

Comments from Ian Rohrbacher

Hi Mark.

The addition of fluoride to a public water system is undertaken after a majority vote of residents served by the system choose to do so. Rochester elected to fluoridate starting in 1967.

Relevant state statutes are RSA 485:14, 14-a, and 14-b (Safe Drinking Water Act); and RSA 44:16 (voting/referendum language). The process to remove fluoride requires a majority public vote.

Rochester follows CDC guidelines for determining the optimal target dose for fluoride, which at this time is 0.7 mg/l. This requires on average 8500lbs of sodium fluoride at an annual cost of approximately \$7500.

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Comments from Carol Petruszewicz

Hi Mark,

I am new to seeing these type of meeting minutes. I just talked to the Mayor today about fees for car registrations. I asked about how to get flouride out of our water. She is researching.

I am only writing to you so that maybe you could see if taking flouride out of the City's water would reduce the overall City's spending and might help the City's budget. (ie: How much money would the town save if they got rid of adding fluoride into our water?)

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol Petruszewicz

Comments from Ray Barnett

Evening.

I'm growing concerned about the financial status of the city. I appreciate the finance departments cautious outlook on revenue estimates in the coming months. The cities spending is getting out of control. Supplemental budget appropriations are approved at the drop of a hat. Totally side stepping the budget process.

Let me start off with the school budget. The FY 2020 operating budget was \$64,981,084. I was watching the school board meeting and they gave a first reading of the FY 2021 operating budget of \$72,715,554. That's a difference of \$7,734,470!!! I do believe I heard the numbers correctly. That's absolutely ridiculous. Then of course there is the \$1,679,500 for the bonded CIP, and another \$5,300,000 for CASH CIP. I hoping for some REAL discussion on the budget.

I don't know why you go through the budget process and give the appearance that the battle was hard fought to get to a tax cap compliant budget. Then you just go ahead and authorize \$2,545,541 in supplemental appropriations on Jan, 7th, 2020 and transfer another \$1,664,787 for the school building fund for a total of \$4,210,328.

I'm still waiting for a reasonable explanation and a time line on the "surplus" unassigned fund balance appropriations. At the Jan. 7th, 2020 meeting, thru supplemental appropriations, \$4,609,373 was expended from the FYE 19 unassigned fund balance estimated increase of \$4,734,317. There was actually \$238,358 more dollars spent than what shows on the documents provided to sell the council and the public that these expenditures were a good thing. I'll admit, I took it hook line and sinker.

At the March 31,2020 meeting, a resolution was read to transfer \$1,664,787 from the unassigned fund balance surplus to the school building capital reserve fund. Using the agenda bill summary sheet which stated the general fund unassigned fund balance "surplus" for fiscal year 2019 was \$4,742,193 as confirmed by the independent audit. The council may transfer not more than half of it's surplus. Half of the 2019 surplus was \$2,371,096. You approved \$4,609,373 in supplemental appropriations at the Jan. 7th meeting using the estimated unassigned fund balance surplus.

The past three fiscal year school budgets show a transfer of city funds to the trustee of the trust fund. The last three years, the school department has received funds from the trustee of the trust fund. These funds are derived from a "surplus" of funds from the unassigned fund balance. So every year this is an option to feed the school department monies to defray building expenses (principle and interest payments) and free up cash for wages and benefits or other items.

So on Jan. 7th meeting you provided information to sell the supplemental appropriations to the council and the public, knowing full well that that the numbers provided were not correct. You had already planned/decided, as shown by past practice,that you were going to provided up to half of the surplus to the school building reserve fund. Those funds were already spoken for. Yet you used an estimated fund balance surplus to sell \$4.6 million in supplemental appropriations at the Jan. 7th meeting. Then you used the audited fund balance surplus to sell \$1,664,787 at the March 31 meeting for the school building fund. Two different appropriations. Same cash. Now, if there is some magical accounting practice that you can spend the same money twice, please let me in on your secret.

I don't believe that the city has been transparent, honest and forthright in their explanation for the supplemental appropriations. You call it creative financing.

I have stood before this committee and the council to increase the qualification and exemptions for the elderly. It's not fair that 60, 70, 80, 90 and 100 year old taxpayers are paying the city school tax. So, I will ask the the city exempt anyone over 60 from paying the city school tax, provided they have no children in the school system. People who have lived in the city their whole life have paid their fair share to support the school. Then retires moving into town that never had, or ever will have children in the school system, shouldn't have to pay the school tax. I've heard it's not fair because others will have to make up the difference. So you apparently figure that it's just as easy to pick the elderly s pockets than to actually tax the people using the school.

I submitted in writing some questions and concerns for the March 31 public hearing and the special hearing that followed. I am totally disappointed that no one on the council asked any questions or voiced any concerns about

the \$100,000 dollar expenditure for the assessing software or the \$300,000 dollar expenditure for the permit technical and legal assistance. No one had any thoughts or concerns with these expenditure with the budget process right around the corner. I had concerns, that why I took the time to submit comments. I know, I'm just a taxpayer and I don't deserve any answers

At the 3/31/20 meeting there was more interest and discussion on how many parking spaces and how many people the American Legion could hold for a wrestling match. There was so much discussion and confusion, that you had to table the discussion till the next meeting. I'm glad to see your priorities are in order.

Can't wait for the budget to be presented and discussed. Should be good.

Ray Barnett
Crimson Lane