

Timestamp	Feedback
2020/04/04 8:39:17 AM AST	RHAM, especially but also AES do not need any sports upgrades or additional funds spent on fields and equipment for sports, travel, and whatever else associated that would increase spending and mill rates on Andover and surrounding towns. I'm sure there are other ways to cut back as well, but this in particular, I feel is most important to cut back on!
2020/04/04 10:41:27 AM AST	<p>To whom is may concern;</p> <p>My name is XX XX, a husband, father of 3, U.S. Coast Guard Reservist and resident of Andover, CT.</p> <p>We moved up from Louisiana last year and closed on our house in Andover last November. The beautiful community, reasonable tax rate and the elementary school is what attracted us to buy in Andover. I currently work just south of Hartford and could have commuted from a number of different cities, but in the end we chose Andover.</p> <p>Shortly after settling into our home and having our oldest child start at AES we became aware of the ongoing issues of the town trying to balance a budget related to RHAM and of AES, essential services, etc. We heard of proposed 6% - 11% tax increases due to education (RHAM, AES). The particulars to us are no matter, the increase would be unacceptable and the idea of the consequences to my family is unsettling. At some point there needs to be the realization that people will be forced to accept a diminished quality of life (less ability to spend, less ability to save... if any) and would likely not be able to sell their homes to relocate to a more affordable part of the state. We would be forced to foreclose on our home if we can't sell it. Older more established families with two incomes may be able to survive this proposed tax increase, but a young growing family with a single income will likely not. We live within our means in a modest home, that was our desire when moving to Andover. Now we are faced with a tax increase that will cripple us financially. We ask that there be no tax increase, especially during this unprecedented Pandemic that has caused our economy to falter. If there should be a tax increase, we ask that there be a considerable delay to allow us to relocate to a more affordable part of the state. We want nothing more than to stay and call this home, but we will be forced to do what is best for our family.</p> <p>Very Respectfully,</p>
2020/04/04 11:49:25 AM AST	RHAM BOE: ELIMINATE all the porkbarrel athletic fluff and focus only on education. Your special-interest proposed increases are obscene -- especially in this time of a global pandemic.
2020/04/04 12:02:30 PM AST	I downloaded the proposed budget twice and am unable to open and view the file. Can you mail a paper copy of the budget? How will you get the public's opinion? For a small town who's Grand list includes resident property owners, the increased financial responsibility rests on the shoulders of the town residents during a time when unemployment is at an all time high.
2020/04/04 12:24:39 PM AST	Although I can see that we need to trim more trees, continue to maintain roads and pay for an increase in the number of students we are sending to RHAM; the COVID-19 crisis has affected most, if not all, of us financially. I am thoroughly opposed to increasing anything we do not 100% have to this year. Another words, we will obviously have to pay our share of the RHAM budget. We should be highly opposed to adding any new fields this year at RHAM. Tree trimming and road work would be next in importance for me, but I do not believe our residents can afford the current proposed increases. As for the rest of the increases, I do not feel that we should increase any of those proposed items this year. Continuing to plan for the future but keeping our feet in the present is important for the towns survival. It won't do anyone any good if the residents are driven out because they can't afford to pay. 11% is a large increase. Cut the "wasteful" and "good times" items that we can't afford right now. We can add them back in when the economy recovers.
2020/04/05 8:14:38 AM AST	I wish the hikes at Rham were not so high and that the school could provide better special Ed so students were not outsourced. I'm frustrated to be homeschooling my children and paying tax money for school- but this pandemic is not anyone's fault it's just a rough time. I think we need to find a way to decrease the budget increases (the tree amnt seems expensive to me) so as to not have over a 3% tax increase.
2020/04/05 9:11:55 AM AST	Clicked on first link for the budget - link not found
2020/04/05 3:05:36 PM AST	The Town Charter provides for this. The budget currently in place remains until a new budget is voted on and passes. If there is an increase in the mill rate, a supplemental tax bill is sent out. Send out the same tax bills and we deal with the increase after the taxpayers vote on it. Just because the governor says you can do it without a vote, doesn't mean you should! Good luck and stay safe.
