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MAY 14 2024

BRANFORD TOWN CLERK

Representative Town Meeting  
May 14, 2024  
Meeting Minutes

Moderator: Maryann Amore	Clerk: Frank Twohill
Majority Leader: Tracy Everson	Minority Leader: Victoria Verderame

The RTM convened on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 8:05 p.m., at Branford Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main Street, to consider and act upon the following matters:

1. Call to Order, and Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator Amore led the Body in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Call of the Roll:

**Representatives Present:** Adams, Adelman, Alfone, Amore, Anderson, Black, Bonenberger, Dahill, Everson, Hartwell, Hentschel, Hynes, Ingraham, Keefe, Laich, Larsson, Loffredo, Maresca, McCall, McCormack, Popolizio, Sharkey, Shrestha, Soomro, Twohill, Verderame.

**Representatives Absent:** Brooks, Greenberg, Neupane, Waterman.

**Ex-Officios Present:** First Selectman Cosgrove, Town Clerk Arpin.

3. Approval of the minutes of the April 10, 2024, meeting:

Motion to approve made by Rep. Everson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Hentschel. The minutes were approved unanimously in a voice vote.

4. Reception of Communications, Reports of Committees and Citizen Petitions:

A. Moderator Amore read a letter from First Selectman Cosgrove who requested the Town Clerk position become appointed, rather than elected. Request referred to Rules & Ordinances Committee.

B. Moderator Amore read a letter from Rep. Everson concerning a proposed resolution that already appears on the May 14<sup>th</sup> RTM Call as Item #19.

5. To consider, and if appropriate, approve a request from the Building Department for the following FY24 transfer request:

**From:**

10142050-566900	Other Supplies	(\$500)
10142050-533550	Legal Services	( 200)
10142050-566100	Office Supplies	(1,000)
10142050-588200	Memberships, Conf. & Meetings	( 250)
10142050-588090	Travel	( 400)
		\$2,350

**To:**

10142050-533280	Consulting Services	\$2,350
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Rep. Hentschel stated that the Rules & Ordinances Committee did not hear the proposed transfer. Motion to waive RTM Rule 4.4.1. made by Rep. Hentschel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. McCormack. Motion approved unanimously by the full RTM in a voice vote. First Selectman Cosgrove explained the proposed transfer is needed to fund more consulting services. Full-time department personnel were out on medical leave and in their absence greater use of the consultant was required. Rep. Hentschel moved approval, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Ingraham. Motion passed unanimously by the full RTM in a voice vote.

**6. To consider, and if appropriate, approve a request from Open Space for the following FY24 transfer request:**

<b>From:</b>		
20545050-566900	Other Supplies	(\$2,800)
<b>To:</b>		
20545050-544300	Purchase Service Repair & Maintenance	2,000
20545050-579400	Capital Outlay Improvements	800
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,800</b>

Rep. Hartwell explained that the Ways & Means Committee did not hear this item. He made a motion to waive RTM Rule 4.4.1, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Verderame. Motion to waive carried unanimously by the full RTM in a voice vote. Rep. Hartwell moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Hentschel, to approve the proposed transfer. The full RTM voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**7. To consider, and if appropriate, approve the following FY24 transfer request from the Executive budget:**

<b>From:</b> 10141020-533280	Consulting	(\$15,000)
<b>To:</b> 10141190-579150	Technology Acquisitions	15,000

Rep. Adelman stated the Administrative Services Committee heard this item on May 7<sup>th</sup> and it passed 5-0. The proposed transfer is for a licensing platform and live program providing salaries and benefits information concerning municipal employees. Rep. Adelman put the matter forward in the form of a motion to the full RTM. The motion passed unanimously in a voice vote by the RTM.

