ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2023

A Special Meeting of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Mayor Cressotti on Monday, April 17, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

ROLL-CALL – Present were Councilors Cekala, (arrived at 5:47pm) Cressotti, Finger, Hopkins, Ludwick, Mangini, Nelson, Pyznar, Santanella and Unghire. Councilor Despard was absent. Also present were Town Manager, Ellen Zoppo-Sassu; Assistant Town Manager, Steven Bielenda; Town Attorney, James Tallberg; Assistant Town Attorney, Mark Cerrato; Director of Economic and Community Development, Nelson Tereso; and Town Clerk, Sheila Bailey.

SPECIAL GUESTS – Update from Impact Residential Development (Strand/Lamagna Project)

Director of Economic and Community Development, Nelson Tereso, stated that there is a grant submission resolution on the agenda later in the regular meeting. It authorizes the Town Manager to sign a grant application in partnership with Impact Residential Development to aid in the redevelopment of the former Strand/Lamagna and adjoining parcels. The refined project includes additional parcels that they have purchased. The site plan is still in its first stage and is subject to site plan approval and public hearings.

Present were Logan Kieweg, Impact Residential Development; Peter Wood, Consultant; Frank Vacca, BSC Group Engineer; Paul Bailey and Susan O'Dell project architects. A copy of the project update is appended to these minutes. Special guests and Mr. Tereso left the meeting at 5:50pm.

MOTION #6563 by Councilor Mangini seconded by Councilor Nelson to go into Executive Session to discuss the potential acquisition of an Enfield Street Property and a proposed fixed tax assistance agreement for Fast Track Realty, Inc.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #6563** adopted 10/0/0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Session of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Cressotti at 5:52 pm.

Councilor Nelson recused himself and left the room while discussion took place regarding the proposed fixed tax assistance agreement for Fast Tract Realty, Inc.

Chairman Cressotti reconvened the Special Meeting at 6:03 pm and stated during executive session there were no votes or actions taken by the Council.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Town Manager, Ellen Zoppo-Sassu stated that they are starting to build a foundation for the work that the Town Council has in front of them for the next four weeks. There are a lot of unknowns at this point. Tonight will be a wide lens view and then they will continue to focus in over the upcoming weeks. The budget books are at the printer, and they are expecting them shortly. At that point they will contain the town and BOE budgets, as well as the CIP schedule, all under one cover. She stated that on the schedule right now is a public hearing for May 1, 2023, and an extra night scheduled on May 3, 2023. The Council could start deliberations earlier than May 1 and they can have several meetings if they need to. The presentation is an overview and wish list. It does not mean that all the items included will be granted. The budget adoption will be May 15, 2023.

Assistant Town Manager, Steven Bielenda stated that they have been comparing current wages with the market rate to attract and retain employees. They are trying to make some hybrid positions to save dollars. He mentioned that they are now using software called Handshake to promote job opportunities to colleges, job boards and college career centers. They are also using our public information officer to create flyers to promote jobs. She created one recently for substitute crossing guards to fill the positions instead of using police officers which is expensive and not the best use of their time. They were able to interview two people that they will most likely hire.

Ms. Zoppo-Sassu stated that they had a stipend in the budget for a UCONN Master of Public Administration Student to come work for a semester, but it never happened. They have identified someone finally and that person will be here for the fall semester.

Chris Drezek, Superintendent of Schools, and Tina LeBlanc, Board of Education Chairperson presented information concerning the BOE budget. Mr. Drezek shared the fact that they have a different perspective this year. He spoke about the percentages in each building of high needs students, including special education, free and reduced lunch, and English language learners. The old way of doing things no longer meets the needs of our students. Special Education referrals are up 22%

The BOE's budget request is $76,178,354. This is the figure required to keep all student services intact without cutting anything. They don't want to cut anything because it impacts the kids.

