. It is a starting point, and they are not set in concrete.

16. ADJOURNMENT: Bill Eccles moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Robert Green at 8:10 p.m. All were in favor.

Richard J. Field, Council Chair

Michelle A. Finnegan
Town Council Clerk



TOWN of TOLLAND/ 21 Tolland Green, Tolland, Connecticut 06084

MEMO

TO: Town Council

FROM: Heidi Samokar, AICP, Director of Planning & Development

DATE: July 19, 2017

RE: Planning and Zoning Fees: Repeal of Chapter 132 and Amendments to Chapters A173-9 and 10 of the Town Code

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 8-1c, in 1993 the Tolland Town Council opted to be responsible for setting fees for planning and zoning applications and zoning permits (Town Ordinance No. 50).

In consultation with the Planning and Zoning Commission, I recommend repealing Chapter 132 and amending Chapters A173-9 and A173-10. The following explains the rationale. A mark-up is a separate attachment. Compared to other communities, most of our fees appear to be on par or greater. Therefore I do not recommend an across-the-board increase in fees at this time.

1. Eliminate Chapter 132, Subdivision Fees.

Subdivision fees are found in two Chapters (132 and A173-9). Chapter 132 was adopted in 1987, prior to the adoption of Ordinance No. 50 (A173-9). Per state statutes, Ordinance 50 superseded previous fees so Chapter 132 should have been repealed. I recommend that the entire Chapter 132 is repealed. Please be aware that Chapter 132 does contain a provision allowing the Town Council to waive subdivision fees and such a waiver is not include in A173-9. I recommend eliminating the waiver; the Council does not have the ability to waive any other planning and zoning fees and I see no reason to single out subdivision fees.

2. Update subdivision fees in Chapter A173-9 to eliminate fee based on percentage cost of public improvements.

The current fee is based on the higher of a per-lot fee or a percentage of the cost of public improvements. We do not have the in-house expertise to do engineering cost-estimating. From a logistical standpoint, we would need to retain engineering assistance to review the proposed cost of public improvements to determine if they seem correct. In other words, the town would need to spend money to determine a fee.

I suggest completely eliminating the percentage provision so that the fee is simply \$300 plus \$75 for each lot. For applications that propose public infrastructure, we have a provision that allows us to collect a fee to cover our expenses for retaining an expert (e.g., engineer) to review the plans. In addition, under Item 3, I propose another fee that recoups costs associated with road acceptance. Therefore the percentage approach is no longer necessary.

3. Adopt a fee for road and drainage acceptance.

When a new road is built as part of a subdivision and that road is intended to become a public road, both the Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council must "accept" the road after it is constructed. This process requires our consulting engineer to inspect the road, drainage and other infrastructure to ensure compliance with the approved plans. In the last fiscal year, we spent \$3,150 for one road review and additional expenditures are likely before it is accepted. The application fee paid in 2007 totaled \$1467.50. We have no mechanism for recouping these additional costs.

Some towns address this by collecting an inspection fee at the time of application. Others have a separate road acceptance ordinance which covers the fee. I recommend that the Council adopts a provision that collects an inspection fee at the time of application. The fee would be based on a cost estimate from our engineer for periodic inspections during construction and a final review. The funds would be held in escrow, similar to how we handle engineering reviews (see item 4). This fee would not apply to previously approved applications for which we have not yet accepted the road.

4. Update fee for "Additional Costs" to cover zoning amendments and zoning change applications.

Chapter A173-9.H. allows the Town to charge an applicant for additional costs incurred on subdivision, site plan and special permit applications. In these situations, we obtain a cost estimate from our consulting engineer for the review. We then collect the fee from the applicant and place it

in an escrow account from which we pay the consultant. Un-used funds are returned to the applicant when the review is completed.

However, the ordinance does not state that the fee can be collected for zoning amendments or zoning map amendments. It should be amended to include those applications.

5. Amend wording in site plan and special permit fees to cover applications where no new buildings nor building additions are proposed.

The fee for a site plan or special permit is based on gross square feet of a building. Not all applications entail a new or expanded building. The proposed amendments provide a second approach to the fee in those situations. I had originally proposed 1 cent per square foot of disturbed area to the Commission, but now propose a half cent (\$218 per acre of disturbance).

