

The second Public Hearing for the 2016-2017 fiscal year was held May 9, 2016 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers. Present: Mayor Hinchey, Aldermen Nystrom, Philbrick, Gould, Braddock, Martin and Nash (7:02 pm). City Manager Salomone and Corporation Counsel Michael Driscoll were also in attendance. Mayor Hinchey presided.

Mayor Hinchey asked for a moment of silence for the passing of Terrell Wilson.

Mayor Hinchey opened the public hearing.

Rodney Bowie, 62 Roosevelt Ave, asked the Council to keep the budget in line, stating that if it is raised we will drive people and businesses out of town. He asked to use the City Managers budget and felt that could be cut more.

Bob Farwell, 50 Mistuxet Ave, Mystic, Director of Otis Library, talked about the unanticipated reduction in the proposed governor's budget. He asked that the council address the long term fiscal effects to the City and the services that could be effected.

Joyce Werden, 13 Lost Acres Rd, thanked the NFA Board Chairman for speaking in favor of the Norwich Public School system. She asked to reconsider and support the NFA tuition.

Michael Menders, 7 Nelson Pl, asked the council to reconsider and amend the cut made to the Library and increase it by \$5,000 as the original City Manager's budget requested He felt this money should be used to fund improvements and additional programing. He talked about the exhibit coming to the Library which will draw people downtown and help other businesses in the area.

Keith Ripley, Meadow Ln, talked about Charter question #4 moving the Capital funds from 1% to 2% and stated at the time the newer council members wouldn't have known this would pass before getting elected and stating their platforms. He asked to replace the two police officers.

Jim Paulson, 16 Carey Ln, talked about the 6% increase in taxes last year and asked the council to think about all the people in Norwich and hold to a tight budget.

David Crabb, 47 Prospect St, talked about previous speakers not being Norwich residents that don't shoulder the tax burden. He talked about home ownership in this economy and stated households are struggling with taxes going up. He stated we need new management in the Norwich Board of Education, NCDC and Capital Improvements are a start.

Ryan Telford, 127 N Wawecus Hill Rd, stated he is a proud citizen of Norwich and has a child in the school system and asked the council to support the Norwich school system. He stated the school keeps our children safe, has made changes to keep costs down and the average budget increase for the last 10 years has been 1.8%. He asked that the proposed school budget be supported which would help bring business back to Norwich.

Jerry Sinnamon, 43 Willetts Ave NL, President of Literacy Volunteers of Eastern CT stated their only area office is at Otis Library. He asked to restore the funding to the Library.

Karen Cook, 62 Gulliver Circle asked to fully fund the school budget. She stated her son's school lacks a library and text books even with a fully funded budget so there is nothing left to cut. She urged the Council to fully fund the budget.

Patrice Bernier, 69 Quarto Rd, asked that the safety kits be fully funded.

Mark Cook, 62 Gulliver Circle, made suggestions on how to address the tax issue without raising taxes; to provide affordable clean energy and that the City and NPU get together using brownfields to create solar farms for Norwich's energy use. He stated Norwich has to attract upper professionals to come to the city and the schools are the driving force.

Debbie Lehman, 560 Boswell Ave, a taxpayer, teacher and parent asked the council to revisit the school budget and help the school system become better. She invited the Council to visit Huntington school and see the faces, challenges, and see what they do.

Roberta Paro, 246a Yantic St, stated taxes are our investment in our community and that cutting the education, economic development, civic engagement and public safety could create more problems in the future. She stated the solution is to approve the education budget so the children will have a better opportunity and not increase class size. She also stated NCDC needs more funding to bring in commerce and create more jobs and stated Otis Library is the anchor of downtown and asked to increase the hours of opening, public safety and social services shouldn't be cut.

Janet Devaney, 155 Hanson Rd, teacher at Stanton school (a network school) and on the leadership team, she thanked Ald. Nash for the proposing the .7% increase at the last public hearing which didn't pass. She talked about the schools priorities for the year and the number one is the whole staff.

Kim Jacobs, 9 Scotland Rd, a teacher, parent and taxpayer asked to look at what you're cutting and the impact it will have on the education, public safety, Library and look at the implication it will have; if you cut it class sizes will be increased and it won't work. She asked to see that if cuts are made to education there will be consequences.

Yvette Jacaruso, 192 Whitman Ave, stated it saddens her to hear negative things about the Norwich schools. She talked about Moriarty school winning awards, three schools won science awards. Asked to fund adequately continue the good work in the school system.

John Blackburn, 15 Alice St, stated the State needs to solve their problem with the budget. He said some ran on a platform not to increase taxes and felt the right thing will be done.

Mayor Hinchey closed the public hearing at 7:40 pm.



CITY CLERK