Ms. LeBlanc shared information regarding the Alliance District status. It is based on the socio-economic status of the residents of Enfield and the needs we have in our community. She said we need more support, and we need to be a team. She appreciates the fact that the Council is looking at economic development to keep our taxes under control.

Ms. Zoppo-Sassu stated that they will be going through all the wants vs. needs over the upcoming weeks.

The presentations from the Town and BOE are appended to these minutes.

MOTION #6564 by Councilor Cekala, seconded by Councilor Mangini to adjourn.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #6564** adopted 11-0-0, and the meeting stood adjourned at 7:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila M. Bailey
Clerk of the Council
Town Clerk

Tina Demers
Secretary of the Council

VIEW FROM NORTH MAIN STREET

UNION SQUARE

ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

IMPACT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PAUL B. BAILEY • ARCHITECT •

DATE: 04 / 13 / 2023

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UNION SQUARE

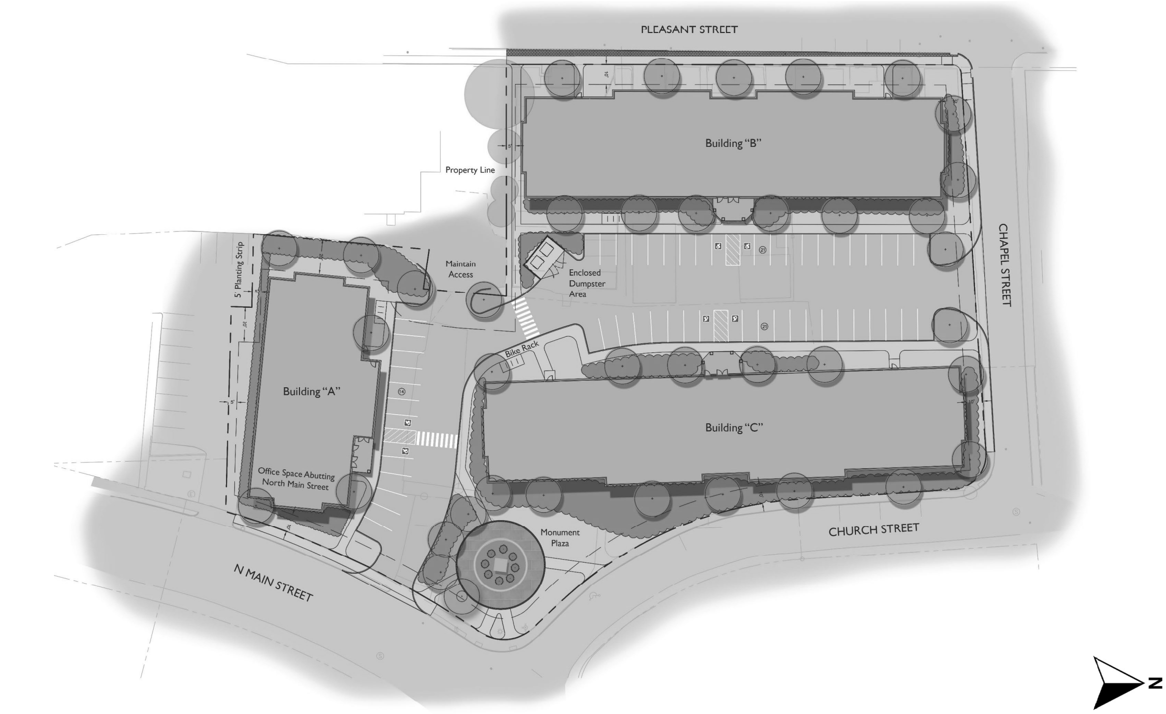
ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

IMPACT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PAUL B. BAILEY • ARCHITECT •

