



TOWN OF VERNON

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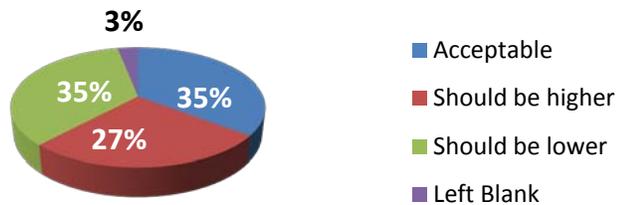
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George F. Apel
Mayor

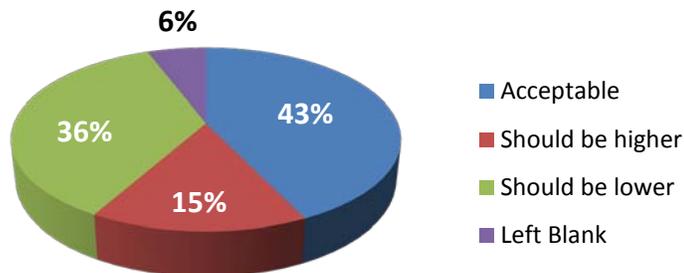
May 1, 2012 Budget Referendum Vote Survey Response

483 respondents of 1355 total voters or 35.65%

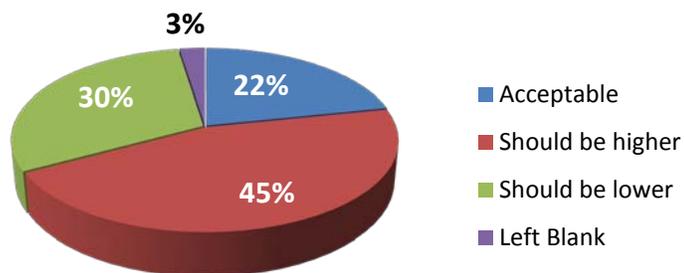
Town of Vernon Overall Budget



Town of Vernon Budget



Board of Education Budget





Town of Vernon 2012-13 Budget Referendum Comments

- 1 Salaries and benefits too high
- 2 I think you could get a little more creative with raising funds than keep on coming at the taxpayers. Get rid of waste first.
- 3 Taxes too high, all.
- 4 Taxes to high, unfair assessment
- 5 Budget should reflect current economic conditions. Why raise taxes when people are losing homes
- 6 Parks and Rec do nothing. Overstaffed. S Windsor, Tolland, Ellington . PPI make money and run program. Waste of time.
- 7 I think the Town can cut some fat, but leave the schools alone. They have been in the news enough.
- 8 Too much spent on administration - town budget
- 9 Status quo is not acceptable
- 10 I hope all those parents that sighed the petition for the budget to go to referendum at those focus groups came out to vote.
- 11 Storm clean up progressing slowly. Garden maintenance on Rt 83 outside McDonalds needs work, chase the State.
- 12 Should focus more on education
- 13 Council did best it could considering econ. job growth loss, reval. Hope for peaceful Council mtg
- 14 Eliminate executive assistant to Mayor position for additional savings
- 15 Costs go up
- 16 Should be publicized more
- 17 Hard decisions
- 18 If this budget does not pass, it will be because people want more cuts
- 19 We are doing this only because Polly Schaeffer hasn't gotten over losing election last year. Sour grapes
- 20 Thanks for a good job
- 21 Hard work but a good budget
- 22 I hate to spend the money doing voting over and over
- 23 The Town did a lousy job of advertising both the budget and the vote
- 24 Love this budget, Want to take it home and adopt it.
- 25 Good budget - excellent detail provided
- 26 We elect you folks to make these decisions and it's a shale a tiny minority can waste all of our time and the town's \$\$
- 27 People at the voting were very nice
- 28 More money should be designated to Parks & Rec.
- 29 I am opposed to the redistricting plan, keep the neighborhood school intact
- 30 Should have been more publicity. No comments in Rockville Reminder
- 31 Great news, Town did not approve of reconfiguration of schools
- 32 We need to educate our kids so the can get a good job in order to pay off the massive debt we have given them.
- 33 Impeach Governor Malloy
- 34 Only spend when you have to, not when you want to - spend wisely

35 Cost \$ to run a town
36 Please if this doesn't pass don't balance it on the backs of our kids
37 Keep it reasonable
38 Did a decent job of holding down costs
39 Keep the Police Department fully staffed
40 I'm concerned with the Mill rate increase
41 Fix the bridge on Phoenix and then you can ask for more
42 Would really like to know how the extra money would be spent for the BOE
43 Enough cuts to Education, It's becoming ridiculous
44 Ways to cut expenses need to be found so taxes do not continue to increase.
45 Why is Public Works spending so much on equipment when the schools are deplorable
46 The Town needs to invest in education. Schools are in trouble, need more funding. Please stop cutting Educ. Funds, find other areas
47 More money for a poor school system. No to adding more school transporting across towns to other schools. Stay local neighborhood
48 BOE should have budget amount, if not more to provide excellent education to kids. Para's are critical in providing teaching assistance
49 Take care of Education, Police and Fire Departments
50 Need more money for the schools
51 Better schools raise house values & attract more involved citizenry
52 We moved to Vernon because of high standard of education. I am Sr. citizen, believe business growth is contingent on good schools
53 Paying nearly \$7000 in taxes (an increase of 1400 /4 yrs) our education budget needs more. A lot of wasted money; blackberry's for DH's
54 Unfortunately our schools aren't doing well. We need to invest now so our current generation of students can succeed.
55 Can't continue to decimate school budget. What happens to property values when school are in bottom 30?
56 Help Vernon schools please so we don't have to move
57 We need more money to fix our failing schools.
58 Need to spend more money for education
59 BOE needs more \$ to make Vernon a town people want to live in. Education is Vernon's future. More Para's, Give kids opportunity
60 Full time Kindergarten should be implemented
61 More commitment to providing enough funds to improve education, will make Vernon more desirable town, increase property value
62 More should be done for support of education
63 Give our schools the help they need
64 I'm happy to pay higher taxes if it means our schools have enough money to fun efficiently and effectively
65 If the town really does care about the children , they will put \$ where mouth is and give adequate funds, to properly educate
66 Support our schools, not ask for cuts, while town budget increases. Our student are the future, we need to remember that
67 If we don't properly fund education, our property value means nothing. Giving more money doesn't always solve problem. Ed is underfunded
68 We need to start addressing the adverse impact that years of 0 or low growth budgets have had on schools. We need to invest in txtbks & tech
69 Schools need to offer more programs for students. With more being cut, our real estate values are lowered
70 Stop cutting money that our kids need
71 Vernon needs all day Kindergarten
72 BOE needs more \$ more the schools. Being in bottom 30% for state is embarrassment
73 We need to do something about making sure schools have more money than they have now. Our schools are going downhill

