

**LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN FROM SHELTON  
RESIDENTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR  
2020-2021**

**Kenneth Hajducky - kenneth.hajducky@gmail.com**

Subject: Budget

Dear Board of Alderman and Mayor,

I hope you and your families are safe in this unprecedented period in our history, as I know our town has been hard hit by Covid 19 and many of our residents have died as a result. I call upon you today as I did in March to plead for some common sense around funding of our town in general and funding for our children's education. I know that I very rarely hear back from anyone in the party that I'm a member of, which is certainly concerning. As this is not what I was brought up to think government does. Ignore residents' concerns and to communicate as little as possible.

As a parent and resident for almost 20 years I'm disgusted to hear that you are considering again (via our budget process) causing our town Board of Education to make more cuts, two million dollars plus to meet the budget and other departments must make cuts as well. It is criminal and you know who is getting abused by this insane practice of lack of funding, my daughters Carly and Scarlet Hajducky, my wife and I as residents who have to continue to see our town lacking in various services other towns expect as normal. I would move from Shelton even if I had to take a loss on my home, but my wonderful daughters would be distraught by leaving their friends and the only home they have ever known, so we have stayed. Sadly, I don't think the vast

majority of you would care, as I have begun to wonder if over the last couple of years if any of you have a soul. Tough yes, but I have never been one to hold my tongue when I see things that are wrong and continue see behavior by our towns elected officials that are disturbing, uncaring and boarding on a derelict of duty. I certainly understand the need for government to be good stewards of our money but to continue to believe that we can function year after year with no necessary increases in funding is ludicrous, silly and shortsighted. What I would really like to see is the alderman for once to stand up and tell our Mayor that this cannot go on and an increase is necessary and increase in the mill is critical for our town's current future wellbeing. But that would require all involved to vote their conscience and not vote party.

I pray that you will all try to do what is right and fund our town properly and to be caring people who put party aside and do what is necessary for the towns long term growth and stability.

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**John Saginario - johnsag49@gmail.com**

Mayor Lauretti and Board of Aldermen members,

You may not have any kids in our city's schools, but Mayor you smiled and waved when you visited our school (Booth Hill) for JA Day last year. Thousands of us taxpaying citizens have kids in our schools, and it's important to us they have a good education with the resources they need, to compete in the years ahead, just as you said was so important during JA Day.

Please don't cut the budget of the BOE. We need teachers. We need schools. We need good schools to bring in families who pay taxes, who work good jobs and frequent the many new businesses you're helping to build on Bridgeport and Howe Avenues.

Don't let our city's education system get cut to pieces. Invest in our future, please.

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**Jean Cayer - jeancyr64@aol.com**

Subject: I Support Joint Public Budget Hearings

To Mayor Lauretti, the Board of Aldermen, and the Board of Apportionment and Taxation,

As a 40-year Shelton resident, I am writing to voice my support for holding joint hearings of the Board of Aldermen and the Board of A&T with department heads and the Board of Education. Joint meetings to review the budget are required by our City Charter, and this is not the time to ignore the rule of law. While the situation with the Covid-19 pandemic makes the future uncertain I think it is more reason for us to have transparency and accountability in our budget process.

The Shelton School System represents the biggest portion of our budget and the success of the school system has a large effect on the prosperity of the City and Shelton residents. Good Schools have a direct beneficial effect on property values and the tax base helping to keep our taxes low. Therefore, I believe it important that our elected officials have a public conversation on the budget cut that has been imposed on the School System via flat funding last year and proposed again this

year. Budget cuts do not only take the form of reducing the amount of money in an appropriation. Failing to account for inflation, contractual raises and reducing the amount or quality of services are also budget cuts. Please hold a special joint session with the Board of Education about their budget.

Our children are the future & they deserve the best education Shelton can provide!

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**Kenneth Hajducky** - [kenneth.hajducky@gmail.com](mailto:kenneth.hajducky@gmail.com)

Subject: Fwd: Education Funding in Shelton and Interim Superintendent Role

Dear Alderman,

I wanted to forward on to you all my email sent to BOE and that I read at the citizens open session the other evening. While you are all working on budget planning, I think you should all be aware that there are many residents and parents like me who care deeply about their children's education and are looking to fight for their future. I'm hoping that you all will listen to these voices and do your very best to increase education funding to a level comparison to our surrounding communities.

