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Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 3:15 PM
To: Glenn Rooney <GRooney@Brookfieldct.gov>; Dan Devorsetz <dan.devorsetz@yahoo.com>; Eileen Koch <eileen.a.koch@gmail.com>; Ramos, Ricky (GE Capital) <ricky.amos@ge.com>
Cc: Steve Dunn <SDunn@brookfieldct.gov>; Sue Slater <SSlater@brookfieldct.gov>
Subject: Budget Questions

BOF members,

I have a couple of questions re the budget proposal. First off, the file I got from the Controller indicates that it may not be final that you were still working on possible amendments. I am concerned that such a delay denies the community the opportunity to review the budget given it must be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the town, i.e. the Newstimes. In the past, that final budget proposal was approved within a day or two of the public hearing. Not sure what the hold up is.

Be that as it may, attached is my analysis, as I had indicated to Glenn previously, I categorize things a bit differently to get to the key drivers, as I see them, Salaries & wages, benefits, fixed costs and Operating costs.

Assuming that this is a final or near final figure I just have a couple of questions,

1) Vs. The First Selectman's proposal, union wages were increased by \$50k. This is in the Parks and Rec department. This is offset in large part by a reduction in nonunion wages in the police Dept. What is driving these changes?

2) It is a small thing, but I note that while wages are down in this proposal vs. the FS budget, Payroll taxes are up? Does that make sense?

I am pleased to see the amount for Capital outlays approaching a figure it needs to be annually. I am however, concerned about the continuing reliance on debt to fund maintenance issues. Adding another \$5 million to our debt load, and anticipating the

debt for the school project, added to prior approved amounts will no doubt add significantly to our Debt Service i.e. fixed costs. This will reduce flexibility to address continued and unexpected needs in the community. I recall seeing some conversations on Facebook, that the Board had discussed future plans as to how it might meet these needs. I remain consistent in my support for Capital outlays in the budget at an annual level approximating the level of depreciation. I fear that the easy way to address the anticipated doubling of our debt service will result in reducing the capital outlays and or other operating expenses that will result in reduced services to the community. At the same time, to meet the maintenance needs, will encourage future administrations to rely on more debt, an ever increasing cycle that is hardly fiscally responsible.

Obviously, what happens will depend on the makeup of the Board in coming years. I would be interested to know if this board has considered the issue of how it will address this concern.

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["The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page."](#)

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