

Area Towns' Budgets – Rev 5/8/09

Avon

4/30 - \$70.887 million budget proposed. Referendum scheduled for May 13. Budget boosts spending by about .5 percent, expected to boost resident's tax bill by approximately 1.65 percent. Mill rate decreases from 26.53 to 23.41 due to reval. Anticipated decline in revenue of about \$800,000, contractual salary increases for town employees, unexpectedly large annual contribution to employees' pension fund. Town budget up 2.41%. Sewer budget down 9.68%. Capital budget down 11.15%. School budget up 2.15%.

Berlin

4/29 - \$66.42 million budget approved by voters. Has a small reduction in spending and requires no tax increase. Tax rate remains steady at 22.69 mills. The board of education would receive a 2.1 percent spending increase. Spending for most town hall departments is less than this year's.

Bloomfield

4/30 - Town council approved \$72.6 million spending plan, includes \$39.2 million for education and \$29.8 million for government operations and represents a .5 percent increase in spending over the current year. .7 percent tax increase and a .24 percent increase in the tax rate to 35.53 mills. The council last week reduced the board of education's requested increase by \$900,000 and the town manager's requested increase by \$400,000. The school board is scheduled to approve reductions to its budget May 12.

Bristol

4/7 - Comptroller recommends a strategy for overcoming a projected \$8.2 million budget shortfall: spending \$2.5 million from municipal reserves, schools do without \$1.8 million of new money requested, and city government would have to get by with \$2 million less than it sought. Also, the city would look for union concessions to offset revenue shortfall.

4/3 - Bristol recently gave teachers an across-the-board raise of about \$1,300 each for the 2009-10 contract year. That averages out to 1.9 percent. In exchange for the \$1,300 per teacher, Bristol's union agreed to freeze all seniority raises — known as step increases — until the following year. The city plans to eliminate 10 to 12 teaching jobs by next fall, but the toll would be far worse without the union's help.

Canton

5/7 - Residents vote May 11 on the proposed \$33.61 million town budget for 2009-10. Spending would be about \$525,000 lower than this year, and no tax increase would be necessary. The proposed budget reduces spending for town hall departments by 3 percent and gives the board of education a spending increase of 1.2 percent. Officials anticipate a drop in revenues.

Cromwell

5/7 - A town meeting May 12. General government and debt service budgets 1.41 percent lower than the current budget. Proposed education spending .19 percent higher than the current year's schools budget. Budget referendum May 16.

East Hartford

3/10 - The town council approved proposed \$151.4 million budget for 2009-2010. No tax increase. \$47.3 million for town government, \$77 million for the school district and \$1.5 million for capital improvement spending. Overall, the budget represents a \$5.3 million spending decrease.

Enfield

4/30 - Board of education chair expects the town council to restore about \$2.3 million that was originally cut from the education budget because of the assumption that the state legislature will pass a "minimum budget requirement" bill that would require the same level of funding for local schools as they are getting this year.

4/16 - Under Superintendent's proposed budget cuts, the school system could lose as many as 120 staff positions, eliminate all middle school sports and get rid of department head positions. Of the 120 positions, 51 are teachers and the rest are administrators, secretaries, aides and counselors. The positions of about 15 teachers who are retiring will not be filled. May cut high school freshman teams as well as middle school sports programs.

4/15 - Superintendent recommended \$6.3 million in cuts: lay off 120 staff members, add sports participation fees and eliminate programs. He recommended discontinuing some middle school and high school sports programs as well as some curriculum programs. Estimated that the district would save \$4.3 million next year in concessions and other savings, including \$352,000 from a renegotiation of administrators' contracts.

4/8 - Paraprofessionals union agreed to a wage freeze, saving the district about \$100,000. The school board also voted to approve a self-insured health plan that could save up to \$800,000 a year.

3/26 - The board of education voted not to renew the contracts for 103 non-tenured staff positions. Positions are generally eliminated with the hope that some can be restored for the start of school if money is available. The district won't know its final budget until the state's budget is set and until any federal stimulus funds are announced.