2020/04/05 4:36:12 PM AST	After reviewing the proposed 2020 - 2021 Andover Town Budget, I saw that YTD expenditures were as of 2/20/20. It would be most helpful if each department would forecast and regularly update expenses to the end of the fiscal year. Concerning the Andover Elementary School Budget, I have seen a news item that states that Andover is spending about 20% - 25% more per pupil than surrounding towns? Is this true, what reason, and where does any surplus in the AES budget end up?
2020/04/05 5:14:33 PM AST	Our current budget should remain in place until we the voters authorize a new one. These are uncertain times, but even that is no reason to take advantage of the of the voters. voters.
2020/04/05 6:42:53 PM AST	<p>Without delving into the budget I think there is a huge problem with passing a budget without voters voting on it. Don't do it!! Find a way to get a vote or use last years amounts.</p> <p>I do feel that the elementary school budget is way too high and should come in lower than it was last year. Forget about trying to add classes. You're going to find more homeschoolers after this situation. Also, there should be some expenses decreased due to having no kids in the school this past spring.</p>
2020/04/07 6:55:18 AM AST	I expect many families to be hugely impacted financially by the COVID-19 crisis. This year's budget needs to be trimmed as much as possible to keep the taxes from rising this year. While I understand the need to move forward on various improvement projects, this is simply not the time.
2020/04/08 3:34:07 PM AST	I think that the town budget should be postponed for at least a month so that we might be able to have a budget meeting. This allows the citizens to make motions and vote on line items in the budget. I also feel that with the uncertain economic future for the next fiscal year that it would prudent to hold the line on the mill rate. If items need to be funded, then you should consider prioritizes items and use town fund and contingency funding.
2020/04/08 4:06:35 PM AST	<p>Andover can live with a 2019-2020 budget for another year and pay their bills. Think about not adding extra money to the budget - request boards and commissions to live with their 2019-2020 for another year.</p> <p>Have the Finance Board keep to the 2019-2020 budget for another year or until it is safe to have a Town Meeting so the residents can decide if they want to send the budget to Referendum.</p> <p>You are always telling us there is money in accounts that you "don't want to use" BUT this is the time you might NEED to use some of it to cover some of what you want to get done in town. Either that - wait another year before you start on all the "projects " you want to do that "haven't been done in years"</p> <p>Be smart - be responsible - use logic - remember you don't need everything all at once - tomorrow is another day.</p>
2020/04/09 11:57:45 AM AST	<p>I am opposed to the proposed budget.</p> <p>I can not afford this increase or increase in taxes as a senior citizen on a fixed income .</p> <p>A town vote should be required to pass or decline the budget as presented.</p>
2020/04/09 12:16:50 PM AST	What is being done to lower these numbers. Cutbacks ? 11% increase is just not doable on our end.Very discouraging. We are Sr's with health issues. Please don't let anything like these numbers pass!

2020/04/11 5:27:47 PM AST	This is basically a no brainer. Since we the residents of Andover are not able to vote on a new budget due to circumstances beyond our control, the BOS should adhere to continued spending along the recently passed current budget. When the situation changes when the residents can vote, a new budget proposal can be entertained. Anything other action done by the Town Administration can be viewed as a power control to either cut or increase the budget as desired by those in office.
2020/04/14 10:05:26 AM AST	At the April 3rd BOS meeting, the comment was made that if we were going to ask the school to cut a couple of hundred thousand dollars from their budget, the town should do the same to share the sacrifice. I feel the town has been underfunded for many years and is behind on required maintenance while the school has been overfunded based on the declining enrollment over the past decade. The town also is a much smaller piece of the total budget than the school, making cuts to the town budget an imprudent way to reduce overall funding levels. While I understand the importance of providing our students an excellent education, I did not think it was necessary to add the additional class last year, let alone add two additional classes this year. The current student teacher ratio of about 11 to 1 is simply unaffordable now. Hiring additional teachers with the current decline in student population projected to continue into the future looks short sighted.