**8. The Board of Finance approved the following budget for fiscal year 2024-2025:**

Board of Education: Operating Budget	\$65,428,110
Board of Education: Special Education	\$0
Board of Education Capital & Leases	<u>\$621,000</u>
<b>Subtotal Board of Education:</b>	<b>\$66,049,110</b>
<b>Town Departments:</b>	<b><u>\$69,261,986</u></b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$ 135,311,096</u></b>

**A. To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$66,049,110 to the Board of Education (Operating Budget + Capital) for fiscal year 2024-2025**

**B. To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$69,261,986 for all other Town Departments for fiscal year 2024-2025:**

Motion made by Rep. Laich, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Verderame, to hear from each RTM Committee Chair and the status of the Town Department budgets heard by them. Motion passed unanimously in a voice vote by the full RTM.

**a. Report and adoption of Education Committee budgets:** Rep. Keefe reported the Education Committee met on May 6. The Committee heard their budgets, and all passed unanimously 5-0, with no changes. Rep. Loffredo raised concerns with the new 10-year Board of Education electric bus contract. Several

Representatives and Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Christopher Tranberg, discussed the matter. Rep. Keefe put the Education Committee budgets forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion.

- b. Report and adoption of Ways and Means budgets:** Rep. Hartwell stated the Ways and Means Committee held a Special Meeting on April 24. The sole change made to their budgets was to increase the Public Celebration account, Town Band Leader, stipend to \$500 per month. The extra \$1,812 to fund the increased stipend would be taken from the FY '25 proposed Contingency Account by \$1,812. The vote on this item passed in Committee 4-1 (Black.) All Committee budgets before them were then approved unanimously, 5-0. Rep. Hartwell put their budgets forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion.
- c. Report and adoption of Rules and Ordinances budgets:** Rep. Hentschel reported the Committee heard all budgets before them on April 15. There were no changes made by the Committee and the votes to approve all budgets before them were unanimous in favor. Rep. Hentschel put the budgets forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion.
- d. Report and adoption of Public Services budgets:** Rep. Bonenberger stated the Committee met on April 18 and 30 to hear the budgets before them. There were no changes made and the Committee voted unanimously to approve all their budgets. Rep. Bonenberger put the budgets forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion.
- e. Report and adoption of Administrative Services budgets:** Rep. Adelman reported the Committee heard all their budgets on April 4 and voted on May 7. All budgets before the Committee were unanimously approved by the Committee. Rep. Adelman put the budgets forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion.

Motion to approve the 2024-25 Town Budget, Education, \$66,049,110 and Town budgets, \$ 69,261,986, totaling \$ 135,311,096, as recommended by the various RTM Committees, made by Rep. Keefe, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Black. Passed by the full RTM in a roll call vote 24-1, (Loffredo.)

- 9. To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$105,240 to the Open Space Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Hartwell reported the Ways & Means Committee heard and approved the appropriation by unanimous vote. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM approved the motion unanimously in a voice vote.
- 10. To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$16,495 to the Sewer Assessment Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Hartwell stated the Ways and Means Committee heard this request on April 24. The Committee approved the item unanimously. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. In a voice vote, the RTM passed the matter unanimously.
- 11. To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$72,250 to the BOE Shoreline Adult Education Enrichment Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Keefe stated that the Education Committee heard this request on May 5. The appropriation was passed unanimously by the Committee. He put the item forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM voted unanimously in favor of the appropriation in a voice vote.
- 12. To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$613,710 to the BOE School Age Child Care Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Keefe reported the Education Committee heard this request on May 5. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the request. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM passed the appropriation unanimously in a voice vote.