BSC GROUP

DATE: 04 / 13 / 2023



UNION SQUARE

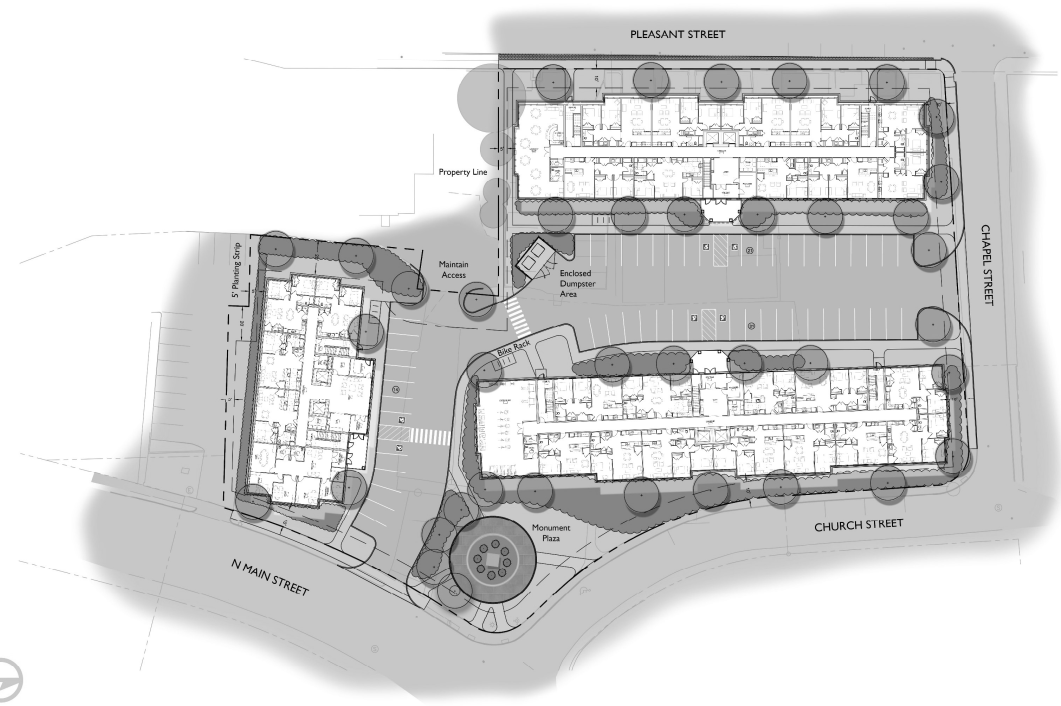
ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

IMPACT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PAUL B. BAILEY • ARCHITECT •

BSC GROUP

DATE: 04 / 13 / 2023



Site Plan

Union Square Development

Enfield, CT | date 4/14/2023 | scale 1"=20' | 0' 5' 10' 20' 40'

PAUL B. BAILEY • ARCHITECT •

BSC GROUP

655 WINDING BROOK DRIVE, GLASTONBURY, CT 06033
(860) 652-8227

CIVIL ENGINEERING, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, SURVEYING, PLANNING, GIS, AND ECOLOGICAL SCIENCES

VIEW FROM THE CORNER OF CHAPEL STREET & PLEASANT STREET

UNION SQUARE

ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

DATE: 04 / 13 / 2023

IMPACT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PAUL B. BAILEY • ARCHITECT •

VIEW FROM NORTH MAIN STREET

UNION SQUARE

ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

IMPACT
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PAUL B. BAILEY
• ARCHITECT •

DATE: 04 / 13 / 2023

2023-2024 Budget Proposal

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Today's overview represents the **Enfield Wish List** for all requests, equipment, and programs.

