

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING – JUNE 19, 2018  
MEETING ROOM B TOWN HALL**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
TOWN OF WILTON

2018 JUN 25 A 10:48

BY: LK

**PRESENT:** Jeff Rutishauser, Richard Creeth, Peter Balderston, John Kalamarides

**ABSENT:** Walter Kress, Stewart Koenigsberg

**Others Present:** Anne Kelly-Lenz, CFO; David Rothstein, Deborah Low, Deborah McFadden, Members of Press and Public

**Call to Order**

Chairman Jeff Rutishauser called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting May 15, 2018**

Mr. Rutishauser asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2018. Richard Creeth so moved, John Kalamarides seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Introduction of Town Assessor**

CFO Anne Kelly-Lenz introduced new Town Assessor Sarah Scacco. Ms. Scacco reviewed her background and fielded questions from the Board.

**Monthly Financial Report – CFO Anne Kelly-Lenz**

Anne Kelly-Lenz gave a monthly financial review as of May 2018 (Memo attached).

**Survey Subcommittee Interim Report and Discussion**

Mr. Creeth gave an interim report on the Survey Subcommittee and the committee presented the attached report. Mr. Creeth said that the current estimate of the survey cost might be around \$10,000 since David Rothstein's firm would provide a significant amount of the effort pro bono, which was appreciated by the BOF members.

**Committee Reports**

*Business Operations Committee:* Mr. Balderston noted that there was discussion regarding list of metrics and pushing those forward and fleshing them out with the consultant. Hoping by end of July to have something to share. Also discussed desire to have their own charter authority; discussed in context of mostly special education in terms of how unknown that could be.

Mr. Creeth noted that John Kalamarides, Peter Balderston and he attended the long range planning meetings held by the BoE and gave an update on discussions.

Mr. Rutishauser noted that the next Planning & Zoning POCD meeting is being held on June 21, 2018, 7:00PM at Trackside and the topics are conservation, preservation and cultural resources.

**Public Participation**

None.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jacqueline Rochester  
(from video recording)

FINANCE DEPARTMENT  
Tel (203) 563-0114  
Fax (203) 563-0299



TOWN HALL  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018

To: Board of Finance

From: Anne Kelly Lenz 

Re: FY 2018 Financial Reporting May 2018

Below I have listed the key items of the FY 2018 forecast versus the budget.

FY 2018 revenues are currently forecasted \$1,595,829 higher than the budget, mainly due to:

- Education – up \$530,363 due to State ESC funds that were not expected or budgeted in FY 18.
- Town Road Aid - \$158,000. Received from State, previously slated to be cut.
- Renewal Contract signed for Cell Tower lease. \$125,000 in signing bonus and \$6,667 additional in annual lease income.
- Additional back taxes paid and increase in MV Supplemental tax - \$240,000
- Interest Income - slight increase in rates giving Town additional income - \$290,000
- Loss of FY 18 LOCIP funds from the General Funds but being picked up as additional funds for the road program in the Capital Fund – (\$225,524)

FY 2018 expenses are currently forecasted \$1,845,746 lower than budget, mainly due to:

- Favorability in the BOS budget was due to open positions in the Police Dept. Assessor's office and DPW along with lower funding level needed for the OPEB ARC.
- Charter Authority – savings of \$1,255,490 as the Town is forecasting it to be unused at this time.

## Board of Finance Survey

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Committee formed in March 2018 by Board of Finance

Objective – “to survey the taxpayers of Wilton to determine where they would like their tax dollars to be applied.”

## Committee Members

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- **Members**

- Board of Finance - Richard Creeth
- Board of Selectmen – Deborah McFadden
- Board of Education – Debbie Low
- Planning & Zoning Commission – Sally Poundstone
- Economic Development Commission – John Kelly
- Citizen Volunteer – David Rothstein

## Activities

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- The committee has met three times and determined the following
  - Specific Objective - "To collect a ***statistically fair*** representation of taxpayer priorities to guide town officials in their decision making."
  - Survey will be
    - On-line
    - Anonymous
    - Statistically valid
    - Focused on spending priorities
  - Survey will not
    - Cover issues addressed by POCD surveys

## Statistically valid

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- Survey size of at least 500 households (6,200 total)
- Represents all significant groups
  - Families with children <18
  - Empty nesters
  - Seniors
  - Non voting taxpayers
  - Etc.

## Drive Responses

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- Segment population
  - Age
  - Children in school
  - Vote at Town Meeting
- Monitor responses by segment
  - Market to under-represented segments
- Weight response by segment to ensure results truly reflect universe

## Draft Questions to Address Budget Priorities

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- 1. Thinking back to when you first moved into Wilton, which of the following would you say are reasons why you chose Wilton? [CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY]
  - [LIST OF POSSIBLE REASONS]
- 2. Considering those reasons, to what degree has the town met your expectations for each? [SETUP SO ASK IS FOR EACH REASON CHOSEN IN Q. 1]:
  - Exceeded my expectations
  - Met my expectations
  - Has not quite met my expectations
  - Has not at all met my expectations



# Draft Questions to Address Budget Priorities

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- 3. How do you think the Wilton School system compares to school systems in our neighboring towns? When we say to neighboring towns, we are referring to the towns of: Darien, New Canaan, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Easton, and Redding. Wilton is...
  - Among the top few
  - In the middle of the pack
  - Among the bottom few
  
- 4. When compared to schools in our neighboring towns, do you believe that Wilton's goal should be that its schools are...
  - Among the top few
  - In the middle of the pack
  - Among the bottom few
  - No such goal should be set
  