3/20 - Proposed overall \$114.1 million budget, about 3 percent decrease, no tax increases. \$4 million revenue deficit, laying off three nonunion town employees, ending roadside leaf collection, spending less on capital projects, starting a self-insurance program and freezing union wages. Schools have to cut \$6 million from the school budget because of increases in fixed-cost items.

Farmington

5/1 – Budget approved by voters on first vote for the first time in a decade.

3/31 – Public hearing 4/6. Budget would boost spending by about .5%, the smallest proposed increase in spending in 15 years, would require a 1.52 percent tax increase. Includes \$49.5 million for the schools, +1.94%. \$22.8 million for town hall departments, which is the same as what they currently have, partly through a wage freeze for employees. Town's revenues will slide by more than 6 percent next year.

3/12 - High school athletes will pay \$75 a sport and 20 teaching positions will be cut. The Farmington Education Association is the only town union not to grant concessions this budget season. All nonunion town and board of education employees have agreed to forgo raises.

Glastonbury

Public hearing and possible adoption of \$135.4 million budget 3/24. Proposed \$135,451,575 budget, a 2.5 percent increase. Tax rate would increase from 28.35 mills to 29.45 mills, a 3.88 percent increase. The town side of the budget is \$36.4 million, a 1.83 percent increase over the present budget. The board of education has submitted an \$85 million budget, a 3.69 percent increase — the smallest increase in a decade.

Granby

5/6 - Town meeting May 11 for residents to consider revisions to the town budget they defeated this week in a referendum. Residents rejected the proposed \$40.87 million budget for 2009-10. After a new budget is approved in the town meeting, a second referendum will take place May 18. The defeated budget would have boosted spending by about \$800,000, an increase of 1 percent. School spending would have accounted for most of that. Taxes would have risen 1.57 percent, with the tax rate going from 29.35 mills to 29.81 mills.

Hartford

4/21 – Mayor proposes a budget that keeps spending flat and calls for a tax increase of 8.89 mills, or 13 percent. But because of caveats in the city's tax structure, the city would actually take in \$259.2 million in property taxes — an 8.3 percent increase over last year, officials said. Average Hartford homeowner would see a 13 percent property tax increase. The mayor said he has had little success in convincing the city's labor unions to agree to concessions. He has pledged to maintain the city's core services, has no plans to lay off more city staff. (The school board, though, projects it will eliminate 225 positions.) Two new initiatives — \$1.5 million for foreclosure prevention, and \$1.7 million to create and preserve Hartford arts jobs. City Council must act on the budget no later than May 31.

Manchester

4/14 - Board of directors voted 4/14. Proposed budget would increase spending by about \$750,000. The tax rate would increase by 1.94. Because town employees agreed to a wage freeze, board members were able to restore some cuts that had been under consideration. Almost all of the increase in spending — about \$716,000 — would go to schools, but the board of education had sought an increase of about \$3.36 million, or 3.53 percent, over current spending. School administrators have been talking with union members about concessions. Union representatives, however, are seeking a promise of no layoffs.

4/1 - More than half of the town's employees have agreed to a wage freeze. Police, firefighters and other employees, including technicians and engineers, have yet to make decisions on whether to follow suit. The board of directors is scheduled to adopt a budget April 14. Recommended budget for town and school services is about \$159.47 million, an increase of about \$1.48 million, or .9 percent, would require a tax increase of 2.5 percent.

3/16 - The board of education received \$2.4 million less than it requested, is considering three scenarios to deal with the cuts--eliminating jobs and some pay raises and potentially closing a school. General Manager recommended school district receive \$96.3 million for 2009-10, a 1 percent increase over current budget. The school board had asked for \$98.7 million. Proposed town cuts include not opening two of the town's six outdoor pools, not filling 6.5 vacant job positions and eliminating the summer youth employment program. Town's department heads and certain managers offered to freeze their salaries. Proposed budget does not call for layoffs.

