

**Public Comments received through 12 noon on Wednesday, April 29th
for Board of Finance Special Meeting, May 4, 2020**

1. V. Shcheglov, 142 Deepwood Road

Hello. I think, because currently and for next couple months we don't receive some Town Service, you need to give people a discount and don't increase the mill rate (School closed, Library closed, Town Hall, closed and all other services is minimum or not exist at all). Thank you.

2. Ryszard Pojawis, 23 Surrey Lane

Hi, I think this budget is way too excessive. Most people are currently on unemployment and it will not end tomorrow so their resources are limited. Because of this we all need to cut our expenses, Town of Avon also. Second, last year property tax increase was 4.94% this year proposal is 4.02%. My and probably most of regular workers (not CEO's) yearly rise is 1.5-2%. So please explain how people should meet their ends if property tax goes up about 9% in 2 years and your rise at work is about 4% and the same scenario happen every year, not only last two years.

3. Avon Volunteer Fire Department, 25 Darling Drive

Chairman Harrison- The Avon Volunteer Fire Department has faithfully served the Town of Avon for more than 75 years. Through the support of the town budget and donations from the citizens, we have been able to reach and maintain a level of service second to none. Our members give close to 30,000 hours of volunteer time annually in order to achieve this milestone. We are writing to request funding for the full increase to our operating budget for Fiscal Year 20/21. This requested increase is needed to purchase new turnout gear for our members and replace obsolete hydraulic rescue tools. These needs are critical, but not provided for in the current budget proposal. Our members deserve the best equipment and support that we can possibly provide. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to serving the Town of Avon for 75 more years!

Respectfully, The Members, Officers and Board of Directors of the Avon Volunteer Fire Department

4. Craig Wehan, 119 Country Club Road

We just moved to Avon last June and after closing received a property tax increase. When we paid it and asked about it the employee said that property taxes go up every year they aren't going to go down. We moved from Massachusetts where this wasn't the norm. I've heard many people complain about CT property taxes and now I know why. I would hope that Avon would at least try to keep the mill rate the same year to year most years or find other properties that may be under paying. I think this would go a long way in building good will with the town. I hope that this becomes an election issue as well.

Thanks for allowing me to comment!

See this post in Nextdoor

"I just moved from Avon to Simsbury and got a letter from the town of Simsbury saying they are not increasing taxes at all this year because of covid-19." What the heck is going on in Avon???

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Hi, Has the town of Avon considered what is going on in other towns nearby? I think that during these tough times, the town may want to follow suit in what other towns like Manchester and Simsbury (and probably many others) are doing.

<https://www.courant.com/community/manchester/hc-news-manchester-budget-adoption-20200415-uczhep2evvfoteodx6ur6ol4si-story.html>

“Citing tough times due to coronavirus crisis, Manchester leaders adopt budget with no tax hike”

5. Yong Tian, 7 Fordham Way

Dear board members, I found the 2020 budget proposal is unacceptable. At this time, a large number of residents are facing a significant income reduction due to the covid19 incident, an increase of budget is not only a big burden to them, but also showing insensitivity to town residents. In long term, our tax burden increase 40% every 10 years at the current rate. It is apparently unsustainable. I encourage the board to take both short term and long term plans to reduce tax burden. Thanks!

6. Gus Penna, 13 Rockledge

Given the uncertain times, it is critical that our local government be well financed and capable of meeting future uncertainties. I am sure that the Board of Finance and other town boards will be judicious in their approach to a final budget. If there are items in the budget that can be delayed or not critical to the town operations, they should be considered for removal. Hopefully, staffing levels are adequate currently and there is not a necessity to add new employees. They town government would send a powerful message if it kept the same budget amounts as this current year, or, if possible a reduction. Not an easy task, but again time are uncertain.

7. Amy Paul, 26 Lofgren Road

Hi, although I am a big supporter of our schools and town services, this year is different. Please limit the tax increase. We are in the middle of an epidemic and it is not business as usual. Many of our residents have been laid off and are not being paid. Until this epidemic is over it is irresponsible to continue as if our residents have the means to pay a tax increase. Please act accordingly. Thank you.

