

**Public Comments received through 6:00 PM on Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**for Budget Public Hearing, April 5, 2021**

**1. Karen Blanchard, 27 Reverknolls**

Hello, Thank you for the opportunity to ask a few questions: 1. With the BILLIONS in Federal funds from two rounds of stimulus payments to public schools, are there “off sets” to proposed budget numbers now and over the next five years, given the Federal funds will be extended over a period of time? 2. Please clarify what is meant by uncertified school personnel and how it relates to the pension benefit. Also, must education employees contribute to the pension plan or is it 100% provided for them? Will the Avon district receive any of these funds that will off set budget requests? Thank you.

**2. James and Patricia Salvador, 10 Cavendish Place**

Dear Board of Finance members, We are writing to express our opinion that the proposed increase in the tax rate should be reconsidered. The Hartford Courant reports that Avon’s tax base has increased 1% and real estate assessments, personal property and vehicle valuations have also increased. Whole Foods should be on the tax rolls this year. These facts, plus the infusion of \$2.5 million dollars from the Federal Stimulus Plan indicates to us that the tax rate should be held steady rather than increased. Thank you for your consideration to our comments and thank you for the service you give to our town. Stay well.

**3. Neil Livingston, 120 Craigmere Circle**

Attn: Avon Town Manager, Town Council, BOE, BOF

Subject: Proposed Budget 2021/2022

I wanted to share the article from the Hartford Courant because there are statements in the article that reflect my position.

**Taxed Enough Already; TEA Party.**

**Point # 1:** The Town of Avon, CT Leadership lacks self-control when it comes to spending. Instead of cutting all Capital Projects for the 2020 - 2021 Budget, they borrowed \$1.8 million from the reserve to maintain a year over year increase in the budget of 3.48%.

**Point # 2:** "people are still struggling with the consequences of government shutdowns" Why would Avon's Leadership increase taxes during this Global Pandemic. The Courant article below states this is "**Immoral.**" I concur!

**Point # 3:** Avon, CT will be getting Federal Funding (Stimulus Package): **Total \$2,515,442** (see below)

**The federal stimulus package will send \$10 billion to Connecticut. Here’s how much funding your town will get**

Hartford Courant | Mar 11, 2021 at 2:26 PM

| <b>Town</b> | <b>Non-Education</b> | <b>Education</b> | <b>Total</b>       |   |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|---|
| Andover     | \$319,500            | \$0              | \$319,500          | █ |
| Ansonia     | \$1,841,763          | \$7,358,000      | \$9,199,763        | █ |
| Ashford     | \$420,108            | \$471,000        | \$891,108          | █ |
| <b>Avon</b> | <b>\$1,804,442</b>   | <b>\$711,000</b> | <b>\$2,515,442</b> |   |

**COURANT ARTICLE**

**Get Ready Because A Round of Tax Hikes Is Coming**

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By Cal Thomas - Hartford Courant

Date Published: March 19, 2021

The front-page headline in Monday's Wall Street Journal said: "Biden weighs how to pay for Agenda." Who purchases something they know they can't afford, and then worries about paying for it later? Only government.

After less than two months in office, President Biden and a majority Democrat Congress have engaged in record spending with insufficient money to pay for it. That may be about to change.

Bloomberg.com reports the president wants to raise individual income taxes, as well as taxes on corporations (and expand the estate tax) to pay for another round of spending on infrastructure and programs and policies dear to liberal hearts. We are already hearing the mantra Democrats have used for decades to justify tax hikes: The rich must pay their "fair share." They never tell us what is fair, or the amount of confiscation they wish to impose. It is always a moving target.

As mentioned in previous columns, the federal government does not lack revenue; **it lacks self-control when it comes to spending**. Some Democrats are even talking about the return of earmarks, those add-ons to legislation that Republicans voted to ban when they had a House majority. Democrats think they can revive them to tempt GOP members into going along with their spending plans.

Unrestrained by a Republican majority in either house of Congress, or a Republican president, Democrats have the votes to push legislation through, at least until the 2022 election, showing little concern for voter anger. It doesn't matter to them that the Trump tax cuts produced tremendous economic results for businesses that then create jobs and hire workers.

Democrats cling to the false notion that more spending and higher taxes solves everything. If it did, would it not have by now?

The left — and that is what today's Democratic Party represents — believes that by spending more it can addict more people to government, enhancing the careers of politicians. In various ads and fundraising appeals over the years, Democrats have claimed that electing Republicans will lead to canceled Social Security checks and other government benefits. They never speak of individual responsibility, liberty, or the proper role of government. Oh, how we need term limits, but that would mean career politicians would have to vote for them, which they will never do.

Democrats will likely begin with raising corporate taxes, because they have been successful in portraying corporations as evil and greedy. Trouble is, those corporations hire people and employees also pay taxes, contributing to economic growth. If corporations must pay more in taxes, they are less likely to hire and layoff current employees. **Anytime is a bad time to raise taxes but raising them while people are still struggling with the consequences of government shutdowns is immoral.**

The Washington Post said this about raising the corporate tax rate: "Some tax experts, business groups and Republican lawmakers say raising the rate could damage U.S. competitiveness. Countries around the globe have both recently and over the past several decades joined the United States in reducing tax rates to attract corporate investment... The average tax rate among countries is 24 percent, according to the Tax Foundation, a right-

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leaning think tank. Just last year, nine countries, including France, lowered their corporate tax rates.”

