

Roxanne Maher

From: Sharon Pealer <pealerl@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 10:09 PM
To: Town Council Group
Subject: Budget vote of 6/10 2025

Dear town council members.

I am one of the 1100 voters who participated in the second budget referendum. I voted no in the first referendum and no in the second. I voted no because I believe that our budget for the Board of Education is out of control. Like every other town, Ledyard got Covid funding for the schools. That extra money was absorbed into the budget, and to be honest where it was spent does not matter because the budget could not be reduced baring circumstances that have not happened in the town. Now and perhaps last year, taxpayers have had to carry an extra tax burden because of those funds, and the board always wants more. Last year it was a director for the MTSS program at a cost of 120,000.00 to the taxpayers. I am very familiar with the program in another town in New London County, a large program in that system, and they do not have a director of MTSS. They have a department head and yes that teacher gets an extra stipend, But the director is the Head of Special Education. Ledyard already had a Director of Special Education, so now we are paying two Directors for basically the same job. The increases this year, some, like adding paras for elementary school students are worthwhile and will bring more bang for the dollar, than the second director of Special Education ever will, and with change left over you could hire four for the salary of that second Director. The Other issue is the science lab. While it is a nice idea, looking at the income being lost to the town in the next fiscal year, the \$500,000 plus for the Veterans tax relief , and the loss of about 625,000.00 dollars the Cathy Osten claims to be replacing for two towns to the tune of 800,00.00 dollars for two years... Well that is split between the towns and will provide a short term shortfall and a long term deep deficit that our tax base will feel for years. I have heard that this is not news to you, and I do think as elected representatives of the citizens it is your job to protect and cushion the whole town, be it your voting base or not. To close, The Board of Ed can easily cut 300,000 dollars from this years proposed budget without harming the students. Unlike other towns I have not heard one word about increasing class sizes or having to cut teachers like other towns have had to do. I know that the town council is not able to cut line items in the Board of Ed Budget, but I would hope that real on the ground information would give you a baseline idea of what is possible to cut without doing any harm to the schools.

Thank you Sharon Pealer



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