8. Erin Lamadrid, 49 Tyler Court

Curious as to what our comparable towns are doing in light of the pandemic. Are Simsbury, Canton, Farmington trying to increase property taxes in this emergency? I have heard at least, that Simsbury is going with 0% increase. If they can manage, what needs to happen in Avon to make this feasible also? Our response to this should be one of shared sacrifices.

9. Robert Starr, 10 Stockbridge Drive

It is unacceptable that Avon Board of finance is looking to increase the budget once again in times of crisis when people are losing jobs and being furloughed. I have been in Avon for the past 11 years and the assessment and mill ate increases every year. This is a year that most people will have stagnant income at best or will lose their jobs or businesses at worst.

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Yet despite this, the town has displayed irresponsible behavior by proposing budget increase. To continue in this manner will only enrage residents to seek litigation questioning if the board is acting in a fiduciary manner. In the face of pandemic and historically record unemployment, proposing budget increase will make it easier to argue the lack of fiduciary duty on the part of the board.

10. Carrie Zheng – Weatherstone Community (non-registered voter)

Dear Avon Town Management, Due to the current economic situation, I oppose to pass the Avon Budget Referendum.

11. Yanlin Wang, 6 Cranbrook

Dear Sir/Madam, I strongly oppose the Avon Budget Referendum for an increase in personal property taxes given the current situation that so many people lost their jobs. Our neighbor Simsbury will have no increase in this year's personal property taxes. Thank you for your time and consideration.

12. Michael Kenney, 44 Country Club Road

Hello. I respectfully voice my objection to the proposed budget in that it includes increased in virtually every budget category, whereas many taxpayers have sustained and continued to sustain significant negative changes in their incomes and financial well being. The COVID19 circumstances have resulted in dramatic changes and considerable financial uncertainty for many taxpayers, and these issues will continue well into 2020, if not beyond. Under no circumstances should the FY 20/21 Budget include increases, including as to salaries. Rather, the Budget should reflect and consider the realities faced by those who are funding it. To do otherwise is fiscally irresponsible.

13. Gerald Kaiden, 13 Crossroads Lane

I cannot believe that a Board Of Education salary increase has been proposed. From \$36,963,959 to \$38,799,781. That is over 4%! We are living in a time of high unemployment, worker loss of jobs, and increasing numbers of workers are being asked to absorb salary decreases. Some families are without the resources to buy necessary staples of everyday living, and the leaders of Avon want to dispense salary increases? Then, there is the issue of teachers' salaries. Where is it cast in bronze, that teachers must receive a salary increase each and every year? This BofE proposed salary increase is outrageous and tantamount to asking Avon taxpayers to do with less, so some privileged workers can have more. There should be no salary increase, none! Workers who are secure in their jobs must take solace in that reality. I wonder who Avon's leadership represents? It does not appear to be its taxpaying residents.

14. Alan Kick, 29 Woodland Drive

Board of Finance & Avon Town Council,

After reviewing the proposed budget and the details associated with it I am asking you to re-evaluate the proposal and reduce the cost. For the past several years the town budget and spending has been excessive. I have lived in town for over 20 years and recall our mill rate at 24. Now we are looking at a mill rate and associated costs substantially higher. Given the reduction of state funding taking place as well as the current economic conditions we need to aggressively reduce our costs. That means reducing the size of our government and the

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significant costs associated with our town employees as well as other costs. Many Avon taxpayers live on fixed incomes and with the pending economic downturn we cannot afford this proposed budget. Please do the right thing for our town and propose a much more financially sound budget. Thank you.

