

**ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2019**

The Enfield Town Council hosted a Community Conversation at Henry Barnard School, 27 Shaker Road, Enfield, Connecticut on Wednesday, April 24, 2019. Mayor Ludwick opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ROLL-CALL** – Present were Councilors Bosco, Cekala, Cressotti, Deni, Kiner, Ludwick, Muller, Sferrazza, Szewczak and Unghire. Councilor Davis was absent. Also present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Manager, Kasia Purciello; Town Clerk, Suzanne Olechnicki and Director of Finance, John Wilcox.

Present from the Board of Education were Walter Kruzal, Christopher Rutledge and Scott Ryder.

Mr. Bromson presented the Town Manager’s proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2019/2020.

Mr. Bromson stated the 2020 budget for the Town is \$66,308,755, and the Board of Education budget for 2020 is \$71,630,274 for a total budget of \$137,939,029. He noted a breakdown shows most of the costs are related to fixed costs.

Mr. Bromson stated last year, they had severe cuts to the Police Department regarding police officers and benefits. He noted they cut from 95 officers to 88 officers, and this is not sustainable. He noted they want to keep a level staff of 95 sworn officers.

He stated the Capital Improvement Plan is \$949,064. He noted over the last couple years, the Town very severely cut its capital improvement.

Mr. Bromson stated debt service relates to bonds for the Enfield High School renovations and Roads 2015, and this is \$158,638.

As concerns the “Others” category, he noted EMS was cut to the bone and was unsustainable. He noted they had cut two EMT’s and two Paramedics. He stated the Council restored those positions last year, and they are keeping that in this year’s budget. He noted they listed \$255,293 for the EMS for increases in health premiums, union increases and wages. He stated that figure is much higher. He explained the union increase alone was \$296,000; EMS staffing was \$172,000, and they realized a savings in health insurance because of negotiations with contracts, and that figure was about \$275,000. He noted with the savings, and then keeping what they had, the increase was kept at \$255,000. He stated if they reduce those numbers that he calls the threshold of mandatory things that are non-discretionary, it’s really a 1.5% increase in discretionary spending for the entire budget, or \$910,107.

Mr. Bromson then reviewed State Revenues and noted they're expecting an 8% increase from FY19, which amounts to \$32,174,605.

He then referred to the General Fund overview and listed the following increases:

**General Government - .82%** (this constitutes the Town Manager, Town Clerk, Town Attorney, Human Resources and Finance. The biggest increase relates to the new Assistant Town Manager and the Safety Officer)

**Public Safety – 9.61%** (this is the increase to 95 sworn officers)

**Public Works – (.94%)** (this decrease is attributable to implementing recommendations by Novak, as well as adjustments in the 1029 union contract)

**Development Services – 17.07%** (economic development and growth is needed, and to accomplish this staff is required)

**Intergovernmental and Agency – 2.48%** (North Central Health District, Celebrations Account, Veterans Council, Cemetery, Capitol Region of Governments and CCM)

**Non-Governmental Charges – 7.71%** (Liability and other insurances, pension retirement funding and other Town funds)

Mr. Bromson then reviewed an overview of other funds as follows:

**Social Services – 4.08% increase** (attributed to grant money)

**Information Technology – 12.2%** (IT services have been taken from all other departments and placed them under IT for efficiency, economies and for accountability)

**Emergency Medical Services – 4.93%** (reinstitution of positions)

**Insurance Reserve – 1.79%**

**Library/Recreation - .76%** - (a staff member going from part time to full time due to reorganization of that office)

**Dog Fund – 0%**

Mr. Bromson displayed a pie chart of the General Fund Revenue, which shows the largest amount relates to property and motor vehicle taxes, which is 74% of the budget. He noted Intergovernmental Revenues is at 24% followed by Charges for Services, Investments, Rental Income and Other, Fines & Forfeitures, Licenses & Permits.

He highlighted areas where increases are needed in the Capital Improvement Program:

- Vehicle Replacement Plan
- Public Works Equipment
- School Facilities
- Refuse & Resource Management
- Town Building Repairs
- Public Works – Other
- Town Road Paving/Miscellaneous Town
- Other Projects

He shared a chart showing the historical mill rate and noted this proposed budget results in a one mill increase bringing the mill rate to 34.4 mills, which equates to \$140 more per year for an average house value of \$200,000. He then shared a chart comparing Enfield's mill rate to other municipalities and noted the average mill rate is 35.64 mills, therefore, Enfield falls in about the middle range for mill rates.

He then highlighted the Water Pollution Control budget. He stated the budget for WPC in 2019 was \$6,148,114, and this year it dropped by 10% to \$5,490,176, which is a reduction of \$657,000, which is mostly in capital, but there were also recommendations for positions in Water Pollution Control, which he recommends holding off on until they have a new Superintendent and until the plant is complete and they really see what their needs are at that time.