6. Clarify that a fee is not required for a change in occupancy.

We have a "Change of Use or Occupancy" form which is required when a commercial or industrial building changes ownership or changes use and Commission approval is not required. There is a \$25 fee. In practice we are not charging the fee when it is just a change in ownership because zoning does not regulate ownership so an "approval" is not needed.

7. Increase fee for a zoning permit for accessory dwelling unit.

The current zoning fee is \$50. The proposed amendments raise it to \$75.

DETAILS

Propose repealing all of Chapter 132:

Chapter 132. Subdivision Fees.

§ 132-1. Fee for processing applications.

Pursuant to Section 8-1c of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Town Planner shall collect, as a fee for processing applications, the following sums for each subdivision application presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission:

- A. At the time of the application, 0.5% of the cost of the initially proposed public improvements;
and
- B. In addition to the amount set forth in Subsection A hereof, if the subdivision is approved,
0.5% of the cost of the approved public improvements.

Editor's Note: For current fees, see Ch. A173, Fees, § A173-9.

§ 132-2. Payment in advance.

No subdivision application shall be accepted and no subdivision plans shall be signed and delivered to the subdivider unless such fees are paid in advance thereof.

§ 132-3. Minimum fees.

Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 132-1 and 132-2 hereof, if the fees set forth in this chapter are less than the minimum fees set forth in Section 8-26 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, the Town Planner shall collect the fees set forth in Section 8-26.

§ 132-4. Waiver of fees.

The Town Council may waive all or a portion of a fee established by this chapter. The waiver may be granted if the Town Council determines that due to special or unusual circumstances, the total fees paid by the applicant cover the costs incurred by the Town for processing the application.

Proposed Amendments to A173-9 and 10

§ A173-9. Planning and zoning application permit fees (plus state fee of \$60).

Underline = new

~~Strike-out~~ = delete

A. Subdivision/Resubdivision application:

- 1) \$300 per application plus \$75/lot per lot, ~~or 1% of the cost of the initially proposed public improvements (whichever is greater).~~

a) ~~Due at the time of application: 0.5%.~~

b) ~~Due if the subdivision is approved: 0.5%.~~

- 2) Plus all subdivision plans not submitted in accordance with the Tolland Digital Mapping Data Submission Requirements require an additional:

Number of Lots	Fee
1-5	\$25
6-10	\$50
Each additional 5 or fraction thereof	\$25

B. Subdivision revision: \$250.

C. Removal of "Not a Building Lot": \$50/lot per lot.

D. Zone change: \$300 or \$5/acre per acre, whichever is greater.

E. Subdivision regulation amendment, ~~or zoning regulation amendment or zoning map amendment~~: \$300.

F. Special permit/site plan:

- 1) Where a new building or building addition is proposed:

Gross Square Footage of Building	Fee
1,000 and under	\$300
1,001 – 10,000	\$500
10,001 and over	\$750, plus \$25 each additional 1,000 square feet

- 2) Where no new building or building addition is proposed: \$300 plus \$0.005 (half cent) per square foot of newly disturbed land area.

G. Site plan revision: \$150.

H. Subdivision, resubdivision, zoning map amendment, zoning regulation amendment, special permit or site plan and special permit/site plan application fees may include additional costs incurred by the Town of Tolland, including, but not limited to, the expense of retaining experts to analyze, review and report on areas requiring a detailed, technical review in order to assist the Planning and Zoning Commission in its deliberations and to cover town costs for post-approval inspections for proposed public roads and drainage. Said costs will be estimated by the Commission, based on preliminary estimates from such experts, and said estimate of costs times 150% will be paid over to the Commission prior to proceeding on the application. Upon completion of the technical review and a determination of the costs incurred, any excess will be refunded to the applicant. The applicant shall not be responsible for costs incurred in excess of 150% of the Commission's estimate.