15. Raj Subbu, 25 Cranbrook

Dear Board of Finance, I have been an Avon resident since 2013, and have trusted the town budget process to find the right balance between taxation and quality of services provided. However, this year I was quite surprised to see a proposed 4.68% budget increase during these unprecedented Covid-19 times, when most businesses and a lot of people are struggling. I would have expected to see a valiant effort under the circumstances to at least keep expenses flat from the 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 budgets. That would have been the right thing to do. What gives the Town of Avon the right to protect all its jobs and even possibly provide for an increase when so many of our residents are going into 2020 and 2021 with significant reductions in their income, or even no income. Please change your approach, and come back with a decent fiscally prudent and considerate budget proposal we can all support. I will vote to reject this current budget proposal, and I would appreciate your including me on the virtual town meetings planned.

16. Mikhail Mensh, 30 Alcott Way

I do not believe that during pandemic when many people are losing jobs and are experiencing financial hardship, it is appropriate to increase budget and a mill rate. Many people are taking pay cuts and struggling to stay afloat financially. Financial markets are down and people's 401k's took a deep dive. Many predict that recession will be result of the country's shutdown. I think it is irresponsible to put more hardship on people of Avon by increasing taxes. Keep 2020/2021 at the same level as 2019/2020.

17. Scott Lewis, 45 Bayberry Hill Road

Given the economic impacts of COVID-10, the town of Avon should hold its budget flat, especially holding salaries flat. Actually, the town should be reducing payroll (cutting staff) but I realize that in itself exacerbates the recession. Keep in mind the enormous number of people who have lost a job. While I received no salary increase this year, I am grateful to have a job. Town employees should feel the same way about not getting raises. Please do the responsible thing.

18. Neil Rudolph, 25 Red Mountain Road

Assuming that the proposed budget was developed prior to the mandated shutdown of schools, library, senior center, and other town facilities, and given that the shutdown may go on longer than anticipated, the town should consider freezing the budget for 2020/2021 similar to what New Britain has done. This would provide much needed relief to those most affected by the economic fallout of this pandemic.

19. Jennifer Nordlund, 103 Rosewood Road

Hi Avon Board of Finance, My husband Tom and I have two children in the Avon school system. This email is regarding the budget that was sent on the cream colored flyer to each resident. I understand that my email will be included as part of the official meeting records.

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I'm not sure if the budget was created before or after the virus hit the US....but three things in it concern:

1. Page 3, first line. It looks like tax revenue is proposed to increase by \$3.3 million
2. Page 3, 4th line. Charge for services (not sure what those services are) is proposed to increase by \$1 million
3. Page 7, BOE Salaries. Proposed to increase by \$1.8 million

At least 22 million people have lost their jobs due to the virus. Keeping the budget unchanged from 2019-2020: OK. Lowering the budget: Probably what most people expect. Raising the budget: Seriously? It would be wise for your committee to rethink this move. Raising the budget...or the mill rate...during this financially troubling time will be perceived as insensitive and aloof by many town residents. Even those who have not lost their jobs. Your call. But if it were me and my reputation on the line, I would not want my name associated with these kind of budget increases. Especially not now. But I'm really thinking/hoping that this budget was drafted and printed before the virus....and that you are already working on a revised version. Just my take.

20. Judy Kaiser, 72 Westland Road

I am appalled that the town of AVON board of finance is looking at ANY increase this year, let alone almost a 5% increase! I strongly oppose this and, as your own newsletter states, given the extraordinary year we are having due to COVID 19 and state shutdown, I am requesting and expecting a 0% increase. You need to hold expenses flat this new budget year, period. Anything other than a 0% increase I will vote DOWN and will encourage as many as I can reach to also vote the budget down.

21. Andy Skelton, 21 Chevas Road

Hello, In light of the fact that a budget referendum cannot be held this year the budget and Mill rate should remain flat compared to last year. Thanks.