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Top Ten Taxpayers

Name	Assessed Value
CT Light & Power	$65,802,470
Mayfield Place	$40,474,680
PPF WE 113 North Maple	$36,561,600*
Nutmeg Solar	$26,167,460*
Paramount Commons	$25,188,400
Mass Mutual Life Ins	$22,658,000*
Eppendorf Holdings	$20,905,160
Northland Bigelow	$20,289,180
Freshwater MZL LLC	$19,913,200
Equity One LLC	$18,827,700

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October 1, 2022 Grand List FY 2023-2024

	2022	2021	2020	Percent Change 2020 v 2021
Real Estate	$3,050,547,460	$3,015,525,440	$2,478,989,450	21.64%
Personal Property	$337,924,960	$346,247,350	$300,560,400	15.20%
Motor Vehicle	$406,286,470	$393,432723	$296,156,680	32.85%
TOTAL	$3,794,758,890	$3,755,205,513	$3,075,706,530	22.09%

$39,553,377 Growth in Grand List
$923,000 in new tax revenue from Grand List growth at current mill rate

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Proposed Revenues

	Adopted 2022-2023 Budget	Proposed 2023-2024 Budget	$ Increase (Decrease)	% Increase (Decrease)
Taxes	**$102,059,712**	**$115,642,209**	**$13,582,497**	**13.3%**
Licenses/Permits	**$1,044,200**	**$1,148,200**	**$104,000**	**10%**
Charges for Services	**$1,484,000**	**$1,499,000**	**$15,000**	**1%**
Investment Earnings	**$185,000**	**$300,000**	**$115,000**	**62.2%**
Other/Misc.	**$336,000**	**$331,000**	**($5,000)**	**(1.5%)**
Fed/State Grants	**$32,701,958**	**$32,501,358**	**($200,600)**	**(0.61%)**
Other Financing Sources	**$7,639,169**	**$5,465,517**	**(2,173,652)**	**37%**
Totals	**$145,450,039**	**$156,887,284**	$11,437,245	11.3%

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State Revenue from FY23 Budget

	FY 23	FY 24 *	Percentage
PILOT State Owned Real Property	1,556,174	1,556,174	0%
Town Aid Road Grant	529,303	529,303	(0%)
Grants for Municipal Projects	256,875	256,875	0%
Municipal/Revenue Sharing	278,255	278,255	0%
Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Grant	1,224,751	1,224,751	0%
Education Cost Sharing - Base Entitlement	28,600,000	28,380,000	(.76%)
Total	**32,445,358**	**32,225,358**	**(0.68%)**

Except for the Education Cost Sharing grant, the FY24 amounts were unchanged from the FY23 town budget because the legislature has not released budget estimates. The Education Cost Sharing amount was reduced for estimated adjustments in school funding.

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FY 2024 Town & Board of Education Budget

	FY 2023 Adopted	FY 2024 Proposed	Value Change	Percent Change
Town	$ 72,174,787	$ 80,707,729	$ 8,532,942	11.82%
BOE	$ 73,275,252	$ 76,179,555	$2,904,303	3.96%
TOTAL Town & BOE	$ 145,450,039	$ 156,887,284	$ 11,437,245	7.86%

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Mill Rate

- FY 20 mill rate: 34.23 mills
- FY 21 mill rate: 34.23 mills
- FY 22 mill rate: 34.23 mills
- FY 23 mill rate: 27.89 mills
- FY24 mill rate: 29.21 mills – motor vehicles
  FY24 mill rate: 31.67 mills – real estate/personal property

The 2023-24 proposed mill rate is 31.67 for every $1,000 of taxable value. Taxable value is 70% of market value of the property as established by the Town Assessor's Office

One mil is equivalent to $3,585,000.