I. Multifamily special permit/site plan: \$50 per unit ~~/unit~~ or minimum of \$1,000.

J. Golf course special permit/site plan: \$750, plus \$10 per acre ~~/acre~~.

K. Removal of earth products site plan:

1) Site Plan or Special Permit

Amount Removed (cubic yards)	Fee
Less than 1,000	\$250
1,001 - 50,000	\$500
50,001 - 100,000	\$1,000
More than 100,001	\$2,000

2) Annual map fee: \$50.

L. Telecommunication towers: \$300.

M. Campgrounds:

1) Per campsite: \$250, plus \$10 per campsite ~~/campsite~~.

2) Annual fee: \$2 per campsite ~~/campsite~~.

§ A173-10. Zoning permit fees.

A. Residential.

1) Single-family dwelling (new): \$125.

2) Accessory dwelling unit: \$50 \$75.

- 3) Multifamily dwelling (~~per unit~~): \$25 per unit.
- 4) Home occupation: \$25.
- 5) Pools, garage, barn, dwelling addition, shed (greater than 200 square feet), deck, porch and gazebo: \$50.
- 6) Fences (over 8 feet in height): \$25.
- 7) Driveway permit: \$25.
- 8) Other: \$25.
- 9) Zoning compliance letter: \$25.

B. Nonresidential.

- 1) Commercial/Industrial: new construction, addition or accessory structure:

Square Footage	Fee
1,000 and under	\$100
1,001 - 10,000	\$250
10,001 and over	\$500, plus \$20 <u>per</u> each additional 1,000 square feet

- 2) All towers: \$100.
- 3) Change in use ~~or occupancy~~ (no site plan or special permit required): \$25.
- 4) All signs that require a zoning permit: \$25 per sign ~~/sign~~.

C. Planning and Building Department Copies ~~Development group~~.

- 1) ~~Xerox copies~~ Copy 11 inch by 17 inch or smaller: \$0.50 per page.
- 2) Copy larger than 11 by 17: \$5 per sheet.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL TOLLAND HIGH SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM August 29, 2017 – 7:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Field (Chair); Bill Eccles (Vice Chair); Kristen Morgan, David Skoczulek, Paul Krasusky, Robert Green

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Sce

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Werbner, Town Manager; Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services; Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting began at 7:30P.M.

1. ANNUAL BUDGET PRESENTATION

1.1 Pursuant to C9-9 of the Tolland Town Charter, the Town Council shall arrange for an annual budget presentation. The annual budget presentation is intended to provide information and encourage public discussion.

The Chair reviewed the presentation. It was posted on the screen and full copies were available for all in attendance. He added on item 2 that there will be a bulky waste pickup in October. He thanked everyone for attending this evening's presentation and noted that it will be repeated tomorrow at the Tolland Senior Center at 12:30PM.

The Chair explained that in regard to the referendum vote, if the State comes up with a budget or other information, the budget process may be stopped before the vote. Once voted upon, the referendum will need to be put out to vote until a budget is passed. Adjustments may then be made once the State provides its budget.

The Budget Referendum is scheduled for September 19, 2017.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident requested an update of what has been cut from the schools. *Dr. Willett responded that the school system had reduced 13 positions and that number is now 15. The BOE and Town Council have worked together to create a situation where the schools can be opened and the resources that Tolland has benefited from for many years can be maintained. If the budget was to go down at referendum or the State budget was to come out worse, reductions would rise exponentially. He added that a number of non-personnel items were reduced as well such as professional development curriculum.*

In regard to the last question, a resident asked what type of personnel and what cost. *Dr. Willett responded that he would have to get the dollar amount but the positions included: 10 teachers and 3 support staff. Total reductions from the BOE adopted budget of 2.14% to the \$38,340,608 is \$1,835,352.*

A resident inquired if the teachers agreed to give up any part of their raises. *Dr. Willett responded that he expects to have an answer after meeting with the TEA (Tolland Education Association).*

A resident asked Dr. Willett if any wholesale programs have been cut. *Dr. Willett explained that there has been an impact on some course offerings from the standpoint of edging back a bit of the competitiveness. If there are no further reductions they can avoid losing programs.*