- 5. Regardless of what you think the goal should be, what is the minimum level of school performance that would be acceptable to you?
  - Wilton schools are among the top few compared to those in neighboring towns
  - Wilton schools are among the middle of the pack compared to those in neighboring towns
  - Wilton schools are among the bottom few compared to those in neighboring towns
  - I don't know/not important to me

# Draft Questions to Address Budget Priorities

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- 6. You said you think the goal should be [INSERT ANSWER FROM Q. 4]. To what degree do you support or oppose the town's current level of spending towards achieving that goal?
  - Strongly support → SKIP TO Q. 8
  - Mildly support → SKIP TO Q. 8
  - Neither support nor oppose → SKIP TO Q. 8
  - Mildly oppose → ASK Q. 7
  - Strongly oppose → ASK Q. 7
- 7. [ASK ONLY IF OPPOSE IN Q. 6] Is your opposition because you think current spending is...
  - Higher than needed to achieve the goal → SKIP TO Q. 9
  - Too low to achieve the goal → ASK Q. 8
- 8. [ASK ONLY IF SUPPORT OR NEUTRAL IN Q. 6 OR TOO LOW in Q. 7]: And if successfully achieving that goal meant your town property taxes increased by about 1% annually, would you
  - Strongly support the increase
  - Mildly support the increase
  - Neither support nor oppose the increase
  - Mildly oppose the increase
  - Strongly oppose the increase
  - [NOTE: REPEAT QUESTION 8 UP TO 5 TIMES WITH INCREASING TAX INCREASE (1.5%, 2.0%, 2.5%, 3.0%, 4.0%, 5.0%); UNTIL RESPONDENT IS NO LONGER POSITIVE IN THEIR SUPPORT]

## Draft Questions to Address Budget Priorities

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- 9. If you could increase the amount of funding for just one of the following areas, which would it be?  
[RANDOMIZE LIST; INCLUDE ROLLOVER OR CLICK-ON DEFINITIONS OF EACH]
  - Schools
  - Fire Department
  - Police Department
  - Trackside
  - Economic Development Investment
  - Department of Public Works
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Purchasing / Developing Open Space
  - Library
- 10. And which would be next?
  - [SAME LIST AS Q. 9 EXCLUDING ANSWER IN Q. 7]

# Draft Questions to Address Budget Priorities

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- 11. Now, hypothetically, if you were put in charge of reducing the tax paid per household, which of the following would you do?
    - [USE SAME LIST AS Q. 9; BUT WITH "REDUCE FUNDING FOR" PRECEDING EACH] → SKIP TO Q. 14]
    - Grow the grand list (DEFINITION? the grand list is the number of tax paying entities that share the total tax burden) → ASK Q. 12
  - 12. [ASK Q. 12 ONLY IF GROW THE GRAND LIST in Q. 11] Which of the following do you think the town should pursue in growing the grand list? [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
    - Allow denser housing
    - More commercial space
    - Hire a full time economic development manager
    - [CONTINUE LIST OF IDEAS]
  - 13. [ASK IF MORE THAN ONE ANSWER IN Q. 10] Among these ideas, which one do you think would have the greatest positive impact?
    - [LIST ANSWERS FROM Q. 10]
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# Demographic Classification Points and Final Questions

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- 14. How old are you? \_\_\_\_
  - 15. Do you...
    - Own a home in Wilton
    - Rent a home or apartment in Wilton
    - Have some other living arrangement in Wilton
  - 16. How many people, including yourself, reside in your household? \_\_\_\_
  - 17. How many children in your household...?
    - Attend Miller or Driscoll schools? \_\_\_\_
    - Attend Cider Mill school \_\_\_\_
    - Attend Middlebrook school \_\_\_\_
    - Attend Wilton High School \_\_\_\_
    - Attend a private school \_\_\_\_
    - Are home schooled \_\_\_\_
    - None of the above \_\_\_\_
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# Demographic Classification Points and Final Questions

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- 18. Which one of the following best describes your current employment status? (Select one)
  - Employed full-time
  - Employed part-time
  - Self employed
  - Homemaker
  - Unemployed but looking for work
  - Unemployed and not looking for work
  - Full-time student
  - Retired
  - Prefer not to answer
- 19. Which of the categories listed below best describes your total household income before taxes? (Select one)
  - Less than \$30,000
  - \$30,000 to \$49,999
  - \$50,000 to \$74,999
  - \$75,000 to \$99,999
  - \$100,000 to \$149,999
  - \$150,000 to \$199,000
  - \$200,000 to \$249,999
  - \$250,000 to \$299,999
  - More than \$300,000
  - Prefer not to answer

# Demographic Classification Points and Final Questions

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- 20. Thinking about the property taxes you pay to the town of Wilton, how do you think they compare with our neighboring towns?
  - Wilton is much higher
  - Wilton is a little higher
  - About the same
  - Wilton is a little less
  - Wilton is much less
- 21. Did you vote on the budget at the Annual Town meeting on May 1<sup>st</sup>?
- 22. As you may know, voter turnout at our most recent annual budget vote was only about 12%. Why do you think so many people didn't vote? [CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY]
  - [LIST POSSIBLE REASONS]

## Timing

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- Finalize questions and setup on-line survey – July – Aug 2018
  - Conduct survey – Sep, Oct, Nov 2018
  - Present results to BoF – Dec 2018
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## What we Need from The BoF

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- Agreement on approach and scope of questions
- Agreement on timing
- Budget of approximately \$10,000 for marketing and outreach (would be considerably higher without David Rothstein's assistance.)