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**Faylynn Haight** - [h8250@sbcglobal.net](mailto:h8250@sbcglobal.net)

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I am writing to voice my support for holding joint hearings of the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Apportionment and Taxation with department heads and the Board of Education. Joint meetings to review the budget are required by our City Charter. While the situation with the Covid-19 pandemic makes the future uncertain I feel that is more reason for us to have transparency and accountability in our budget process.

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**Ken Hajducky - [kenneth.hajducky@gmail.com](mailto:kenneth.hajducky@gmail.com)**

Again, trying to speak to my fellow republican as about the need to fund education. Words from a great republican who none of you at like including our Mayor:

If America is to offer greater economic opportunity to her citizens, if she's to defend our freedom, democracy, and keep the peace, then our children will need wisdom, courage, and strength -- virtues beyond their reach without education” Ronald Reagan

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**Joe Guerra - jguerratke@gmail.com**

To the Shelton Board of Aldermen:

I am writing to you this morning to implore this Board to support education in Shelton and propose a budget increase for the coming Fiscal year instead of the flat-funded one currently presented. As a Shelton resident for four years now, it has been disheartening to see the lack of support for a strong school system.

While I understand that low taxes are something, we all appreciate, modest increases to taxes that make Shelton schools more attractive to young families would be something in everyone’s best interest. The current plan Interim Superintendent Dr. Smith presented to the board last night would do the exact opposite. The personnel cuts would result in larger class sizes, a heavier workload for remaining teachers, and in turn a drop in test scores and overall learning.

What will happen to Shelton when the school district begins to weaken? When people looking to put down roots see Shelton, do you want them to see a “you get what you pay for” district with overworked staff not fulfilling student needs? Or do you want them to see a city that values its’ students and educators and puts forth the funding necessary to let them thrive.

Therefore, I am begging you to consider coming back to the table with the Board of Education. Everyone needs to work together on this. The

Mayor and BOE may not see eye to eye but the Board of Aldermen can be the changing force in Shelton and stand up for those students at risk of losing their right to a solid education. Whatever it takes, we as a city need to protect its' future and it starts with our schools. Our kids cannot learn what they need to from 32 fewer teachers. This is not a matter of simply saving jobs, it's a matter of saving Shelton's place as one of the finest cities in Connecticut.

Thank you all for taking the time to read this, and I hope this letter will help your reconsider your respective stances on education in Shelton.

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**Quinn Weber - qaweber@gmail.com**

As a lifelong Shelton resident and graduate of Shelton High School (Class of 2011), I have been dismayed by the zero dollar increase in the Board of Education's budget. I understand times are hard with the pandemic leading to layoffs in all sectors public and private. The reality is though that this is a result of poor fiscal planning on the city side, with an appropriate amount of money in a rainy day fund the city could have avoided some of the necessary cutbacks. I did my part and have saved money to pay my taxes and other expenses I need during this emergency; I would expect the city to do the same. My original point though is that year after year the city continues to have an adversarial relationship with the school board and constantly underfunds it. The cuts being proposed this year boil my blood. We must hold some institutions sacred; the schools are one of those institutions. To hold institutions sacred means investing to keep in working order. If the mayor was able to give his graduation speech this year, like most years he would compare America to Rome to make the point of empires rising and falling. The mayor's proposed budget makes him look less like Julius Caesar and more like Nero burning the city down. I'm aware that

sounds melodramatic, but tell me I'm wrong in thinking that so much of the success of the City of Shelton comes down to the fact that we are able to still maintain an above-average school system on a penny-pinched budget. It has been disheartening watching the school system look worse than when I attended, which was in the middle of the Great Recession. Teachers should not lose their jobs, children should not lose a psychologist who will be so important in helping our children recover from the trauma of these uncertain times when they return to school, and the children should not lose the afterschool activities that enrich their lives and college applications. I ask that you reconsider the mayor's proposed budget and make a workable budget that reflects the priorities of the people who will be affected by such cuts and those advocating on their behalf.

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**Peter Nelson - peterericknelson@gmail.com**

I am very concerned by what I am hearing about the BOE budget. 20+ teachers being cut, a psychologist, etc. I don't understand business seems to be booming here. I have a three-year-old and I'm getting nervous about what kind of education she will have here in our town. Sounds like I'll have to get more involved if I want to continue to live here.

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**Eileen Caponi - ebcaponi@snet.net**

I am a senior citizen and I know when families want to move to Shelton- the first thing they ask is how is the school system. Why does the Mayor always have an adversarial relationship with the BOE? Isn't time we tried to be better than mediocre? Please do not pass this budget without making some additions.