Middletown

4/2 - Proposed \$128.5 million budget for 2009-10 would raise the average homeowner's city taxes by \$140 and trigger as many as five job furlough days for municipal employees. Includes \$69.3 million for schools (0 increase), would raise the tax rate from 25.5 to 26.5 mills (+3.9%), is 1.5 percent lower than the current budget. City is receiving \$1.6 million less this year from the state. Unions suggested budget cuts and agreed to furloughs, the unions' biggest concession, unprecedented, range from two days to five. Proposed budget includes a litany of cuts. The council must adopt a budget and set a new tax rate by May 15. Public hearing April 28.

New Britain

4/14 - Mayor has proposed a budget with deep spending cuts but no tax increase, city council has two months to decide whether to revise it. \$216 million budget proposal would hold the tax rate steady at 34.98 mills, but would force layoffs and service reductions because of a 5 percent across-the-board cut to budgets for police, the fire department, public works and other city departments.

Newington

4/13 - Town council adopted its 2009-10 budget and set the new tax rate at 28.40 mills, an increase of .72 mills. The \$94.7 million budget represents a \$1.4 million, or 1.5 percent, increase in spending. It includes a \$1.67 million, or 3 percent, increase for spending on education and a \$50,000 increase for government operations. Under the new tax rate, a home in town assessed at \$166,000, or 70 percent of market value, would see a tax increase of about \$120 per year.

Plainville

4/28 – Voters approve \$47.97 million budget.

4/3 - School administrators have agreed to concessions that will amount to a pay freeze. Administrators will look at possible changes to their health insurance that could save the board more money. Town officials are hoping municipal employees will take a wage freeze. The board has talked to the union representing its teachers about a wage freeze.

4/1 - Town council approved a \$47.97 million budget, boosts spending by about \$180,000 (.4%). Residents vote April 28. Town revenue expected to fall \$450,000. The budget for the schools is \$32.4 million, while the budget for town hall departments is \$14.5 million. In addition, \$1 million was allocated for capital improvement projects. Taxes increase less than \$10 for most property owners. A key component of this budget is a salary freeze for town and school employees.

Rocky Hill

4/3 - Proposed \$58.4 million 2009-10 budget increases spending by approximately \$492,000, or .8 percent. Includes a \$482,000, or 1.7 percent, decrease in governmental spending and a \$1.05 million, or 3.9 percent, increase in educational spending. Council adopts the budget May 18.

Simsbury

4/1 - Hearing on the \$85.27 million proposed budget April 7. Would boost spending by less than 1 percent and taxes by 2.7 percent. Includes \$60.86 million for the board of education, a 1.25 percent increase. For town departments the budget is \$17.77 million, a 3 percent cut. Includes \$6.1 million for debt service, a 2.31 percent decrease. Unionized town employees have agreed to a wage freeze while

workers who are not in a union will take a day off without pay next year and pay more for health insurance. A budget referendum is planned for May 19.

3/1 - School Board OK's \$60.9 Million Budget Plan: High school athletes might have to pay more to play, and 30 positions could be eliminated. Requires a \$753,869, or 1.25 percent, bump over current spending. List of reductions includes seven teaching positions and five retirements throughout the district that won't be filled. Paraprofessional support for special education would be reduced by \$200,000, which supt Ullman said would affect 15 full- and part-time employees.

South Windsor

4/15 - Public hearing on the board of education's budget 4/16. The \$61.7 million budget is an increase of 2.91 percent or \$1,743,056 over the board's current spending plan. The budget includes the elimination of 24 positions districtwide.