Kenny Trice, 53 Doe Run, commented that this is a difficult situation for everyone. He inquired if the worst case scenario is realized and the State takes more money from the Town, what would be the plan and impact. *Dr. Willett responded that the worst case scenario would be the executive orders by Governor Malloy that reduces ECS funding by \$8.2M from \$10.7M. He explained that that scenario, which no one in Tolland wants to consider and why he is encouraging people to contact their legislators, the school system would be decimated. A reduction of \$8.2M would necessitate the elimination of 50-60 staff and essentially a year of schooling would be lost due to the modifications to schedules. Tolland would need to look at regionalization in a very short time span. It would be irresponsible to ask for the reduction of so many staff in a single year.*

Tammy Nuccio, 71 Webber Road, agreed that she did not believe a reduction of \$8.2M would come to fruition this year, she thinks it is coming based on Governor's report of municipality spending over the past 10 years. Further, when looking at the trend of spending over the past 10 years, the State cannot sustain paying such amounts to municipalities without imposing a drastic state tax. She believes the Town will get something. That said she asked what is on the slate, when looking at programs that have been added over the last 10 years that can be eliminated or reduced to get spending down for next year for optimization in savings on both the BOE and Town sides of the equation. *Dr. Willett explained that the MBR, which is reviewed every 2 years, was established to ensure reasonable reductions in spending. A reduction of \$8.2M is just irresponsible. In regard to making adjustments, a consulting group is looking at consolidation of THS and TMS and the State is looking at changing graduation requirements that would allow for more flexibility. He added that one needs to consider that a school system is a valuable piece of the community. The State is pushing for regionalization and there will be winners who will bring tuition into their district and those who lose that tuition along with the spending in the respective towns that comes with having staff and students in town. Looking long term, he believes the district needs to look for as many efficiencies as possible and create programs that provide cost avoidance as well as those that bring in revenue. A robust and dynamic system that brings students to Tolland will support the local economy while not putting as much of a burden on the taxpayers. He added that any recommendation of reducing \$8.2M is abuse but the district could take modest cuts over a span of 3 years. The State thinks some towns have too much money and believes this is because they have received too much ECS funding allowing them to build a fund balance. In turn, it wants to create a situation where that is no longer possible. The only way to offset this is to create new ways to raise revenue and look at how the district can walk its way down to a level that works. Ms. Nuccio, in regard to walking it down, asked if they are looking for the optimizations now and looking at how they can reduce fat and redundancies. Dr. Willett responded that they are doing so. They need to do so without crippling the district's ability to keep its level of service and put into place tuition bearing and cost avoidance programs.*

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that she hopes that with all the work the Town Council and the BOE have done that the budget will pass. She suggested that the presentation today is extremely

prejudicial to the budget not passing by including anything from the Town Manager's perspective on the fund balance and the recommended practices. The budget being put forth uses the fund balance. She recommends taking that information out of the presentation. She asked what projects will be done and the sources of those funds. Additionally she inquired what portion and how much of a portion is being set aside for administrative changes in public safety. *Mr. Werbner explained that the capital improvement projects are outlined in the capital section of the budget. A number of school projects and others are being bonded while fire equipment is coming from the fire account. None of the funds being used are associated with the general fund. In regard to the administrative changes in the Fire Department, they are very minor in regard to the amount of money. It will allow each of the Public Safety Officers to pick up a small additional administration portion so they can provide assistance to the Fire chief. This is from the savings from the elimination of the Assistant Public Safety Director position.*

A resident asked Dr. Willett if they are seriously looking into closing a school. He added that he hopes this is the case. THS is now operating at 30-40% capacity. Ten years ago there were 3,000 students in the school system and the district is losing 70-100 students per year with 2,250 current students. With 1,700 projected in the next 5-7 years, how can they justify keeping 4 schools open? *Dr. Willett noted that currently there are 2,642 students and this is something they are examining. He explained that a DRA study was done which determined that schools could be effectively combined in 2022 and proposals for options as well as expenditures which would be necessary. This year they are looking to see if they may be able to bring TMS into one of the wings of THS. He added that they have reduced many administrative positions. For information on the DRA study, visit www.tolland.k12.ct.us, click on Superintendent's Corner, click on Budget, and then click on FAQ.* The resident then commented that in regard to a 7% increase there are a lot of seniors in Town. He went to Tolland schools as did his children and he understands. The other extreme is that those who are lucky are getting a 1% increase in social security. The 7% forces more people out of Town. If they had kept a "cute" Town, 99% of the people would not be here. Tolland is a great place and he does not know why route 195 is not built all the way to UConn from the highway – many opportunities were missed and this is why this is happening to the Town. *Dr. Willett understood. The State is going to extract something from Tolland no matter what and it is up to Tolland to decide how deep that will be thus the referendum. They need to think about how to offset the impacts in the school system via cost avoidance and bringing in revenue.*