13. **To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$4,879,501 to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Budget for the fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Hentschel stated the Rules & Ordinances Committee heard this request on April 15. The item passed unanimously in Committee. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM passed the appropriation unanimously in a voice vote.
14. **To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of appropriation of \$492,704 to the Animal Control Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Bonenberger stated the Public Services Committee heard this appropriation on April 18. The Committee unanimously approved the request. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM voted unanimously to approve the appropriation in a voice vote.
15. **To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$2,035,111 to the Human Services Special Revenue Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Adelman stated the Administrative Services Committee heard this item and the Committee passed it in a unanimous vote. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM voted to approve the appropriation unanimously in a voice vote.
16. **To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$366,995 Lease Fund Budget for fiscal year 2024-2025.** Rep. Keefe reported the Education Committee heard this item and voted in favor of it unanimously. He put the matter forward to the full RTM. In a voice vote the RTM voted unanimously in favor of the appropriation.
17. **To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance of an appropriation of \$1,088,500 to the ARPA Fund Budget for the fiscal year 2024-2025.** This proposed appropriation was not heard in any RTM Committee. A motion was made by Rep. Hentschel to waive RTM Rule 4.4.1, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Ingraham. The RTM voted unanimously in favor of the motion to waive by voice vote. The list of items to be approved using ARPA funds was read by Public Services Committee Chair Bonenberger and Administrative Services Chair Adelman. A motion was made to approve the appropriation by Rep. Adelman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Popolizio. In a voice vote, the full RTM unanimously voted to approve the appropriation.
18. **To consider and, if appropriate, approve the recommendation of the Board of Finance to the RTM that the salary for the following elected official increase by 2% for each year of their two-year term of office: Registrars of Voters.** (Rep. Black recused himself and left the room.) Rep. Adelman stated the Administrative Services Committee heard the proposal on May 7. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2% annual salary increase. He put the matter forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM voted to approve unanimously by voice vote. (Rep. Black was recused from the vote and he returned to the room after the vote.)
19. **To consider the following resolution: "Resolved, given the post-covid financial impact experienced by all Branford taxpayers, the RTM respectfully requests that the Board of Finance consider mitigating the recommended 2024-2025 tax increase by bringing forward a greater amount of the undesignated fund."** Rep. Everson spoke regarding the resolution, introduced on behalf of the Democratic Majority. A motion to approve the resolution was made by Rep. Hartwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rep. Hentschel. A series of graphs were projected to the RTM by Rep. Hartwell showing: the undesignated fund balance growth over the last 10 years, the amount per capita and other Towns' fund balances compared to Branford's fund balance. Many Representatives discussed and debated the proposal. A roll call vote was taken, and the resolution passed the RTM 14-11.
20. **To consider and, if appropriate, establish a harbor management commission pursuant to CGS 22a-113k.** Rep. Hentschel stated that a working group has been established at the Rules & Ordinances Committee to work up an ordinance on this and he requested a re-referral. He put that request in the form of a motion. The full RTM, in a voice vote, unanimously approved the re-referral.

**21. To consider, and if appropriate, create an ordinance which will encode reasonable restrictions on short-term rentals in Branford.** Rep. Hentschel reported the Rules & Ordinances is working on this proposal and he asked for a re-referral. He put that request forward to the full RTM in the form of a motion. The RTM approved the request unanimously by voice vote.

**22. Any other business to come before the RTM:**

- A) Rep. Ingraham stated on May 18 flags will be placed on graves in cemeteries to honor Branford residents who died in military service to our country; the Memorial Day parade is May 27, 10 a.m., on the Branford Green;
- B) Rep. Ingraham mentioned Madeline "Buzz" Clem had just died and mentioned her great citizenship. Rep. Twohill asked for a moment of silence. "Buzz" was an outstanding Branford citizen serving on the Fire Commission for 40 years;
- C) Dr. Sofia Noori and her husband, Stephen Diaz-Romero, described the problems they are having with their home in Lanhier's Cove where a neighbor constructed a retaining wall without permits, damaging their property.

**23. Adjournment at 9:41 p.m.**

Rep. Everson made a motion to adjourn; Rep. Ingraham seconded.