2020/04/22 12:44:45 PM AST	It is concerning to see the number of students dropping in AES but the number of classes increasing. With a \$4.4M budget with an expected 186 students, that is a per student expenditure of \$23,607 which is higher than every neighboring town including Hebron, Marlborough, Coventry, Bolton, Columbia and Windham. The student to teacher rations seems pretty low. Are there legal requirements for Student to teacher ratios? With the number of AES students on the decline, is there any consideration to coordinate/consolidate with other nearby small towns who may be in the same situation? With the current state of our State, we need to consider talking about some radical options.
2020/04/22 8:23:18 PM AST 2020/04/26 3:26:35 PM AST	Remove Resident Trooper from budget. I would suggest a freeze on all departments unless absolutely necessary. Perhaps I am too late, this talks about a 4/22 meeting but doesn't talk about what happened there. I definitely never received the "Postal Mailer" mentioned. My kids went through AES and are now at RHAM, and I believe keeping the quality, small class size, and local nature of AES is essential to keeping Andover attractive to young families and a place people are proud to live. That said, I also think the current numbers of students certainly allow for the AES budget to remain flat, not need an increase. I do hope RHAM can cut back its budget. My kids see what they consider wasteful staffing and overheating the building there that could be places to save. Now that the town only spreads salt, not sand, in the winter, are we able to do away with spring street-sweeping? Can we sell off the sweeper trucks?
2020/04/29 8:24:24 AM AST	I spoke up at Monday's RHAM Budget Adoption meeting stating that I was disappointed that more cuts were not made to the budget to make it more realistic for the continuing declining overall enrollment and the current times. I spoke of people in tough financial situations such as senior citizens, small business owners and residents who have lost jobs or been recently laid off due to Covid-19. Even though it was a futile attempt, I feel that it was necessary, and we need to continue to voice this opinion to the RHAM BOE or we will lose residents and small businesses due to this sky-high budget.
2020/04/29 8:36:35 AM AST	Please request at least \$50,000 additional cut from the AES budget. It is still too high given the continuing declining enrollment numbers. There are many items they can reduce or cut without touching the quality of education the student's receive.
2020/05/05 3:44:49 PM AST 2020/05/05 4:20:00 PM AST	I would question why there is any increase in the budget considering what is going on with the pandemic. I would like to see the AES school budget reduced down to a 5 percent cut. Class sizes are an issue for me. It's acceptable, as it was when my successful kids went to school there, to have 22 kids in a class as it is in surrounding school districts. I also think it's a shame not to add any money toward the community center.
2020/05/07 8:43:35 AM AST	Well you've probably heard plenty of this already but here's my input; One of the reasons I've always liked Andover is the relative lower tax rate which is now rivaling many other higher tax based towns in CT. So let's add this to high cost of living here (utility, fuel, income taxes). Now we have the impact of the virus which means cuts in income to many. For some of us older ones who are already on lower fixed income, it's another nail in the coffin.
2020/05/14 8:50:55 AM AST	I realize that you have worked very hard to keep our budget increase to a minimum. As a town resident and a senior citizen living on a fixed retirement income, I truly appreciate your efforts. I know that many of our residents have been financially impacted in a negative way by COVID-19. I want to thank you for doing such a very difficult task of keeping our taxes as low as possible when our town needs so much work. As a member of the Andover Board of Education, I am somewhat conflicted. I became a member of the BOE in order to serve the town that I love and because I want to provide the very best education to our Andover Elementary School community. I am concerned that maybe we are cutting the school budget too much. The reason being the unknown future of the impact of COVID-19 on AES. We do not know yet what we will be required to put in place when school opens in September. We also don't know what it will cost to put all of the safety measures in place. I do not have all the answers...or even some of them. I just want to let you know that I think we all need some flexibility when it comes to taxation and budgets. Andover does not waste money and our leaders are good stewards of our tax dollars. Please consider and provide for the possibility that our school may need to pay for the implementation of safety measures that will have to be put in place. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this feedback. As I said before that I do not have all of the answers, but I trust you to make the best choices in trying to accommodate all residents of Andover. Thank you for your volunteer service to our town. With appreciation for all you do,