

The first Public Hearing for the 2016-2017 fiscal year was held April 13, 2016 at 6:30 PM in Council Chambers. Present: Mayor Hinchey, Aldermen Nystrom (6:35 pm), Philbrick, Gould, Braddock, Martin. City Manager Salomone and Corporation Counsel Michael Driscoll were also in attendance. Mayor Hinchey stated Ald. Nash was absent due to a work commitment. Mayor Hinchey presided.

Mayor Hinchey opened the public hearing.

Keith Ripley, 9 Meadow Lane, stated he was pleased with the video/televised budget presentations because they were good for the public. He also talked about the City Managers budget cuts in staff and more money allocated for energy efficient lighting. He suggested exercising borrowing capacity.

Janna Deveny, 155 Hansen Ave, teacher, spoke about the impact cutting 72 teachers will have on the class sizes. She believes this would create class sizes of 30 students per class in grades K-2 she asked to look at what effect this will have on the students.

Joyce Werden, 13 Lost Acres Rd, spoke on behalf of the Board of Education and asked to pull together as a community for the greater good of Norwich. She talked about the treasures that Norwich has to offer.

Theodore Phillips, 17 Adams Dr, Chairman of the NFA Board of Trustees, stressed the importance of intelligent resources within the government and the need to properly fund education. He stated that education directly correlates to our economic and social health. He talked about families and businesses moving to Norwich and felt growing the grand list depends on a strong education system.

Aaron Daniels, 89 Union St, Chairman of the Board of Education, stated that we must make education a priority.

Amy Dauplaise, 207 Hamilton Ave, voiced her opposition to cutting the school budget. She stated her children have blossomed in the Norwich school system and talked about the teachers going the extra mile even while the class sizes are too big. She mentioned that teachers share more than one job.

Nancy Smith, 3 Pautipaug Hill Rd, Baltic, para educator in Norwich, spoke in opposition of the budget and asked why we are always cutting positions from the bottom when they should be cut from the top. She suggested putting caps or a freeze on wages and looking into the pensions because there are substantial increases in this new budget. She can't understand why raises are given out and then we are cutting personnel and programs that affect our children.

Matt Quigley, 140 Hanson Rd, talked on how unfortunate it is that taxes keep going up. He said he sends his children to private school because he is unsure what is happening in the school system. He didn't understand why cuts are made that affect our children's education and suggested focusing on our children.

Yvette Jacaruso, 192 Whitman Ave, spoke about the 30 languages spoken in the NPS system and all the staff that is needed to accommodate these students. She talked about the student principal/teacher ratio for each school. She stated that if this budget passes it is shameful.

Tanya Williams, 47 Boswell Ave stated that the education is mediocre at best with the make shift classes and felt the regular education isn't appropriate. She felt that a shared principal is a safety risk. She stated we are not respecting our children's education.

David Crabb, 47 Prospect St talked about page 18 in the budget book and the budget is at 2001 levels. He talked about the general fund percentage increase and past City Managers. He mentioned how the State budget affects our City.

Rodney Bowie, 62 Roosevelt Ave stated he has been speaking for 40 years and points out education starts at home and he asked not to tax businesses out of town.

Kevin Saythany, 16 Surrey Lane, Board of Education member, stated it was hard to see that some teacher's contracts were not renewed. He believes that education is the linchpin for economic development in the City. He asked the Council members to deeply think about education and that our children taught today will invest back in Norwich. He stated children are the future of our City.

John Blackburn, 15 Alice St, talked about unfunded mandates within the education budget and reminded the Council members of the promises they made last November. He suggested getting more money from Hartford and felt you can't cut more from the City Managers budget.

Cora Lee Boulware, 385 New London Tpke, talked about her parents moving to Norwich for a better education for their children and has the utmost respect for the system. She stated education is a way to lift people out of poverty. She also reminded the Council about lowering the taxes as an election promise asking to do what is best for the people of the City.

Mayor Hinchey closed the public hearing at 7:15 pm.



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