

**TOWN OF POMFRET
BOARD OF FINANCE
PUBLIC FORUM ON PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2014/2015
THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2014 AT 7:00 PM
POMFRET COMMUNITY SCHOOL CAFETERIA**

In Attendance: Board of Finance members Ken Kristal, Carolyn Gerrity, Alyson Aleman, Michael Baum. Also present: Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, and approximately 40 citizens, staff members, and interested parties.

- I. Open Session – K. Kristal opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.**
- II. General Government – Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Budget Review and Public Comment and Questions – M. Nicholson, First Selectman, presented an overview of the proposed General Government budget. She reviewed some of the key areas of increases and decreases and opened the floor for questions. The proposed budget reflects an increase of 1.47% or \$35,793. Sally Johnson asked about the increase in janitorial costs at the Senior Center and the increase in the Professional Services line if the center was to be closed on some days. She stated displeasure at the increase in salary for the First Selectman. M. Nicholson stated that the budget approval was not a unanimous vote. Jim Rivers, previous First Selectman, was present and stated the variety of demands on that office and the need for more appropriate pay. He felt the salary was still low in comparison to similar positions outside of municipal work. P. Mann stated that he voted against the budget due to this line item and felt that the office was a part-time job. A woman in the audience stated concern with**

decreased hours at the Senior Center. Sally Johnson asked about the Abington Library budgeted flat while the Public Library reflected an increase and suggested the Abington Library should receive more funding.

- III. Board of Education – Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Budget Review and Public Comments and Questions – Richard Schad, Board of Education Chairman, presented the proposed budget for the Board of Education. He stated that the budget was underspent last year and anticipated a surplus this year as well. The budget represents an overall increase of 2% - or \$194,076. He provided some background of the process to date and an overview of increases and decreases. A woman in the audience stated that she was happy to see two music teachers listed and commented on the importance of the arts. Discussion continued in support of enrichment programs, music, and Spanish classes starting at an earlier age. A man asked if cuts had to be made – where would they come from?**
- IV. General Discussion/Comments/Questions regarding Proposed Budgets – K. Kristal asked if there were any further questions. He reviewed the upcoming meetings on these budgets. The Board of Finance will meet on April 3rd and a Public Hearing is scheduled on April 22nd for additional public input.**
- V. Adjournment – Meeting duly adjourned at 8:34 PM.**

Respectfully submitted

Bonnie Ryan, clerk

Date approve_____