The current federal corporate tax rate is 21 percent. Former President Trump cut it from 35 percent. As we emerge from the pandemic, it should stay at 21 percent and President Biden should keep his hands off the money we earn.

What’s needed is a nonpartisan panel to conduct a top-down review of all government spending, eliminating waste and reforming programs that are outdated, or can be better done by the private sector. Don’t look for Democrats to do that. It isn’t their nature. Republican hands aren’t clean when it comes to spending, either. Voters not addicted to government will have to demand more fiscal responsibility. As with nations of the past, massive debt and high taxes have contributed to national decline.

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**4. Bill Geiger, 112 Brookmoor Road**

Good morning, I live across the street from the Carriage Club on Brookmoor Rd in Avon. The road is falling apart and has many potholes that continue to get larger and larger. This road has a lot of kids, joggers and dog walkers that use it every day. Everyone is forced to walk around and try and avoid these obstacles, but with cars driving by it’s getting dangerous. It’s getting too dangerous for my kids (because they are younger) to ride their bicycles and besides having a great school system, enjoying the neighborhood was the main reason I had moved to Avon. I want my kids to be able to enjoy their neighborhood. I’d like for the kids to be able to enjoy riding their bicycles to visit their friends as I did when I was a kid. The road is in desperate need of repair. Some patchwork was done in the past, but it’s gotten way worse now. My driveway is now getting chewed up because the road has a pothole at the base of it as well. Can you please help? Thank you.

**5. James Hawk, 106 Brookmoor Road**

Good afternoon, I am writing to request that funds be made available to repave Brookmoor Road. I have been in touch with Paul Welsh and Bruce Williams multiple times over the past few years and they have both stated that Brookmoor is in need of repair and that the road is “at the top of their list” to repave however they do not have the budget to perform the repairs. I urge the budget committee to make the funds available to repave Brookmoor Road. Many children reside and play on Brookmoor. The rough surface makes the road difficult to walk, ride bikes, skateboard and many other outdoor activities that children and adults may partake in. The ride is also by car very rough as well. Beyond the aesthetics and comfort it has become a safety issue. Joggers have sprang their ankles and fallen as a result of the poor condition of this road. Before we have a serious injury I am requesting the appropriate repairs and repaving be made as soon as possible. Please allocate the appropriate funds to repave Brookmoor. Thank you.

**6. Charles Harvell, 7 St. Michael Court**

The budget materials make references to the operating fund balances at different year ends and the Policy concerning the maintenance of the fund balance ( which I think is somewhat analogous to a family's savings account) at a minimum of 10%.My questions related to the 10% policy are:

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1. Is the 10% policy on the Town website or available by other means?
2. Is there an ordinance related to the 10% or is it less formal/binding than an ordinance?
3. What year was the Policy adopted and, if not an ordinance, is the related resolution of the Board of Finance/Town Council establishing the Policy available?

From reading the budget documents, \$1.8 million of the operating fund balance was designated in June 2020 to absorb as much as \$1.8 million related to the expected operating deficit (loss) for fiscal 20/21. This \$1.8 million designation was deemed appropriate and prudent at the time because a proposed millage rate increase for fiscal 20/21 was not approved. (The proposed millage rate increase that was not approved would have generated tax revenues of \$1.8 million.) As I understand it, there is the current expectation that the Town will incur a deficit (loss) of \$1.8 million in the operating budget for fiscal 20/21 which will need to be closed to the Operating fund balance for which \$1.8 million has already been so designated. With that as background, I wonder:

1. Is there a policy with regard to how the Town's operating fund balance may be used?
2. Has the Operating fund balance been used before in the manner like what is described above for fiscal 20/21?
3. Has the Operating fund balance, since the 10% policy was implemented, been used for any purposes other than the use of \$1.8 million for fiscal 20/21?
4. In the seven-year long-term projections included in the budget materials, is the Operating fund balance expected to only grow or do the projections contain expected uses of the Operating fund balance?

In advance, my apologies for the tediousness of my thoughts on such things as budgets. Thank you.

**7. Susan Geiger, 96 Moravia Road**

Hello, I'm just writing in to see if it is a priority and be made to re-pave Brookmoor Rd. The pavement has some large potholes and cracks. The patch jobs are not helping at all, once and significant weather occurs they deteriorate and break up. The road is highly traveled by kids and adults walking and biking. It forces the kids to ride their bikes in the middle of the street to avoid the holes which is becoming a safety issue. Any consideration is appreciated! Thank you!

**8. Jill Coppola, 137 Mallard Drive**

I just want to say that I believe a 4.6% increase at this time seems high considering all of the people who have been hit hard from the Covid pandemic. — Many out of work or making less than normal will struggle with this increase. Please consider cutting the increase at least one percent. Thank you for your consideration.

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9. **Eileen Reilly, 22 Stagecoach Road**  
4 percent too much