

The third public hearing for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year was held May 22, 2008, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers. Present at the meeting: Ald. Coutu, Desaulniers, Jacaruso, Nash, Bettencourt, Zarnetske and Mayor Lathrop. City Manager Bergren and Corporation Counsel Driscoll were also in attendance. Mayor Lathrop presided.

Speaking against making cuts to the Board of Education budget were Tamara and Tristan Perry, 35 Chestnut St., Erin, Madison and Stevie Houk, 57 Canterbury Tpke and Colleen and Samantha Casady, 118 Baltic Rd. They asked the Council to please save the education budget because a reduction in the Board of Education budget would mean cutting classes, teachers and programs. The speakers said children are our future, and they urged to Council not to cut them short. If anything, they felt the Board of Education needed more money, because education is very important.

Yvette Jacaruso, 192 Wightman Ave., said we want to be fiscally responsible as well as meeting the needs of our students. When one builds a structure, the foundation must be very solid and elementary education are the foundation in which children build their educational life.

Jim Newman, 228 Mckinley Ave. Ext., stated that NFA wouldn't make any concessions and is there any recourse? He wanted to know if the money for Kelly Jr. High's roof repair should fall under the \$40 million dollar upgrade. He thinks the general budget and the board of education budget should be separate.

David Crabb, 47 Prospect St., stated that the Board of Education budget has increased from 1 million to 3 million in the last few years. He said the Council needs to cut extravagant tax increases.

Peter Szydlo, North 3rd Ave., thanked the Council for its hard work coming to a reasonable decision on the present budget but would also like to see separate budgets.

Joanne Philbrick of Norwich, stated that people can't take anymore tax increases. She said 63% of the budget for education is too high.

Megan Czechowicz, 166 Yantic St. and Claire Aubin, 94 Sherwood Ln. are both music teachers. They said that the children are getting so much out of music and the band. One more teacher is needed in this district and they don't think one position should be cut.

John Levangie, 85 Lawler Lane, explained the demographics of why the Board of Education should not be cut and that 75% of people have children in school or attending school.

Ron Ward, 121 Golden St., said the quality of education that that every person in the City of Norwich wants for our children is top notch, however, there is not enough money to go around. He encouraged the Council to look for additional resources to supplement the Education budget.

John Blackburn, 15 Alice Street, said it was tough to listen to the previous speakers because there is only a certain amount of money available.

Pam Aubin, 30 Wightman Avenue, Superintendent of Schools, said she was proud of the previous speakers in support of the Education budget. She said there have been times when unspent money has been returned to the Council and they have frozen their budget in February. She also said they have done everything fiscally possible, and she urged the Council not to cut the Board of Education budget.

There being no further speakers, Mayor Lathrop declared the public hearing closed at 8:10 PM.

ATTEST:

Sandra Greenhalgh
Assistant City Clerk