Deb Goetz, 176 Kate Lane, inquired as to the kindergarten enrollment this year. *Dr. Willett approximates it to be 142 with about 18 students per class. He tried to make the reductions at the higher levels.* Ms. Goetz commented that Dr. Willett has stated that 5 students support the salary of one teacher and asked about the tuition rate. *Dr. Willett responded that the current per pupil expenditure is \$14,495. There is an exponential return when you have a tuition bearing program in the school.* Ms. Goetz asked if he expected to get that much. *Dr. Willett expects to get that amount or more. On the website he has provided scenarios with varying dollar amounts. There is a greater benefit of having tuition bearing programs than an erosion of services.* Ms. Goetz inquired as to how much the district expects to get from the Open Choice Program this year. *Dr. Willett explained that there are 3 kindergarten students coming in at a rate of \$8,000 each for a total of \$24K. The Town will not have to pay for any special education or transportation costs for those students. Additionally, the program will provide the district with resources such as professional development.* Ms. Goetz asked what the savings will be this year from cost avoidance. *Dr. Willett explained that in regard to the LEAP program, the average cost of one outplacement is about \$69K and it can go up to*

\$164K. Further, transportation is \$10K-20K per student. Thus the cost avoidance is about \$60K per child. The purpose of the program is to provide a better program for students and have them stay in Town. Currently Tolland spends \$2M more than similar districts on outplacements. Ms. Goetz commented that she does not believe the Town will lose \$5.4M and it has indicated that once the fund balance is paid off, the Board will receive up to its original 2.14% if there are sufficient funds. She inquired if that is needed since they are avoiding costs with LEAP and other programs. Dr. Willett explained these programs save millions of dollars in the long run. If abandoned, in a few years they will have the same problem/situation.

A resident commented that people want to know the numbers and added that Dr. Willett is providing answers without presenting the numbers. The public wants to know the savings. Dr. Willett has only presented that teachers are being cut making it sound bad and scaring people. He noted that teachers are valuable but no one has heard anything about cutting expenses on maintenance or sports fields. There is discussion regarding combining schools. Could they start by combining sports fields to save on maintenance costs? He has a problem with seeing a 7% tax increase which will equate to an additional \$2K expense for him because the district is not willing to make any cuts other than teachers. He hears that many people do not want to pay more for "pay to play" and asked how many students pay for "pay to play" and the cost. *Dr. Willett responded that it is approximately 600 students, about 400 play more than one sport. The district collects approximately \$195K of the \$400K+. The resident suggested doubling the "pay to play" – it will still be less of a burden on people's pockets than the tax increase on the smallest home in Town. Dr. Willett noted that this is listed on the next level of reductions. People are opposed to this because there are families with multiple children. The district has one of the highest pay to participate fees. By combining the TMS and THS (schools) a couple of hundred thousand dollars would be saved and cited the difficulties in finding a use for the former Parker school. He noted that the Town covers some of the maintenance costs of the sports facilities. The resident asked if it was correct that with tax and mill rate increases even fewer people would be interested in the TMS property if the schools were combined. Dr. Willett replied that he has a point and the Town is facing many challenges. The anger should be directed to the legislators who are taking a vacation while the Town is looking at an \$8.2M hit to ECS funding. The resident asked how people would see Tolland that built 2 new schools because it had too many students and is now looking to close a school. They are closing the schools he attended. It looks like the Town was not looking at the future. Attendance has gone down because taxes have gone up because the housing market is dead because people are moving out. It is a revolving problem and the only solution being provided is cutting teachers to make it sound like it is worse than it is instead of saving money where it can be saved. Dr. Willett responded that he has tried to find ways where it is not put on the shoulders of taxpayers. Enrollment has gone down across the state. The residents stated that currently it is on the shoulders of the taxpayers with a 7%+ increase on the referendum. Today's meeting is about the budget and the only reason taxes are going up is because of the BOE. He explained that he is asking questions on where the BOE can save. Mr. Krasusky commented that what he is saying is not true and asked that the meeting move on.*

