

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
City Council of the City of Bath, Maine
Tuesday, May 14, 2002 6:00 PM
Dike-Newell School

Present: Vice Chairman - Tibbetts; Councilors Hart; Rogers; Reed; Hall; Banks; Blake

Absent: Chairman Wyman; Councilor James

Vice Chairman Tibbetts called the Hearing to order at 6:00 PM.

I. PUBLIC HEARING - City of Bath 2002-2003 Combined Budget

William Torrey III, Chairman of the Board of Education began the Hearing by giving an overview of the School Budget. Mr. Torrey stated that the school budget would be up 8% which would be about 1.1 million dollars. He listed the following reasons for this increase:

- Increase in health care costs for personnel by 15%.
- Interest and principal repayment on the Middle School debt which is about \$330,000.
- Technology upgrade and filling of positions left by grants that are going to expire.

Michael LaFortune, Superintendent of Schools, spoke next regarding some of the programs that have been introduced in the past couple of years. These have resulted in the hiring of extra personnel. Some of these are:

- Foreign Language Teachers at the Elementary and Middle School
- Technology Coordinator
- Gifted and Talented Coordinator
- Increased the Summer Enrichment Program
- Debate Team
- Academic Decathlon Team
- After school Tech Lab Program

Mr. LaFortune stated that the following reasons have also lead to the increase in the School's Budget this year:

- Bath Middle School Addition
- Loss of State and Federal Aid
- Personnel salaries are up

John Bubier, City Manager, then presented an overview of the City Budget. He stated that there four issues that have to be addressed by this budget:

- Delivery City Services
- Spending Cap
- Property Tax Rate
- Responsibilities of Being a Service Center

Mr. Bubier stated that the combined budgets of Municipal Services, Capital and Wastewater Treatment are \$27,000 less than last year. Another \$350,000 or \$360,000 still needs to be cut just to get to the cap at this time in the process.

Doris Ford of 94 Whiskeag Road addressed Council regarding the need to get the County Budget under control.

Christopher Toy of 12 Eagle Point Road spoke in favor of funding the library at the amount requested.

Judy Metcalf of 53 Pearl Street stated that she would ask the Council to give full support the school and library requests and was in favor of doing away with trash pickup and turning out every other street light to help pay for these requests.

Pamela Bessey, Director of Adult Education, Mary Derossie, Coordinator for Adult Education, and Juanita, a student of Adult Education asked the Council to please support the Adult Education Program's funding request.

Craig Burgess of 87 Whiskeag Road addressed the Council regarding the need by residents to take control of the local, county and state budgets. He stated the City really needs to look into new and innovative ways to do business. The City needs to keep the tax rate down to promote business growth. Mr. Burgess stated the School Department needs to be more attentive to benefits to personnel such as insurance coverage.

Katherine Erwin of 71 Russell Street and a teacher at Dike-Newell School expressed the feeling that teachers are under paid and have negotiated benefits in good faith with the School Board.

Daniel Donovan of 1017 Washington Street stated that the residents need to accept the tax increase this year, but the City needs to work very hard to keep the Budget with in the spending limitations in the years to come.

Judy Dillon of 47 West Chops Point Road stated the School Department needs to be come more efficient as their spending is in the top 22% of the state.

Betty Hughes, Director of the Library, spoke regarding regional library services that are in place.

Doris Ford of Whiskeag Road asked the Council to look more closely at the future potential costs of projects before granting them.

Vice Chairman Tibbetts closed the Public Hearing at 7:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary J. White, City Clerk

Please note: These minutes are not recorded verbatim. A tape recording of the meeting is available for review in the City Clerk's Office during regular business hours.