22. David Panico, 95 Stony Corners Circle

I offer the following comments on the Proposed 2020/2021 Budget. With the expected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all citizens, including those in Avon, the 2020/2021 Budget should be crafted with the smallest increase possible. A 4.68% spending increase and 3.47% mill rate hike are too high. I would urge the Council to consider:

1. Financing more of the CIP Program with long-term bonds. A \$700,000 increase in CIP funded by the operating budget next year does not seem prudent. I would recommend reducing the line item for Facilities by \$1.7 million or more and financing these costs with long-term bonds. Interest rates for "AAA" rated municipalities like Avon will be at all-time lows this summer and Avon should take advantage and finance as much as possible with long-term bonds. The Town should also look at any potential refunding options on outstanding bonds.
2. The Town's Fund Balance exceeds \$11 million and represents 11.7% of the 2020 budget, with more than \$2.7 million added to Fund Balance at the end of FYE 2019. I don't believe using an additional \$1,000,000 of Fund Balance to reduce the tax increase for the 2020/2021 budget would be viewed negatively by the rating agencies. It is times like these when Fund Balance should be used.

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3. A \$2 million reduction in expenditures, using these adjustments or others, would be much more affordable. Also, a \$97.8 million budget would represent an increase of approximately \$ 2 million over the FYE 2020 budget, which is more in-line with the \$2 million increase from FYE 2019 actual results to the adopted FYE 2020 budget.

Once this crisis is over, we can return to the sound, conservative fiscal management the Town of Avon is known for.

23. April Aldighieri (non-registered voter)

Why not give pay cuts and benefits cuts to save money? We can't afford to live in CT anymore.

24. Marianne and George Michailow, 73 Chevas Road

To the Town Council of Avon, Ct: We just received the Town of Avon Newsletter and read about the proposed budget for 2020/2021. After talking with some of our neighbors, at a distance of course, I found myself needing to write to you. Please know that I have been a resident of Avon since 2002, and this is not something I have ever done in the past. Many of us are appalled, and I find it unconscionable that you would even think of raising the mill rate given the state of affairs in Connecticut and the United States right now. My husband has been on a fixed income for a few years now and I am a private school teacher. I've often been amazed at the salaries and health benefits Avon gives their teachers. They are one of the highest paid in the area. I am sure this year they earned it. Many people are losing jobs, and those lucky enough to still have them will probably see minimal raises if any because businesses are also losing money. Also, because we are stuck inside, household bills like water, electricity, and food have increased. Savings are being depleted for the majority of us. Perhaps this is the year you actually find ways to cut the budget and not increase it. Since the majority of us will not see raises this year, perhaps any increases to salaries of the employees paid with our taxes can also be put on hold.

25. Chithra Niezrecki, 112 Juniper Drive

Could you please let me know how this year's budget will be voted on by Avon residents? We are very concern if the taxes a hiked too much, it would cause financial hardship. Thank you.
Concerned resident

26. Mary and Don Cole, 3 Canterbury Lane

PLEASE do not increase Avon taxes during this time. Like many people in Avon, we are older residents depending on social security and a small annuity. We are barely making it now, and struggling with mounting health costs. Many people are out of work. Many retirees are depending on investments that are tanking. It will take us a long time to recover, and shouldering the burden of more taxes is not only not preferable but not possible! Let's wait for better times when the economy is stronger and more able to support your constituency. Even the Governor does not support this measure.

27. Frank Rawden, 46 Woodmont Road

I'm retired on Social Security and moved to Avon to be with family. I am now paying 10 times to taxes that I had been paying previously. Enough is enough. How about cutting back on some expenditures?? And now with a lot of people out of work, you're going to cause bankruptcy and foreclosure. How's that going to help the budget??

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28. Michael Ryan, 15 Hastings Turn