Mr. Eccles clarified the question posed by Ms. Goetz. If there have been cost avoidances/savings in the school system, does the district still need the full 2.14% increase? *Dr. Willett explained that they have adjusted downward to get to the number they were asked to reach. The 2.14% had reductions. Is it needed? He could put the reading and math support back and build up RTI and SRBI programs. This was all presented during the BOE budget workshops.*

A resident inquired why the Town and BOE need a tax increase every year. *Dr. Willett responded in regard to the BOE. Contractually there are a large number of personnel and each year there may be increases related to their contracts. If requested, he can provide data on the pay rate for Tolland teachers vs. those in other districts. They do receive a competitive wage. The 1-2% zone is the cost of business for competitive salaries. Mr. Werbner explained that in regard to the Town, it is -2.5% in expenditures and for a number of years it has been at 0% or less. They have tried to economize where possible. The Town has primarily three pockets of money: public safety, public works, and solid waste. For a change to happen it is about how much tolerance there is to lessen services. They have eliminated bulky waste over the years and reduced public safety by 50%. It is not sustainable to present a 5% or 7% tax increase year after year.*

A resident thanked them for the explanation. The Town is asking for an increase and the residents are getting less and that is a big reason people do not want to vote for a 3%, 5%, or 7% increase. Last year we lost services and this year we will as well and there are a lot of things in the works to save money long term but if one keeps raising taxes and losing services they will never save money to get to the long term plans. At some point they need to take a hit and say over the next 3 years we will have a budget of x, y, and z in order to accomplish a specific goal (privatize trash etc.). He added that not to be rude but the BOE needs \$300K in raises and it bothers him. This affects the entire Town and the residents' way of life. They will all win or lose together. In regard to the 2.14%, as soon as the money is available the Board has reasons for why it wants it back and while he understands they are trying to do the right thing, one has to stop and look at living in reality that the money is not there. It is on the Town side as well when you see the Tolland trucks driving around on the weekend which should be parked at Town Hall. It needs to stop at some point if the money is not available. If you are going to raise my taxes, give me something. *Dr. Willett explained that adjustments have been made in the school system since he came to Tolland 9 years ago. Thirty seven staff positions have been reduced. People are trying to make responsible adjustments and he is trying to create tuition bearing programs. The Town needs to be innovative.* The resident commented that Tolland does not have the tax base to keep sustaining tax increases so at some point something has to be lost for 2 years to gain it back in 3 years or they will just keep losing and raising taxes and going in a circle. The Town and the BOE are doing the best they can with what they have but something is not working. *Mr. Werbner explained that what is not working is the entire State of CT. It is in a downward financial spiral and no one has produced a long term plan to show how to pull out of it. There is no way Tolland can react to an \$8M-\$10M loss of revenue over 2 years and be able to come up with pay type programs to offset it without large tax increases. If the State would work with the Town over 5 years it would be a different scenario. It could not be predicted that this would happen this year in this magnitude. When he came to Tolland he wanted to promote diversity of the tax base but even with a home run it will be 90% residential.* The resident commented that if more money comes back everyone seems to want to spend it which does not help the Town's future. *Mr. Field noted that the recommendations for if more money comes back were outlined in the presentation (item 7).*

A resident commented that the BOE's 2.14% budget was never approved by the Town Council. *Mr. Werbner clarified that the 2.14% was approved by the BOE but not by the Town Council. It was brought to the Town Council but the budget process was stopped.*

A resident inquired if the Board still wants more money than it had last year. *Dr. Willett explained that his intention is to ask for less money from the community and to have tuition bearing programs.*

The 2.14% budget was a responsible one in that it included what was needed for the schools. Given the new situation adjustments had to be made. Can he run the same budget for year? The answer is no but he is making plans to run with less. The resident noted that the Town Manager noted that the Town is working with less money but the BOE still wants an increase. Dr. Willett replied that the BOE is getting a 2.5% decrease from 2016/17.