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Town Employees are Enfield's Greatest Asset

9

<u>Strategic Employee Reinvestment Initiatives</u>

- **Continue to Compare & Contrast Current Wages with the Market Rate to attract and retain Employees.**
- **Explore Vacant Positions for Hybrid Models to Increase Workplace Efficiencies and Tap Into Individual Skills and Attributes.**
- **Continuously evaluating efficiencies within job descriptions and assigning more responsibilities when appropriate and cost-effective to do so.**
- **Expand Hiring Net to Include Trade Schools and Colleges using social media, Handshake & Career Centers.**
- **Enfield to sponsor a UCONN MPA candidate for the Fall 2023 semester**

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Contractual and Mandatory Increases

Drivers	Amount
Health Insurance Increase (6% increase; reduction due to decreasing claims)	$468,204
Contractual Union Increases in Wages	$1,194,832
Debt Service (includes lease payments)	$528,644
Increase due to Police Accountability Bill (HB 6004)	$275,000
Total	**$2,466,680**

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Town Budget Increases		
Salaries	$	867,141
Benefits	$	1,093,428
Purchased Professional/Technical	$	33,825
Purchased Property Services	$	577,450
Other Purchased Services	$	(68,087)
Supplies/Materials (incl Utilities)	$	355,733
Property and Equipment	$	(1,600)
)Other Expenses	$	398
Debt Service – Bonds	$	827,090
Debt Service – Leases	$	(298,446)
Capital Transfers	$	4,122,986
Transfers to Other Funds	$	1,023,024
Total	$	8,532,942

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Salaries

New Positions	
Finance	
Purchasing Assistant	83,478
Social Services	
Teacher – Child Day Care	40,610
Recreation	
Program Coordinator	42,329
Total New Positions	166,417

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NEXT…

THE TOWN OF ENFIELD'S INVESTMENT *in* CAPITAL & LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

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CIP PROJECTS

Schools…………………	$335,000
PW Engineering…..	$187,500
Town Facilities…….	$4,284,500
PW Equipment…….	$498,000
Storm Sewer Reline	$500,000
PW Projects………..	$1,300,000
Non-PW Projects…	$1,532,582
Vehicles……………….	$2,935,510
WPC……………………	$3,207,684

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Fund Balance

Minimum fund balance requirement – 9% of operating budget - **$13,715,426**

Remaining fund balance after projected expenditures - $**26.2 million**

- $12.5 million more than fund balance requirements

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Fund Balance (Rainy Day) & Use of Reserves

Use of Fund Balance	$ 5,000,000
Maintains Fund Balance Above Policy Level	

Use of Surplus/Reserves

• Bond Premium	$ 1,137,000
• Mill Rate Stabilization Reserve	$ 3,863,000
Total Reserves/Surplus Proposed	$ 5,000,000

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Waterline and Sewer Infrastructure

$3,928,186 to design and replace pump stations

- 15 pump stations need to be upgraded
- $2 million available in Capital Non-Recurring

To be determined which pump stations shall be replaced and on what schedule

- Pump station upgrades range from $250,000 per replacement to $4.5 million.
- Savings to Sewer Users projected if ARPA funds are utilized

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Water Pollution Control/Sewer Rates Recommended

	FY 2023 Actual Adopted	FY 24 Town Manager Recommended	FY 24 Changes
Base Rate	$39 per quarter	$45 per quarter	**$6 increase per quarter**
Volumetric usage charges	$3.60/$5.39	$3.96/$5.93	$3.96/$5.93

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Working to Improve the Future of Enfield

20

Town Council has Voted to Provide Additional Tax Relief to Seniors

- Senior & Disabled Tax Relief Program expanded per CGS 12-129n. Income expanded to $60,000
- Senior Volunteer Tax Relief Pilot Program – an additional $400 in tax credit for the 7/1/24 Grand List

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- Increasing Marketing presence to promote assets
- Maximize Financial Opportunities through the aggressive pursuit of Grants and Enfield's "fair share."
- Continue Community Conversation on Diversity, Opioids & Substance Misuse, Open Space and other hot topic issues
- Create an effective Economic Development Strategy to retain, recruit, and assist businesses looking to expand
- Support residents with a robust Mental Health and Wellness program
- Maintain a good Quality of Life in Enfield neighborhoods by enforcing code and property maintenance standards
- Work with the Board of Education to address facility issues to improve quality and student performance

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Decisions/Open Issues

- Need for Further Reductions and Changes
- Alliance Fund Status
- Unresolved State Budget Allocation / Revenue
- Budget Deliberation per Charter - May 1, 2023
- Community Conversation - May 3, 2023
  - Need for additional meetings next week when budget books arrive?
- Budget Adoption per Charter
  - May 15, 2023

23

NEXT…..

