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[CE SBAC] The Recent School Building Advisory Committee's Public Forum and Your Responsibility to the Tax Payer

1 message

Jessica Sullivan <jessicasullivan441@gmail.com>
To: cesbac@capeelizabethschools.org
Cc: Matthew Sturgis <sturgismal@gmail.com>

Sun, Feb 4, 2024 at 5:25 PM

Dear SBAC Members,

Please see below my email to the Town Council prior to the Public Forum. I was out of town with scanty internet access and was unable to find your email address.

In addition to my comments below it was so disheartening to learn that the results of the public opinion survey were totally ignored that evening. Also, a \$200 million dollar figure is now being offered although the public resoundingly defeated the \$116 million figure at the ballot box last fall.

The Cape Elizabeth taxpayer has traditionally been more than generous to the schools. That generosity is in serious jeopardy. And taxpayers are anxious.

It is critical that you set a budget number *in advance*. The importance of a firm advance budget number had been stated repeatedly for several years; why aren't you listening ?

If you want to improve the school buildings with public support, then please pay attention to what the voters have already told you.

Jessica Sullivan
441 Mitchell Road

Dear Town Councilors,

I am unable to attend tonight's forum in person or remotely.

Only options A and B are under \$70 million. In last year's public survey citizens responding were clear that only amounts resulting in under a 10% tax increase would be supported. This would be about \$70 million.

It has been extremely frustrating to observe that the majority members of the School Building Advisory Committee (SBAC) have refused to set a budget limit. They persist in offering the architects blank check options instead of establishing a firm budget at the outset. Specifically: " what can you do for a maximum \$70 million ?" should be the directives

to the architects instead of “ knock yourselves out with no limit on spending !”.

Static and declining enrollment predictions do not support going beyond \$70 million.

I would like to personally ask each member of the SBAC the following: when you need a new car, do you go to the car dealership and ask the salesman what they would like you to purchase ? I suspect that everyone has a firm budget number in mind before walking into a dealership.

The prior school committee’s refusal to set a reasonable budget was a key factor in the recent school bond’s referendum failure. If the SBAC refuses to set a FIRM \$70 million limit, to include any and all contingencies and without future change orders, history will most definitely repeat itself .

Please use logic and fiscal responsibility and limit the total cumulative amount to be no more than \$70 million. I support only Options A and B.

Thank you,

Jessica Sullivan
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