

**Board of Finance
Public Hearing
April 8, 2025 7:30 PM
Weston High School Auditorium**

Summaries of the budget are available from the Town Clerk. A copy of the detailed budget is available for public inspection in the office of the Town Clerk and on the town website. The Call of the Public Hearing is attached.

The final Approved copy of the budget summary can be found in the Town Meeting book.

Present: Board of Finance Chairman Mike Imber, Vice Chairman Rone Baldwin, Jeffrey Farr, Daniel Gershburg, Jeffrey Goldstein, Christopher Bryant and Theresa Brasco. Donna M Anastasia, Clerk of the meeting.

Also present: First Selectwoman Samantha Nestor, Town Administrator Karl Kilduff, Finance Director Rick Darling, acting Superintendent of Schools Deborah Low, Director of Finance & Operations Phil Cross, Board of Education Chairman Steve Ezzes and members of the Board of Education. There were approximately 25 residents in attendance.

This Public Hearing was called to order by Chairman Imber at 7:32 pm.

Chairman Imber welcomed everyone and introduced the head table. The rules of the meeting were noted. Chairman Imber then turned the meeting over to Steve Ezzes to present the highlights of the Board of Education budget. The proposed BOE operating budget for 2025-2026 is \$61,151,439 representing a 3.05% increase. Chairman Ezzes went over the drivers including the significant rise in health care insurance.

First Selectwoman Nestor went over the proposed \$16,436,317 town operating budget for 2025-2026. The proposed budget represents an increase of 3.42%. The First Selectwoman went over some of the drivers such as bargaining unit outcomes and health care increases, loss of state funds and the change in the method of motor vehicle tax calculation as mandated by the state. The proposed budget if approved would yield a mil rate of 24.01.

First Selectwoman Nestor then turned the meeting over to Chairman Imber who opened the meeting to questions and comments from the public.

Alex Staehely, Lords Hwy

Would like the town to find a more holistic basis regarding upgrades specifically the HVAC system. Energy service companies will come in and provide an analysis. Mr. Staehely also spoke a second time regarding the proposed sinking fund for the purchase of fire trucks and equipment saying it may not be the best use of capital.

Alan Rubenstein, Old Hyde Rd

Commented on the sidewalks and the impact of the trees and stone walls and costs associated with that.

John Russell, Wells Hill Rd

Mr. Russell wanted to know if there are mechanisms in place to check that the quality of the education is proportionate with the spending.

Lisa Yountchi, Partridge Lane

Wanted to acknowledge the overall positive experience with the school system.

Amy Sanborn, Old Hyde Rd

Ms. Sanborn asked about a decrease in 100K for Techton last year and has anyone looked at those projects. Ms. Sanborn later spoke again regarding the enrollment and believes the demographics are erroneously high.

Lauren Traum, Old Hyde Rd

Wanted to suggest that grant match funds be paid as a supplemental in the event the special project does not move forward.

Aaron Burakoff, 38 Norfield Woods Rd

Wanted to acknowledge the work the BOE has done and is very pleased with the schools.

Ellen Crafts, Norfield Rd

Thanked the school administration and that she supports the BOE budget.

Carolyn Hill, Weston Rd

Commented on the improvement to the River Rd bridge and the achievements of her own children in the school system.

Amy Hussain, Salem Rd

Wanted to comment positively on the early investing for our fire department.

Chairman Imber wanted to give some background on the fire trucks and equipment stating that our equipment is old and because of the lead time required (which can be as long as 48 months) it is less costly and more efficient to "plan" for these purchases. This will cause a "smoothing out" of the budget rather than significant lumps if we wait. We are going to need several pieces of equipment.

Chairman Imber announced that the board of finance will be meeting for deliberations this Thursday.

Chairman Imber asked if there were any further questions or comments on the budgets and hearing none, Chairman Imber asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made and seconded and with none opposed meeting was adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Donna M Anastasia, Town Clerk

Legal notice is hereby given of the Public Hearing of the Board of Finance of the Town of Weston on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. at the High School Auditorium

To discuss the proposed budgets for the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Education, Capital Improvement and Debt Service as submitted to the Board of Finance for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2025. Said budgets are as follows:

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S BUDGET	
General Government	\$8,260,751
Public Safety	\$3,879,897
Public Works	\$2,172,283
Sanitation, Health & Environment	\$475,148
Human Services	\$1,118,285
Parks & Recreation	<u>\$529,953</u>
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S BUDGET	\$16,436,317
BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET	\$61,151,439
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET	\$3,858,598
DEBT SERVICE BUDGET	\$494,475
GROSS TOWN BUDGET	\$81,940,829
Less: Estimated Non-Tax Revenues	\$4,418,666
General Fund Balance Offset	\$300,000
NET TOWN BUDGET	\$77,222,163

Dated at Weston, Connecticut
this 28th day of March, 2025

Michael Imber
Board of Finance, Chairman