To Avon's Board of Finance, Board of Education, and Town Council: If a referendum were being held this year, I would vote against the proposed 20/21 Avon budget. It represents an increase of 4.7% in expenditures on top of a 2.5% increase in expenditures from 2019 to 2020. It funds the increase in expenditures essentially by raising the mill rate 3.5% and increasing the charges for services by 19%. Tax payers and residents will be forced to pay for the increase in expenditures. Town budgets can't just keep increasing without regard to the realities of the economy and its affect on town residents. Due to Covid-19, the economy has collapsed, the state is broke (if it wasn't already), and people are out of work. That is certain to have an adverse impact on the revenue projections in Avon's 20/21 budget. The Town of Avon is not the federal government that can create trillion-dollar stimulus packages without regard to where the money is coming from. The traditional tax-and-spend model cannot be sustained. At some point that model will compel Avon's residents to live elsewhere because it's simply too expensive to live here. I suggest what's needed is a line-by-line review of your proposed costs. I understand some are fixed, but many are not. Which ones are truly critical and which ones are discretionary? The Board of Finance, the Board of Ed, and the Town Council need to sharpen their pencils, make some tough decisions, and cut costs. Raising taxes and fees year after year to fund ever-increasing costs is not the answer. Thank you for your consideration.

29. JoAnne Lipsy, 34 Heritage Drive

Hello, I am concerned about any type of budget increase during this unprecedented pandemic. Please consider waiting to raise taxes for now, just like our good neighbor Simsbury. It makes sense. People have lost jobs and loved ones. It can wait. Thank you for reading my email. Stay safe.

30. George Michailow, 73 Chevas Road

I don't understand why you would add to the financial hardships to the residents of Avon. There should be no increases for the upcoming 2020-2021 budget. Shame on you using the crisis to push thru one of the largest increases in the town history. I'm sure your hearing from many Avon tax payers. All pay increases should be frozen for the year. The teachers should wave any increases even though it's in their contract. It's been done before! Find a way of not abusing the residents of Avon. I will be contacting the Governor office and the media! You have not heard the end of this. You have lost the trust of the town. I am in the process of re-started the Avon Taxpayers Association. You have forced my hand and I have major support.

31. Pieter Wyckoff, 80 Forge Drive

To whom it may concern, The town of Avon, along with the State, and Country are in a time of peril. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented levels of unemployment, forcing many families to survive with reduced wages, or no wages at all. An increase in spending and an increase in taxes at this time of crisis would only add to the pain and suffering Avon residents are already experiencing. Please do not increase spending and taxes. Thank you.

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32. Kelly Mailhot, 32 Sunset Trail

To the budget committee: We have continued to see increased taxes again and again and now even during a time where we don't even know what businesses can come back of this 'COVID' shutdown we think it's a go old idea to increase? There will be plenty of time to increase taxes especially when business just do NOT come back and then what, another increase for those residents. I moved here from Maine for a job, I have no children in the system but have brought millions in business here over 7 years. This is not the time to increase our taxes with so many unknowns. I hope the govt doesn't try to sneak this in while so few actually know about it. Please reconsider as so many in private industry have no new hires policies in place and so many don't know where they'll stand. Make this great town affordable again!

33. Stefanie Wyckoff, 80 Forge Drive

To whom it may concern, The town of Avon, along with the State, and Country are in a time of peril. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented levels of unemployment, forcing many families to survive with reduced wages, or no wages at all. An increase in spending and an increase in taxes at this time of crisis would only add to the pain and suffering Avon residents are already experiencing. Please do not increase spending and taxes. Thank you.

34. Phil Richer, 72 Brookridge Drive

Good Morning. Myself and my family live in Avon. I'd like to strongly protest the 4.68 (!) percent proposed increase to our property taxes. Since moving to Avon two years ago, we've been appalled at the tax increases that we've seen. We moved to this town because these taxes were lower than Simsbury and West Hartford. If taxes keep increasing like they are, I don't think we'll be sticking around for much longer. The Avon Town Council has a fiduciary responsibility to the residents of Avon, who are struggling with the current COVID economy. In my view, the town council is currently failing that mandate. The families in this town have made enormous sacrifices over the past few weeks, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Its only fait for the town to tighten its belt as well. I will be voting at every election with this in mind.

35. Danute Dmowski, 28 Canterbury Lane

Hi. I was very much displeased with the huge budget increases during this pandemic. That is insensitive to say the least.