**See the BCTV recording of this meeting for details of the conversations.**

**Frank Twohill, RTM Clerk  
Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024**

BRANFORD RTM RECORDED VOTES

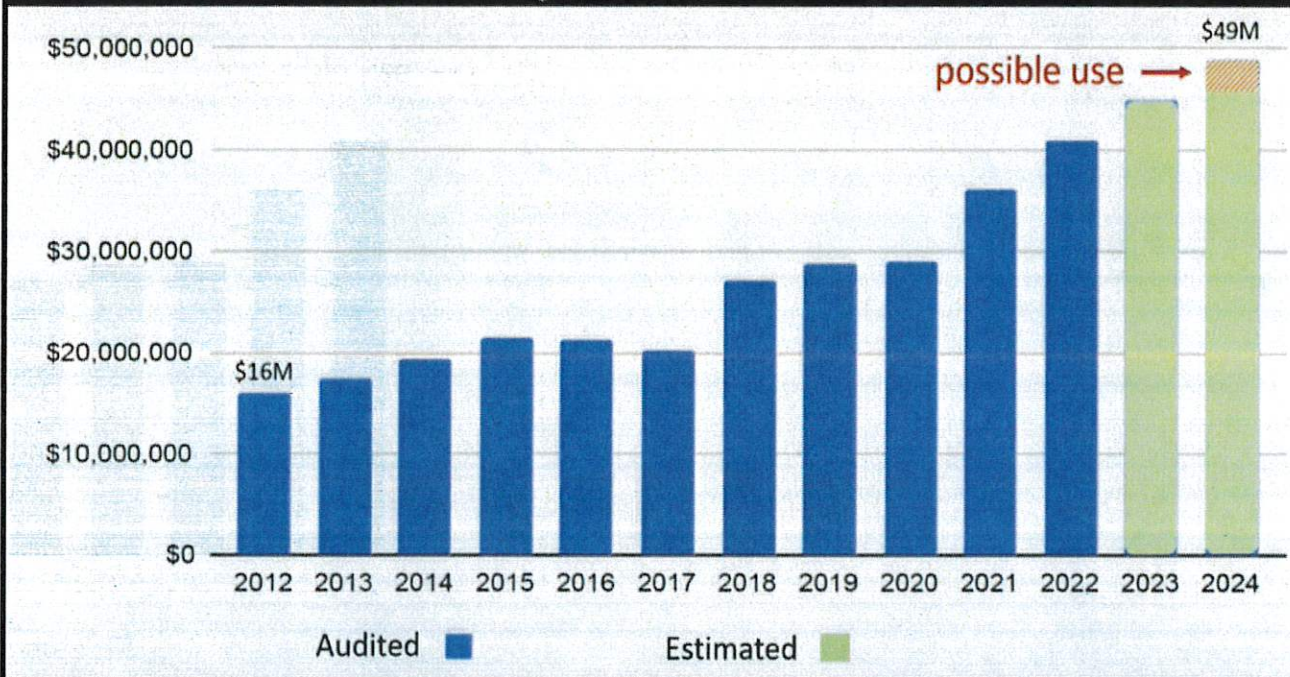
RTM ROLL CALL, MAY 14, 2024					
	NAME	ATTENDANCE	Item #8, Budget	Item #19, Resolu	
1	ADAMS	Present	Yes	Yes	
2	ADELMAN	Present	Yes	Yes	
3	ALFONE	Present	Yes	No	
4	AMORE	Present			
5	ANDERSON	Present	Yes	No	
6	BLACK	Present	Yes	No	
7	BONENBERGER	Present	Yes	Yes	
8	BROOKS	Absent			
9	DAHILL	Present	Yes	Yes	
10	EVERSON	Present	Yes	Yes	
11	GREENBERG	Absent			
12	HARTWELL	Present	Yes	Yes	
13	HENTSCHEL	Present	Yes	Yes	
14	HYNES	Present	Yes	No	
15	INGRAHAM	Present	Yes	No	
16	KEEFE	Present	Yes	Yes	
17	LAICH	Present	Yes	Yes	
18	LARSSON	Present	Yes	Yes	
19	LOFFREDO	Present	No	No	
20	MARESCA	Present	Yes	No	
21	MCCALL	Present	Yes	Yes	
22	MCCORMACK	Present	Yes	Yes	
23	NEUPANE	Absent			
24	POPOLIZIO	Present	Yes	No	
25	SHARKEY	Present	Yes	No	
26	SHRESTHA	Present	Yes	Yes	
27	SOOMRO	Present	Yes	Yes	
28	TWOHILL	Present	Yes	No	
29	VERDERAME	Present	Yes	No	
30	WATERMAN	Absent			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24-1</b>	<b>14-11</b>	
	Ex Officios				
	1st Selectman Cosgrove	Present			
	Selectman Dunbar				
	Selectman Higgins				
	Town Clerk Arpin	Present			
	Treasurer Schwanfelder				
	Attorney Aniskovich				

