

From:  Budget 2021  
Brian Shea <brian.p.shea@gmail.com>

Wednesday, May 13, 2020 4:24:53 PM



Subject: Fwd: Budget

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  Zachary Smith

Board of Finance members,

I recognize the very difficult job that all of you have right now - we want to ensure that our town continues to work for our children and our neighbors, and this requires a budget that meets those needs, but we are also in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic that will leave many Redding residents in a difficult position. I think given those two competing concerns, the Boards of Selectmen and Education have done a remarkable job in submitting budgets that are relatively flat and still maintain the high level of service we in the town have come to expect.

I urge you to pass the budgets as they are now, even with a slight increase in the mill rate. It is the only way to ensure that our children continue to receive the wonderful education that they get in this town and that our town continues to grow while also looking out for those who are struggling in these uncertain times.

I thank you for your service on this board and the effort that has been made to educate the public during a season where there will not be a referendum. I sincerely hope that you will not make any further cuts and will adopt the budgets as is.

Best,  
Brian Shea  
25 Wagon Wheel Road

To: Redding Board of Finance  
Redding Board of Selectman

From: Redding Commission on Aging

May 17, 2020

To our elected officials:

Recognizing that we now have entered an era where every penny spent in the town budget must be scrutinized for its value it gives back to the town, I would like to share the vital role Redding's Social Services department plays – particularly during a time of distress and downturn.

Even before the pandemic, Social Services was seeing an increased need for its tangible services – food pantry, mental health services and referrals, housing assists, transportation, insurance assistance (including the Medicare Savings Program, Medicare and Medicaid), heating, information about financial / health / domestic violence programs, and coordination with police and schools for referrals and services. Residents of every income level have access to the Social Services, and through its excellence and word of mouth, it has become a hub of compassionate kindness and help.

Beyond the concrete services listed above, the Senior Center (working in conjunction with Social Services) provides invaluable resources to our sizable elderly population. Even during the shut-down, classes and helpful hints, websites, and a dose of humor delivered electronically via the remarkable Heritage Center BLAST offer companionship, stimulation and diverse opportunities for the large number of Reddingites who are over the age of 55. This is more than about having a little fun – the Heritage Center is an active component to the health and well being of our senior community.

Statistics are important.

- The food pantry has seen a 50% increase in usage since the beginning of the pandemic.
- The many generous donations, while most welcome, have kept the entire staff of the Social Services department busy. Food must be picked-up (for certain donations), sorted, packed, and arranged for pick-up – all of which is labor intensive, particularly during the COVID-19 regulations.
- Grants have been identified, and will continue to need to be identified and/or updated, that provide services for Reddingites in need. This is a time-consuming process.

- For instance, working in conjunction with the United Way, and with the help of a generous Redding resident who is using his access to wholesale food, qualified participants receive bi-monthly portion of high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables for a markedly reduced fee. It's a great program, but requires constant meticulous upkeep.
- Weekly telephone calls by trusted staff to recipients who know and trust the voice on the other end of the telephone are a life-saver to many of our elderly residents. These phone calls, which do take time, ensure the well-being of many.
- To date, many Heritage Center classes continue to be offered via Zoom. A wonderful service for our community, it is not free. The teachers, of course, continue to request payment.
- Procedures to set programs in place for those who wish to volunteer are an ongoing process. With grit and determination, Social Services has a put in place a "safe" volunteer program in which the volunteer is vetted by our local police and given helpful instructions to keep all safe.

Please note that all of these services are available not just to senior citizens but to anyone in town who requests help.

Of course, all of these additional services are offered in conjunction with the bread and butter assistance noted above in the opening paragraph.

It is our opinion that over this next year, more demands will be placed on our Social Services department, including the Heritage Center. We believe that there will be great need in our town, and the Social Services Department is working hard to meet it. This department is a well-oiled machine that does work efficiently and with fidelity.

We therefore respectfully request that regardless of where the budget numbers may lead, even if an "across the board" reduction is required, the Social Services budget numbers remain in place. It's smart, it's does good, and it serves our town well.

Sincerely,

*Mary Dale Lancaster*

Mary Dale Lancaster, Chair  
Commission on Aging

Addendum: At the most recent COA meeting, we were presented with jaw-dropping statistics provided by the United Way (211) about stark increase in calls for help in Redding – see attached.



From:  Budget 2021  
Edward Humphrey <edhumphrey21@yahoo.com>

Wed, May 13, 2020 4:46:47 PM



Subject: Fwd: Board of Education Budget

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  Zachary Smith

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Esteemed members of the Board of Finance,

My wife and I moved to Redding 13 years ago seeking a town with good real estate values and excellent schools. We had hoped to stay here into our retirement years well after our two daughters complete high school. But my belief that we had chosen a town that understands the value of the education its schools provide and how that attracts people like ourselves that hope to settle in this beautiful place has been deeply shaken. I hope that you will pass the budget on the table and do no further damage to the opportunities for my children in our schools and to the attractiveness of our town as a destination for home buyers. Please don't make our self-inflicted wound worse.

Regards,

Edward Humphrey  
8 Thankful Bradley Rd.  
Redding, CT. 06896

Sent from my iPad

From:  Budget 2021  
FRITCH <jackiefritch@optonline.net>

Wednesday, May 13, 2020 9:36:22 PM



Subject: Fwd: Thank You

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  Zachary Smith

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To the Members of the Board of Finance -

I thank you for your tireless work and dedication to our town. I know that even in these times of difficult decisions, the very best intentions for our dear town are in our hearts. I thank you again for supporting our BoE budget.