36. Valerie Marshall, 41 Cotswold

For nearly forty years we've been members of that complacent group who vote neither for nor against the town budget because our town boards have been doing a fine job. It seems now, though, that our elected leaders think we are insulated from the financial downturn that is creating uncertainty and hardship in our households. Clearly we need to rethink the budget in light of the crisis. In this time of reduced services and programs, we can make temporary economies. To do otherwise smacks of an arrogance never seen in Avon's leadership. I'd rather think this current budget increase is rooted in optimism for a recovering economy rather than in failure to recognize the coming hardships in Avon families. Please make prudent cuts in this budget that recognize that we are, indeed, all in this together. Thank you.

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37. Rebecca Primovic, 112 Kings Wood Drive

I am sure you are aware of the growing concern of the proposed tax rate increase for our town. Is the town seriously going to burden those who are currently out of work or taking a pay cut to stay employed? Why does our rate increase every single year? Why do employees of the town get automatic increases each year? If our town was run like corporate American then we would not be in this situation. Can we look into ways to reduce the cost of running a town? Put a hold on any salary increase or limit it to 2% like most Americans in the corporate world are receiving. Taking out waste in the budget is what we need to be looking at – not the easy way out of tax increases year after year after year...How can Farmington consistently be lower and steady in their tax rates each year (and Farmington is rated higher than Avon in education per USNEWS.COM). Maybe get creative and tax the properties with children using our school system the higher rates and give us old folks a break on taxes who have no children in the system, just a thought since a big chunk of the money goes to running the schools. Also – will there be any kind of public hearing on this topic? Thanks for your time.

38. David A. Griffith, 40 Northgate

These are extraordinary times that require us all make sacrifices. Many of the townspeople are being laid off, furloughed or taking salary reductions – these are difficult times. That said, the original budget proposed by the town was conceived with a different economic picture. The Town Council and Board of Education should consider options to minimize increases and not place additional stress on the citizens.

39. Paul Valente, 21 Paper Chase Trail

I am writing as a long-time Avon resident of 28 years. My wife and I have raised two children here and put them through the Avon school system. We have always supported the budgets as an investment in the town. However, we cannot support this tax increase that comes at a time when residents can least support it. I am baffled how my property values in Avon keep going down and my taxes keep going up. I think it's time you looked at budget cuts, as most of us are doing, as opposed to looking at raising taxes on an already over-taxed population.

40. Martha Lemmon Inglese, 26 East Woodhaven Drive

Hi Cathy & Katrina, A quick question about the Town Budget for FY2020/21. Since the Town Council has authorized the Board of Finance to adopt a budget for FY 2020/21, has the Board taken the initiative to cut the budget as proposed? I sat through the Town's Saturday budget workshop and heard a lot about raises, promotions, funding new positions, and increasing department budgets. In light of the financial uncertainty ALL Avon residents currently find themselves in, wouldn't cutting the Town Manager's proposed budget be the prudent thing to do? I just read the Avon Newsletter and am appalled, frankly, at a \$4,461,615 budget increase for tiny town of 18,000 people, even in the best of times. I think it's time the Town of Avon start practicing some fiscal constraint. At some point, the State is going to delegate all or most of Avon's share of its unfunded teacher's pension liability back to Avon, and Avon will not have the funds to weather that storm.

41. Corinne Foltz (working class tax payer), 50 Grant Drive

Hello. Please advise on the tax increases while many of us are hit with paycheck decreases, furloughs, or layoffs. How about capping spending instead or scrutinizing validity of how

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much is being spent and prioritizing budgets. Please be smart and do not overburden those of us who work for a living. Do the rich really need to get richer right no please keep the budget flat or decrease it for once. I pay too much in taxes as it is. Why is Avon increasing at such harsh times? The future may be a depression.