Deb Goetz, 176 Kate Lane, commented that the CT General Assembly is meeting on September 14th and an article said there was going to be a vote. There is pressure to have a budget by September 30th. She asked what it would cost to put the referendum off by 2 weeks. She asked if any of the Town Council members truly believed that the cuts to Tolland's ECS funding would be \$5.4M which the Town's 7% budget increase is based upon. She knows they made the best decision they could when they did but a lot has happened since that time. The House Democrats have a \$1.3M budget cut which is much better than the \$5.4M. She reviewed the Town's charter in regard to sending out tax bills. Why does the Town Council want to commit the residents to something the might not happen? Mr. Eccles explained that they have not had anything to hang their hats on. The timeline was based on the information from the Town Manager in regard to the tax bill. In regard to the \$5.4M, that was the best guess and his crystal ball is no better now than it was then. If something was presented that was much more concrete, then if possible, they should pause and regroup. Mr. Green explained that they are in a situation where they are throwing darts at a wall in the dark with a blindfold on in regard to the budget. Based on his discussions with Sam, he does not believe the meeting on the 14th will produce anything. In regard to the \$5.4M, his crystal ball is murky. If something happens on the 14th he would not be opposed to putting the process on pause if it could be done. The timetable was done so tax bills could be distributed in a timely fashion to avoid a catastrophic cash flow problem. Mr. Krasusky commented that he echoed Mr. Green and the timeframe. In regard to the pressure on the State, they have heard this since spring so he does not feel any credence in what the legislators are doing. He places zero credibility into the September 14th meeting and believes the number may be \$5.4M – they have no other information. Mr. Skoczulek agreed with the others. In regard to rescinding the process, he would need to see something that that Governor would not veto. An actual vote in the House even with the risk of veto might cause the Council to consider putting a pause on the process. The Democratic proposal at least had some town runs. He is not unconvinced they will not end up with the whole \$8.2M. He is hoping for better but the level of dysfunction is absurd. One has to wonder with all the politics being played if the Governor is creating cover for the Legislature so that his budget will pass since he is not running in another election. They have tried to find a middle ground and he hopes and prays something happens before the referendum so they can come up with something that is better for everyone. The next best case is passing the referendum and getting a budget soon thereafter so adjustments can be made. He supports this budget. Ms. Morgan reiterated what has been said. In regard to the \$5.4M figure, she believes it is a possibility and they need to prepare for the worst. They have worked hard to try to make the most responsible decision. This is the information they have to work with. Mr. Field commented that he has no idea if it will be the \$5.4M. In regard to the Democrat's budget, he does not know if the Governor will sign it. He still endorses the budget and doubts that a State budget will be available by September 30th.

A resident commented that BOE budget workshops are coming up. The first one is scheduled for October 18th. These are community participatory workshops that cover short and long term planning. The BOE wants input and she encouraged those who would like to learn more details to participate.

Mr. Werbner addressed the budget in regard to timing. They stopped the budget process based on a Supreme Court decision that said that timetables are discretionary and as long as the process is completed in its entirety the time taken is up to the towns. That said, the Town cannot tweak the current referendum. There are two options. First, they can rescind what they currently have via an emergency meeting and rescind all action and start the process over with a new recommended budget, adoption, public hearing, etc. Second, the community can vote not to pass the budget. If the House adopts the budget on September 14th, the Senate still has to adopt the budget, and then it would have to go to the Governor to be signed. He does not see this happening by the 19th thus they will probably have to have the referendum on the 19th because there will not be any concrete information available. If something happens on the 18th or 19th, he would assume that Tolland voters would reject the budget on the 19th given the new information. The subsequent budget would incorporate the new numbers that would be in sync with the State.

The Chair thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.
He asked that everyone keep Texas in their thoughts and prayers.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:21 PM.

Richard J. Field, Council Chair

Lisa A. Pascuzzi
Substitute Clerk