Mr. Bromson stated they never fully implemented either the sewer usage or the monthly fee as was recommended by Woodard & Curran, therefore, they are trying to balance it this year, so they are self-sufficient and repay the General Fund. He noted they had almost a \$5 million-dollar debt, which has been cut in half, and they owe about \$2.5 million dollars, and they want to have an emergency rainy day fund. He stated the volumetric rate last year was \$3.39, and they're recommending it go to \$3.49 or they will have a big shortfall in years to come. He noted the cost per quarter will amount to \$44.60. He stated the annual ready-to-serve charge was \$21.00 last year, and it's going to be increased to \$36.00. He noted this is the difference of the total annual cost from FY19 to FY20, therefore, it's an increase of \$65.00 per year or \$16.28 per quarter. He noted this will keep them solvent and will address all the operational needs at the plant. He stated the Town Council may adjust this.

He stated a Novak study recommends the Town have a facilities type manager, and that is being recommended and included in this budget. He explained this position oversees major things such as the new Enfield High School and JFK Middle School to insure those facilities are being properly maintained.

Mayor Ludwick then invited comments from the public.

**Resident:** Questioned how police are selected for duty during road projects.

Councilor Sferrazza explained such jobs are considered extra jobs, and the salary for these jobs is not paid by the Town of Enfield, but rather the contractor for that project. He stated everyone within the union is on a list for such jobs, and it rotates so everyone gets a turn, and such work is only done on a police officer's day off. He pointed out the Police Department makes money in these instances because there's a fee for the officer and a \$20 per hour fee for the use of the cruiser. Mr. Bromson added these fees go into an account, and some monies from that account will be used toward fleet replacement.

Councilor Deni pointed out that pension monies aren't included in the case of extra outside work or overtime for police officers.

**Resident:** Questioned what he is buying for the ready-to-serve sewer fee, and Mayor Ludwick responded this pays for pipes, which is similar to how utilities do this.

**Resident:** Questioned if the \$36 million-dollar referendum for the Water Pollution Control Plant covered only equipment.

Mr. Bromson stated this funding is for upgrades to the plant, and the Town of Enfield also gets \$6 million dollars in federal grants. He explained the Town was under orders from DEEP to make improvements to the plant. He noted every Tuesday morning, there is a meeting regarding the Water Pollution Control project to be sure they are within their budget and on schedule. He stated the project is 20% complete.

**Resident:** Requested clarification of \$1.6 million dollars for police vehicles, and Mr. Bromson noted \$545,000 is for police vehicles, and the balance is for heavy duty trucks.

**Resident:** Questioned whether a savings is anticipated due to the truck wash helping with wear and tear on vehicles.

Councilor Bosco responded absolutely and noted washing vehicles preserves the vehicle, but also buying the right vehicle is important.

**Resident:** Questioned whether the truck wash has started operating yet.

Mr. Bromson stated it has been built and will be up and running very soon.

**Resident:** Questioned when the Water Pollution Control project will be completed, and Mr. Bromson responded it will be done in 2020.

**Resident:** Questioned how people can be encouraged to do more recycling.

Councilor Bosco stated the Council has been having discussions about recycling. He pointed out the cost of getting rid of trash is increasing. Councilor Szewczak stated the Council is planning to have a presentation on the topic of recycling at a future meeting.

**Resident:** Questioned when the printed budget will be available for review by the public.

Mr. Wilcox stated his goal is to have it available online tomorrow evening with printed copies available on Monday. He pointed out this has been the usual timeframe for making the budget available to the public.

**Resident:** Questioned how much is being collected on the volumetric rate versus the ready-to-serve rate, and Mr. Wilcox stated he did not have those numbers at this time.

**Resident:** Questioned whether the license plate readers can be used to identify out-of-state licenses being used by Enfield residents.

Councilor Sferrazza stated people have 60 days to make the change, and the burden of proof to make such identifications has always been on the police department.

**Resident:** Questioned whether the Town ever considered establishing a roofing department.

Councilor Bosco stated the Town did try a sidewalk department, but that did not work. Councilor Szewczak stated her belief a roofing department wouldn't be efficient since they would not be doing roofs 24 X 7.

**Resident:** Questioned whether Enfield is an "opportunity zone".

Mr. Bromson responded no, Enfield is not eligible.

**Resident:** Questioned why the Enfield Child Development Center isn't under the Board of Education. Mr. Bromson stated a lot of the ECDC is grant-oriented. He added it's a highly recognized program. **Resident:** Pointed out people at the Board of Education are always writing grants, and Mr. Bromson responded the Social Services Department is a master at writing grants.

**Resident:** Questioned if there's any limit to how much money the Town can have in a sinking fund.

Mayor Ludwick responded the Town can have \$60,000 per year per sinking fund.

**Resident:** Referred to business personal property tax and noted some businesses do not pay until they are caught. She questioned whether the Town is confident that's not happening in Enfield.

Mr. Wilcox stated the Town checks the list of registered businesses, and those businesses are mailed a property tax declaration. He noted there are several verification steps, which includes a contractor who looks at the tax declarations and audits what is being submitted.

Mr. Wilcox stated the Town signed a contract with a law firm that will pursue delinquent motor vehicle taxes.

**Resident:** Voiced concern about newly paved roads being dug up for utility work.

Councilor Bosco stated before road work is conducted, the Town notifies the utility companies in case they have any work that needs to be done in the hope that such work is done prior to paving.

As no others wished to speak, Mayor Ludwick closed the Community Conversation at 8:30 p.m.