42. Carol Shubinski, 34 Oakengates

Hello! I am not sure when this will get looked at. I was not aware the Board of Finance would be starting to discuss the budgets tonight and not next week. Obviously the school and towns created their budgets before coronavirus was impacting Connecticut. However, I believe both the Town Council budget and School budget should be adopted as proposed. There are provisions in place to help people who truly cannot afford to pay their taxes. We still need to have town services and active and vibrant schools. The school admins and teachers have been working so hard to continue providing an excellent education remotely. Although that is successful, the kids are still missing out on so much. They deserve to have a great school year next year. If the budget is cut, especially if it is cut drastically, they won't have that. It will be welcome back to school, we no longer offer music and art and sports and clubs. Those kinds of things are the things that will be cut. We cannot afford it. Instead of social distancing, I see overcrowded classrooms and limited electives. I see high schoolers only being able to take 5 classes because nothing electives and sections are so limited. Please approve the budgets as proposed.

43. Ellison Berns, 15 Wilcox Lane

With a U or L shaped recovery forecast, I was astounded to read in the April Avon Newsletter that the town proposes a budget increase of 4.68% with another increase in mill rate rather than endeavoring to develop a budget similar to last year's. I sincerely request that the town speak with West Hartford that announced that it does not plan an increase in taxes. Hopefully it will give Avon's leadership ideas of what another town has done to help its residents and businesses who are suddenly confronting serious financial challenges. Thank you.

44. Linda Stevens Madsen, 76 Carriage Drive

To the Town of Avon I feel what you want for a tax increase is the wrong time for this much – people are out work – seniors – People are worried and scared – no jobs. I think asking this much at this time is just careless on the Town part – people are struggling and I think the Town of Avon needs to cut this amount. Thank you for your time.

45. Bryant Chatfield, 35 Verville Road

We oppose the tax increases at this time, while we should be working on ideas to decrease or maintain taxes along with ideas and suggestions to decrease unnecessary spending. Ideas for improvement of business opportunities within the town should be discussed to improve tax revenues rather than relying on taxes from depreciating home values. Thank you.

46. Patty and Dennie Obie, 20 Lakeview Blvd.

My husband and I are residents of Avon and we support the proposed budget increase. We strongly oppose reducing the increase to zero.

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47. Sue Anderson, 17 Mountain Ledge Road

Ladies/Gentlemen: I am writing to express my dismay at the proposed budget for this year. It's bad enough in other years when Avon has the highest budget increase of any town around, but amidst a pandemic and economic recession, you are still proposing over a 4% increase. By comparison, Simsbury is proposing holding their budget to a zero increase, Farmington is proposing just over 2% and Canton is proposing under 3% as well. Many of us in the private sector have not seen raises or only minimal raises for years now. I know I am not alone in this respect. Yet year after year the Town seems to believe Avon residents have money to burn. With the reassessment and large tax increase last year, my real estate taxes went up 8.5%; with the proposed mill rate this year, my taxes would increase by 6.2%. I implore you to sharpen your pencils and come up with a more reasonable budget. If other towns are able to keep their tax rates below 3% every year, it indicates poor management by Avon's town officials. The guaranteed yearly raises and step increases for town employees must change or Avon will lose its appeal as a place to live because of its high taxes. Hiring teachers and school personnel while the student population is decreasing makes no sense and needs to be examined so that portion of the Town's budget reflects the reality faced by private employers. The budget has passed the last couple of years solely by virtue of less than 9% of voter turnout; the fact that the majority of the people voting were opposed to the budget should be an indication that defeating budget increases such as currently proposed may well be close at hand. Thank you for your consideration.

48. Pat Bialaski (AHS Library Media Tech. Assistant), 6 Rosewood

Good Morning, I am writing today to voice my APPROVAL of the town budget, in particular I am voting to approve the budget for the Board of Education. Having lived in Avon for over 42 years and worked in the Avon Public Schools for over 25 years, I have experienced the great generosity of our teachers and staff to supplement school supplies out of their own pocket. People in town who are not a part of this school community would never see that the school budget is NOT exorbitant and is NOT frivolous in their requests. The Public schools have made MANY MANY cuts to the disadvantage of the education of our young students. They are our future and need to be able to have the education that will prepare them for what may lie ahead. Therefore, it is my VOTE to allow the budget of the Board of Education to stay as it is requested and to remain intact. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

49. Paul and Fran Argay, 23 Parke Road

Comments for your private meetings....Eliminating the voting process on the budget is completely undemocratic! We strongly disagree with the increased budget. Property values keep going down, yet the taxes continually go up. Budget cuts need to be made!

