

## CITIZEN COMMENTS, 2<sup>ND</sup> READING OF APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE

Shane Deichman: Agrees with Councilman Abbatiello that the distribution should be equitable, but disagrees with the metric: while Abbatiello uses a percentage, I believe that we should base it on the staffing numbers, which would generate a 70%-30% split.

Lisa Buckner: Very disturbed with the proposed distribution. When exactly did it come to our attention that you are in need of more? You have heard over the last year or two that we need this additional funding. All of us who ask for this funding are also in favor of Crestpointe, as you are. There is no parity in the City Manager's pay raise and that given to schools employees. Please increase taxes by seven cents for the schools.

Ms. Baughn: Why don't the DOE employees live here? We have housing, we have excellent schools. Don't raise taxes – they'll get a \$3 million windfall. Vote against the tax increase.

Raj Jain: RMS student in tow, demonstrates the contents of a 35 pound backpack. 734 students in this community have to walk to school carrying heavy backpacks. Doctors say there are lots of back complaints from students in this town. Asks Council to fund bus service.

Ellen Smith: Does Council have the option of adopting a tax rate tonight without adopting a final budget? (No.) Lots of debate about the priorities on both sides; wants to hold off on a decision until the amount of state funding is known.

Ann McNees: We received again this year the Gold Medal Schools Award, but with the lowest score allowable, for the second year, due to the decline in Council funding support. Look at supporting the schools as an investment in our future.

Emily Whetsel: I will soon be buying a house, I am willing to pay increased taxes. I'm paying it back for what I received from this school system. However, I haven't heard anything about debt reduction. If not for this budget, then further budgets: what are you going to do about the debt?

Andy Marathe: Gratitude is not one of the stronger human emotions, and many of us forget that for the taxes we pay, the wonderful services we receive. I have heard no gratitude, no answers, from the school system. I oppose any tax increase; let the next Council deliberate and decide.