

Comments from Ray Barnett

Evening.

I would like to start by saying that I respectfully disagree with the mayor with regard to getting answers to some of the questions I have posed at various meetings. It is true that I have spoken with the city manager and the finance director and they have answered some of my questions. And I thank them for taking the time to talk with me.

Unfortunately, there are still a few questions that remain to be answered. I believe they could be answered with a simple yes or no answer. Maybe with a little explanation.

Did the city use the estimated fund balance surplus (exceeding 17%) of \$4.5 million dollars to sell, justify spending \$4.6 million dollars for various resolutions at the January 7, 2020 meeting? Did the city use the fiscal year 2019 unassigned fund balance "surplus" of \$4.7 million dollars as the basis for providing \$1.6 million dollars to the school building capital reserve fund? When the transfer was brought forward, what was the actual unassigned fund balance at that time? Did \$4.7 million dollars in surplus funds (exceeding 17%) exist?

I still believe that the the city used the same fund to sell two different appropriations.

With regards to the March 31 meeting, I posed some questions to the council. At the finance meeting last week the mayor said that no questions were asked by the council because they understood it all and didn't have any questions. It's apparent that it didn't dawn on anybody that since a taxpayer took the time to submit questions that maybe someone could have asked some of those question. It's good the council has the information, but how's about sharing with the taxpayer. You're spending our money. What about transparency?

So, here are the questions again about the \$100,000 dollar assessing program.

What recourse does the city have against Patriot Properties? How much money did the city pay Patriot Properties for a junk program? Is the city seeking a refund?

And last, the \$300,000 dollar supplemental appropriation for the Pollution Discharge Permit and Legal Assistance.

What is the goal for spending this money? How much money will be spent by the other cities and towns? Are all of the cities and towns paying their fair share?

Thank you

Ray Barnett

Crimson Lane

Comments by Justin Keenan

Good evening,

I am sorely disappointed in the City after news broke of a hearing to raise our utilities bill being held in the middle of a nationwide "lockdown".

My girlfriend and I are purchasing our first home in Rochester, a city which both of us grew up in, and are already dreading having to shell out additional funds for a system that is already subpar. The article quotes the board as saying "the increases are necessary to... keep the system operating at the high level residents have come to expect". Unfortunately, no one expects a "high level" operation from these utilities as the city council has failed time and time again for years to be able to ensure quality water supplied to households.

According the 2019 Water Quality report for Rochester, NH the fluoride levels in our drinking water is .78 ppm, higher than the HHS' recommendation for acceptable levels. This has been true for multiple years.

Many people in the city already avoid the public water out of fear of health repercussions. Now the board wants to charge more money to pump more of the same chemicals into the water that make it unsafe in the first place. After the recent tax hikes, and continued lack of confidence in leadership, many are extremely disappointed to hear of another potential cost increase to live in a city that fails to grow and adapt at the rate of its neighbors. Rochester needs to stand for the fundamental beliefs of the state, and of the nation, and allow their citizens to live unfettered by beaurocratic oversight determined to nickel and dime every individual until we have succumbed to the overwhelming tax burden. STOP THE SPENDING, STOP THE TAXES.

With regards,
Justin Keenan