

**TOWN OF PORTLAND, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
ANNUAL BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
March 15, 2022**

First Selectman Ryan Curley called the public hearing on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday March 15, 2022 in the Portland High School Library Media Center and via Zoom A, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Curley read the legal notice of the meeting into the record of the meeting.

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Town of Portland, CT

Notice is hereby given that there will be a public hearing on the proposed Budget for 2022-2023 to be held, by the Board of Selectmen pursuant to Section 1201.3 of the Town of Portland Charter, at the following place and time:

Tuesday, March 15, 2022
7:00 P.M.
Portland High School
Library Media Center
95 High Street, Portland CT
In-person and with Public Access through Zoom A

SUBJECT: General Government, Board of Education Budget; and all other Special Revenue Funds

At this hearing, any resident or taxpayer may be heard concerning the proposed budgets. Copies of the proposed budget are available for inspection in the Town Clerk's Office, Public Library and online at www.portlandct.org.

Mr. Curley provided a PowerPoint presentation that gave an overview of the current fiscal year, and the proposed 2022-2023 Budget for General Government. He highlighted recent projects: sidewalks, water main replacements, paving/curbing/drainage improvements, LED light upgrades, \$1.5M capital lease for Town and BOE equipment, remediation of 248 Brownstone Avenue. Other projects underway:

- Air Line Trail – continue exploring expansion opportunities
- Canoe/Kayak Launch – a potential site has been located
- Potential Energy Savings – solar panels to be installed on BIS in the future
- Replacement of High School track
- Complete the CT Connectivity sidewalk project along Rt. 66 corridor

Mr. Curley reviewed the timeline of meetings for discussion of the proposed budget.

- Budget workshops: March 16, 22, 23
- Budget deliberations: March 29, 30
- BOS Adopt budget: April 6
- Town Meeting: May 2
- Referendum (property owners & voters): May 9

The combined proposed budget total: \$37,172,809 which represents an increase of 2.82% over the current FY 2021-2022. General Government (*includes Debt Services, Capital Improvements, and all other general government*): \$14,379,900 (+2.94%) and Board Of Education: \$22,792,909 (+2.75%)

Mr. Curley thanked the Long-Range Capital Improvement Commissioners for their hard work in meeting with the department heads to create a report on recommendations.

Dr. Charles Britton, Superintendent of Schools, (in a previously recorded video) provided an overview of the Board of Education budget.

Public Comment:

Mr. Curley read two letters into record that were emailed to him:

Nicole Rumpf, East Main St. stated: In my recent completion of an end of the year survey for the library's story time, I decided to share my thoughts on how valuable their services had been to my family and the early childhood community.

Our family has utilized the Portland Library's services at least on a weekly basis. I am raising two voracious readers (age 3 twins and also a newborn). I strongly believe it is in part to the services of the library. Their events and story time have been so important to our family, particularly during this pandemic. They have been a safe community option to provide stimulation, social interaction and education to my young children.

Please consider the value that the library's community programming provides when reviewing your budget for the upcoming year. Thank you.

Declan Kelley current 5th grader and friend of the portland library wrote:

Dear Mr. Curley as i turn my head towards the imposing danger of the library budget being lowered by large amounts all I can think is "this isn't fair" and in fact it isn't. The library has done so many things for the citizens of our town and given many opportunities for us to learn, read and have fun (in my opinion they're all the same thing). And although the staff at the library takes great pleasure in helping the many children and adults that walk through the doors they are limited by their

budget. They can't simply make new and wanted books appear on the shelves. It all comes out of the budget which currently is under the threat of being lowered and if it is the amount of smiles the librarians love will drop because all of their fun activities and events revolve around that budget and it CANNOT be cut.

Mr. Curley thanked them for writing their support and wanted to make it known that his proposed budget has a 4.07% increase in the library budget.

James Soder of Riverside Street, asked if the town was in the process of hiring a new police officer. The reply was that it was not funded in this year's budget. With that answer Mr. Soder didn't have to go into his second question.

There being no further discussion, this public hearing was closed at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Ceppaglia, Executive Secretary to the First Selectman