Sincerely,

Jackie Dyar

60 High Ridge Road

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From:  Budget 2021  
Jessica Nevins <jessica41313@gmail.com> Wednesday, May 13, 2020 3:31:21 PM 

Subject: Fwd: BOE budget

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  Zachary Smith

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Dear Board of Finance Members,

I understand the gravity of the vote before you. Everything in our lives is uncertain. Supporting the budget as it stands is the only certain thing we can do. Come fall, whether in-person or distance learning is at play, the schools will need all of the resources available to them to proceed with our children's education and to make up for any missed education during this spring's hasty transit to e-learning. Please don't advocate for further cuts to the BOE budget. For our children, for our town, please approve the current budget.

Thank you,  
Jessica and Tyler Nevins  
59 Cross Hwy, Redding, CT 06896

From:  Budget 2021  
Kristin Bedoukian <kboyle1979@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 13, 2020 3:56:57 PM



Subject: Fwd: Redding K-8 BOE budget

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  Zachary Smith

Dear Board of Finance,  
After months of remote learning, children will be playing educational catch-up during 2020-2021 school year. Although it is a financially difficult time, it is not the time to make additional cuts to the K-8 budget. Please pass the budget as presented by the BOE.  
Thank you for you consideration,  
Kristin and Matt Bedoukian  
12 Indian Hill Rd  
Redding, CT 06896

Sent from my iPhone

From:  Julia Pemberton  
info@townofreddingct.org

Thursday, May 14, 2020 8:43:51 AM



Subject: Fwd: New submission from Contact Us

To:  **Steve Gniadek**

**What does this comment regard?**

Budget Issues

**Please include any questions or comments:**

Please seriously consider not further cutting the board of education budget. Families are leaving NYC and buying houses in our community as a result of the pandemic. Class sizes will likely naturally increase, at a time when restrictions require in school supports to maintain caps of 10 students per class. Cutting teachers and services during a pandemic doesn't take into account the implications of new, potentially long standing restrictions. Recommendations to reduce administrators is not realistic given state and federal guidelines, teacher evaluation requirements, and necessary communication. The BOE has thoughtfully made cuts that show an effort to do more with less. Revisiting contracts could be considered, however this requires negotiation and agreement from multiple unions and will take time. Please consider adopting the BOE proposed budget and supporting our schools and youth.

**Name**

Martine King

**Email**

[maq238@nyu.edu](mailto:maq238@nyu.edu)

**Address**

440 Rock House Rd  
Redding, Connecticut 06896

[Map It](#)

From:  Budget 2021  
Seana Bedard <seanabedard@yahoo.com>

Wed, May 13, 2020 5:35:22 PM



Subject: Fwd: Please support the budget and the schools!

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  **Zachary Smith**

Dear Board of Finance

I urge you to pass the school budget with no cuts. Please do not use this current pandemic as an excuse. A majority of the citizens in favor of the school budget are the ones most effected by furloughs and layoffs and yet they still do not want to see a decrease in the schools budget. The children need to be given an increase in support when they return, hopefully, in the fall as homeschool and online learning is not an ideal setting and most will be behind. Additionally, with so many unknown procedures that may be put in place regarding social distancing, cutting teachers and increasing class sizes would become a catastrophe.

You seem to be too concerned with the mill rate, and I hope you are not listening to inaccurate public complaints about the mill rate and too high of a cost per student. Redding is directly in line with Weston for both mill rate and cost per student. Redding's cost per student is also comparable to Wilton and Darien. The mill rate is also not high considering are lack of commercial base. What is out of line seems to be the First Selectman's and Chief of Police's salary when compared to neighboring towns.

If you think the total town budget is too high then you need to reassess other areas, including the Board of Selectman's budget and salaries paid to top town employees.

Stop taking away from the school as there is nothing left to give.

Seana Bedard  
16 Winding Brook Lane

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From:  Budget 2021 5/13/2020 3:24:17 PM   
 Tracy Anderson <tracysanderson1214@sbcglobal.net>  
Subject: Fwd: 2020-21 BOE Budget - Support for budget to be passed without further cuts  
To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  Zachary Smith

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Good afternoon,

I would like to enter into record that I feel the 2020-2021 BOE budget should be passed as is without any additional cuts. The schools in our town need our full financial support - this is not the time to make any additional cuts. My husband and I budget our incomes down to the dime, but if we need to pay more in taxes in order to help secure the quality that we have come to expect for our schools, we will make it happen.

(Please note that I do not wish to have these comments read into the public record, assuming that all members of the BOF will have the opportunity to read them on their own prior to tonight's vote.)

Thank you,  
Tracy Anderson  
6 Meeker Hill Road

From:  Budget 2021  
Mini Movie clips <trishp260@gmail.com>

Wednesday, May 13, 2020 4:34:40 PM



Subject: Fwd: Budget Cuts Proposed

To:  **Steve Gniadek**  **Krista Gramer**  **Zachary Smith**

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Dear Redding Board of Finance Members,

I urge you to approve the proposed Board of Education budget as presented. As a parent and educator in the Easton-Redding school district I would say please maintain the quality of Redding's most valuable asset, our school system.

Thank you very much,

Trish Miles Pereira

60 Lonetown Road  
Redding, CT 06896  
(203) 257-2929