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# BRANFORD TOWN MEETINGS

## Growth of Undesignated Fund 2012 - 2024



REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING 05/14/2024

Slides as presented to the RTM  
by John Hartwell on 5-14-2024  
Item #19



# BRANFORD TOWN MEETINGS

## Branford vs Other Towns - 2021

	Population	Undesignated fund	
		2021 Balance	Per Capita
<b>BRANFORD</b>	<b>28,176</b>	<b>\$36,145,295</b>	<b>\$1,283</b>
CHESHIRE	28,628	\$12,121,654	\$423
FARMINGTON	26,645	\$18,354,698	\$689
GUILFORD	22,031	\$2,508,232	\$114
MADISON	17,619	\$1,605,711	\$91
MANSFIELD	26,357	\$8,184,086	\$311
NEW MILFORD	28,182	\$21,406,372	\$760
NEWTOWN	27,522	\$16,082,132	\$584
SIMSBURY	24,807	\$16,955,367	\$683
WETHERSFIELD	27,124	\$12,813,487	\$472

*REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING 05/14/2024*

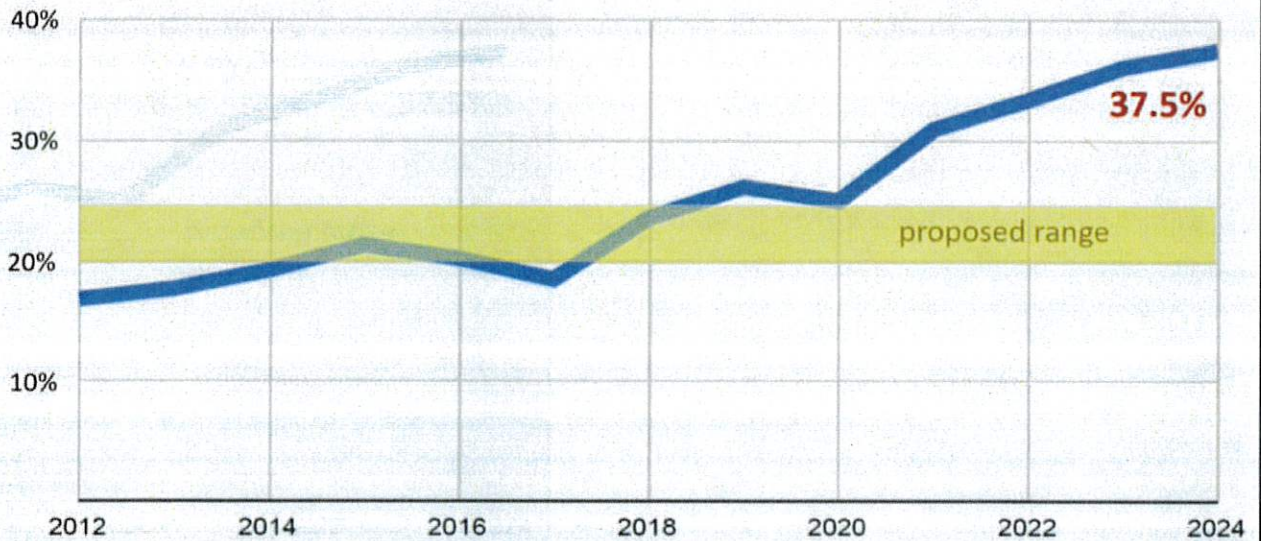
**Slides as presented to the RTM  
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# BRANFORD TOWN MEETINGS

## Undesignated Fund as a % of Expenditures



*REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING 05/14/2024*

**Slides as presented to the RTM  
by John Hartwell on 5-14-2024  
Item #19**