50. Brien Bialaski, 6 Rosewood Road

Good morning. I'm writing you today to voice my opinion and supporting approval of the Town Budget, in particular the Board of Education's requested budget. Having lived in town for over 42 years and raising my 3 children here, I know how important it is for our children to have the best education possible. Our teachers are very caring, giving and loving educators who give unselfishly of themselves, their time and even their own money. Our education system here in Avon is considered one of the best in the state which attracts many young

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families to move here and raise their families here. And yes, many families like my wife and I have even stayed here and plan to stay here. We are perpetuating and increasing the resident base here in Avon. And that's a good thing for Avon. Being a senior citizen, and soon to be a retired one on a fixed income, I know how important it is to give back to my town and community. In the long run it benefits us all. I believe our budget as proposed for the Town is important to pass. We have many hard working and dedicated teachers and civil servants that serve our town and community. We need to be responsible and take care of them as well. Having served on the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission, I know how important it is for responsible planning and development and fiscal spending. Sometimes the decisions that need to be made are not easy, and may even be considered unpopular. And we all know that just to maintain a status quo, forgetting about improving and to sustain growth, does come with a price. But we, as citizens of Avon, have a responsibility, not only to our residents, but to all those who serve it, to make our Town a place people want to come, live and raise their families. So I urge you to approve the Town of Avon Proposed Budget.

51. Valerie Gordon, 31 Arlington Drive

Dear Board of Finance, Despite the challenge of uncertain and fluctuating income due to my work as a consultant, I'm in favor of the proposed budget and the personal responsibility of all Avon residents to fund our community's needs. In particular, we need to provide funding to support and protect our top-notch public schools which is what drew us to this town 12 years ago to raise our family and which continue to be a draw for others moving into the area. Our strong school system supports the local housing market. Thank you.

52. Gerry Gordon, 31 Arlington Drive

Dear Board of Finance, Despite the challenges of uncertain and fluctuating times and income, I am in favor of the proposed budget and the personal responsibility of all Avon residents to fund our community's needs. In particular, we need to provide funding to support and protect our top-notch public schools which is what drew us to this town 12 years ago to raise our family and which continue to be a draw for others moving into the area. Our strong school system supports the local housing market. Thank you for all your hard work. Thank you.

53. Erin Devine, 11 Saint Andrews Drive

I am writing to express my support for the proposed budget put forth on 3/5/20. I want our town to have what it needs to continue to provide excellent services. Thank you for your thoughtful work to develop a budget that maintains the exceptional services and education we value and expect.

54. Greg Kagan, 11 Highwood Drive

Hello there! I've been seeing a lot of posts on the "next door" app specifically calling out Teachers only to take a pay freeze as a way for our town to not increase taxes. I disagree with this statement completely and feel teachers 100% deserve their pay, they've had to change their lifestyles, some taking care of their kids plus having to teach virtually all of their kids which happened at blink of an eye. Most are putting in more hours of work. While these are tough times, I don't agree with singling out only one group of our town to take a pay freeze. I would say either everybody in town or nobody. I don't think certain groups are above one another here. Thanks!

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55. Annette Wright, 5 Goodwill Trail

Under Recreation and Parks expenditures for Community Activities, the 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 budget amount has more than doubled. Why did the amount double to \$75,927? What are the community activities that require a more than doubling? Thank you.

56. Lori Lerner, 5 Cranbrook

To whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Avon. I do not believe this is an appropriate time to consider tax increases, when unemployment is up, and even people who have jobs are working reduced hours and making less money. It seems extremely greedy of the town to consider a tax increase at this time, especially without a vote. Is this even constitutional?