ENFIELD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Eduction Proposed

2023-24 Budget

1

OUR PHILOSOPHY

- Getting our kids through a pandemic
- Stretch funds as far as we can
- Sustainability

2

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE THIS YEAR

- Equity Statement
- SEL Presentation
- Restructure Central Office Staff
- State Data Presentation (Definition of High needs)
- Academic Presentation
- Budget

3

WHO OUR KIDS ARE

- Defined by per pupil expenditures per percentage of students who qualify in one of three areas- special education, free and reduced lunch & english language learners. State calculates the percentage of High Needs Students in each school. For the 2020 data year, EPS is as follows:
  - EHS - 46.3%
  - JFK- 55.8%
  - Prudence Crandall- 60.6%
  - Eli Whitney- 58.8%
  - Parkman - 56.3%
  - Hazardville Memorial - 54.8%
  - Enfield Street - 49.6%
  - Henry Barnard - 58.9%

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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? BUDGET

- Old way of doing things doesn’t meet the needs of kids today.
- Need to look at the budget process differently.
- Our funds are not just a spreadsheet, they are a reflection of our beliefs and the supports we provide for our children.
- Change the lens into four categories.

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NEW PERSPECTIVE

- YELLOW- SUPPORT
- ORANGE – ACADEMICS
- PURPLE- OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS
- BLUE- OTHER BY LAW

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CURRENT BUDGET

$ 73,275,252

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FIXED COSTS

- To keep everything we currently have, not adding any new initiatives
- **3.96%**

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BUDGET REQUEST

$ 76,178,354
OR
3.96%

9

2% CARRYOVER

- Not included in this request. We simply don't have it this year, why?
  - Drastic increase in special education costs.
    - 22% increase in SPED referrals (up over 150)
    - Psych evals - required even if in house staff not sufficient, forced to use agency.
    - Outplacements have gone up rapidly. Students showing an alarming rate of significant mental health issues requiring a clinical setting.
    - Eagle Academy - 27 students, at capacity.
  - Staff retention- if staff leave, replacement cost is much higher and not budgeted.
  - Nutrition. Free lunch vs. paid lunch?
  - FOIA costs. $100k this year alone.

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REQUEST 3.96%

- This maintains what we have.
- COVID relief funds are running out. Stretches what we received into next year.
- No staff or program reductions!

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UNKNOWNS - NOT A TYPICAL YEAR

- Retirements- 2 at the moment.
- Insurance- 3% increase right now.
- Change in Personnel- we know people are leaving.
- Possible 2% carryover- current year budget is frozen to attempt to secure 2%.
- Alliance funding
- Changes to ECS (all dependent on legislative process)

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CHALLENGES THIS DOESN'T ADDRESS

- Staffing - crisis level. Currently have 10 open certified portions that we simply can't fill.
  - Morale- local, state and nationwide.
  - Retention, it's the wild west out there. Districts are stealing and plundering.
  - One thing that won't help morale, class sizes going up. No choice at this point.
  - If we can find teachers and money is not an issue, where am I going to put them?

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SUMMARY

- We'll work to get this number own, just too many unknowns at the moment.
- We NEED to work with the Town Council, we're all in this together.
- I'm going to say out loud what everyone is thinking, we need to start talking about a plan for our elementary schools.
- Reminder, the Town funds this request as well as our facilities.
- Older facilities cost more to operate, just factual.
- If we are going to explore new buildings, what would that look like. I don't know Facebook!
- **Its' time for a Long Term Strategic Plan**
- One last time, NO CUTS TO CURRENT STAFF OR PROGRAMS

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