Southington

5/7 - Southington's budget battle is more frenzied than usual this year: Parents are irate that popular school programs might be axed, and taxpayer groups are incensed about a 5 percent pay raise for teachers. Town council must set a new budget May 11. Relations have been testy between taxpayer groups and some education advocates in recent months. Some taxpayers have publicly called on the 600-member local teachers union, an arm of the Connecticut Education Association, to forfeit some or all of the 5 percent pay raise it has negotiated for next year. After the finance board cut \$1.2 million from the proposed school budget, Superintendent Joseph Erardi said he'd have to recommend shutting the alternate high school, laying off dozens of staff members, closing the gifted-students program, ending middle school sports, doing away with most school librarians and cutting back the music program.

4/22 - Proposed budget of \$118.8 million boost spending from the current budget by about \$1 million and increase taxes by approximately 1 percent. The finance board cut \$2.4 million from original requests, including \$1.2 million from the school system and the same amount from town hall departments.

3/31 - Proposed budget of \$121.2 million would boost spending from this year by \$3.4 million. Hearing on the budget on April 6. Taxes would change less than 1 percent. Board of education budget of \$77.5 million, a 2.9 percent increase--increases in health insurance and salaries, largest for teachers, up by 4.98 percent next year. Spending for town hall departments would also go up by 2.9 percent. Town revenues expected to decrease by more than \$500,000.

Suffield

4/27 - Public hearing 4/29. \$49.97 million total budget is about 1.6 percent lower than the current budget. The board of education's proposed spending plan is \$29.9 million, about 2 percent higher than this year. After the recent revaluation, the tax rate would drop about four mills to 23.15 mills. The town meeting for residents to vote on the budget will be May 13.

3/27 - The board of education has cut its proposed budget to \$30.1 million, a 2.68 percent increase instead of the 4.4 percent initially requested by the superintendent. Cuts come from many small reductions in a lot of different areas--diesel fuel, non-contract wage freezes, spending freezes, leaving positions vacant. Additional cuts would mean layoffs. Board of finance is asking for a zero increase.

Windsor

5/1 - Town council \$95 million adopted budget is \$290,000 less than 08-09. Board of ed reduced its proposal by \$290,000 and council increased use of reserve fund by \$475,000. Total use of reserve = \$1.075 million. Mill rate decreases from 29.3 to 28.34. Reval will be phased in over 5 years.

4/3 - Proposed 2009-10 budget calls for no tax increase related to governmental and school operations for the third time in four years. The \$95.5 million spending plan includes a \$1.5 million, or 2.47 percent, increase for educational spending; a \$1.3 million reduction in capital improvements; and a \$300,000 decrease in the town's operating budget. Town saved about \$300,000 by implementing a wage freeze for nonunion employees and by restructuring health plans. Many residents will still receive tax increases as a result of property revaluation. Referendum on the budget is scheduled for May 12.

Windsor Locks

5/1 – Board of Finance approved budget is \$43.13 million, a .15% decrease from 08-09. Board of ed budget increases .75%. Town side decreases 1.42%. Mill rate decreases to 21.65, mostly due to reval. Town meeting votes on budget 5/19.

4/15 - The town has reached out to all of its bargaining units to seek help in saving money in next year's budget. So far, the town has not gotten any offers but has had some requests for additional information. Bargaining units were asked to look at wages, co-pays and insurance concessions. All of the town's non-union employees will take a wage freeze in the next budget year. The school district also asked its bargaining units for concessions, but none have been announced.

4/8 - Board of finance reinstated \$200,000 to the board of education budget at an appeals hearing over a previously directed zero-percent increase. Two special education tutors, a paraprofessional and a library media aide were reinstated in the school budget.

4/3 - The board of education cut about \$869,000 from its budget, about \$117,000 short of a board of finance-directed cut. \$611,000 of the cuts come from staff reductions, including a special education teacher and a social studies teacher, and reducing workload and pay for several other positions. Two assistant principals are becoming 11-month positions, and a reading tutor will switch to grant funding. Non-union staff would get a pay freeze and several non-certified staff positions would be cut if the education budget passes. The board will make appeals at a hearing 4/7 with the finance board, "then we're going to have to go deeper into staff cuts," if additional cuts are ordered, Hoffman said.