74 Real fixes to educational problems require real commitment - that mean financially, not just verbally

75 We cant allow our children to be dumbed down any further. Are we trying to be number 169 in quality of education?

76 Good education drives a town, attracts residents improves housing values, lowers crime. Stop skimping on Education

77 Put paras back in classrooms

78 More for education

79 You get what you pay for

80 We seniors can not afford higher taxes. My home could never be sold for the assessment value

81 Does not cover priorities for Bd and Town

82 I would like to see the Town and BOE budget listed separately. Perhaps have last years budget for comparison. A no vote can mean we think its too low

83 We need a clear idea of what we are voting on. The Town of E. Haddam manages to send out a pamphlet on the budget. Why cant we?

84 There was not enough information in the paper I could find. Friend told me to come out and vote

85 This shouldn't even be happening.. Hire better teachers

86 We need to stop raising taxes every year, control spending - economy is bad

87 Town officials must work to reduce budget/taxes. Reduce benefits, outsource rubbish, janitorial, etc.

88 Must everything go up like 2 oversized projects on bridges at leased

89 The school budget would be fine if it was for the children of Vernon. If I knew Mayor was going to raise the taxes I won't have voted for him.

90 Although I voted for budget, proposed increase is way too much. Suggest closing a school or 2 and stop subsidizing public employees healthcare

91 Cut social services. Vernon should not be a dumping ground for other towns misfits.

92 Joke - too much Administrative overhead. Unqualified Administrators/2 salaries one individual

93 What costs us money is the insurance & retirement funds. I'm self-employed and we do both on our own so can the town

94 We are taxed out

95 Seniors can't keep up with increasing taxes.

96 Need to reduce upper management positions in the Town and BOE. Less use of town vehicles for employee use

97 What happened to the money in the "snow" budget? How about a freeze on seniors taxes?

98 Senior taxes should be frozen after you retire. Why should I pay taxes for school and other services I already paid for years ago that I don't need now

99 Budget should be broken down more. Does the Town budget include education budget? Confusing as is . % of increase should be listed

100 A 1.65% increase shouldn't cost 3.93 mils, because of 10% decrease in revenue. Live within means like rest of us. Threatening to cut things isn't helpful

101 We need to cut spending. People on fixed income cant afford to pay more. More money will not fix educational problems

102 What happened to 2.2 million the BOE had 2 years ago? 1 mil from Federal and 1.2 mil you found after you raised our taxes?

103 Start teaching the children. Have good teachers teach the ???? To be better

104 As a senior citizen, I can't afford increase. Freeze property taxes for seniors on fixed income. I'll vote yes to increase.

105 On the ballot, it would be nice to include the mill rate and the percentage rte, it would explain to residents

106 When are they going to freeze taxes for retired seniors, Our raises are frozen. Don't get raises

107 Town and state have to control costs and control biggest expenses for more taxpayer/voter value

108 Our Mayor/Council must realize that Vernon is still in tough times. Projects like VCAC is clearly optional, funds should be spent on necessary items.

109 School population has decreased. Budget should follow

110 Always higher

111 Pensions, salaries health insurance. More s/b paid on own for insurances and much less in overall benefits. Pensions too high. Greece here we come

112 Need to do something about education poor schools too many administrators

- 113 Need to separate Town budget from School budget so taxpayers can see true costs instead of projections
- 114 Time to let tax payers afford to survive
- 115 School budget & town budget should be separate. People with less than 2 children should pay more including renters
- 116 You keep adding and never subtracting
- 117 When property values go back up will the mill rate go back down?
- 118 Need to help keep finances down in bad economy
- 119 After the vote last night to only temporarily put off reconfiguration, I am insulted
- 120 Voted no because I don't want to pay to bus my kids across town
- 121 Can't afford any more tax increases. I am not covered by a union
- 122 Like many people in the state, I had to take multiple pay cuts in the recession. I don't expect to get this money back and I can't afford higher taxes
- 123 There should be NO increases in today's economy. It should be reduced
- 124 I'm on fixed income. No extra cash for food, heat, other necessities, and NOW a higher tax rate
- 125 You need to do something about union benefits, instead of keeping on screwing the taxpayer
- 126 Town needs to keep taxes down time are hard for all
- 127 There was no information about the budget at the voting center
- 128 Tax increase is too much, can't afford
- 129 Still too much waste. Cuts need to be made in right places
- 130 We need a new superintendent
- 131 We need to lower teacher pay and administrators pay. Keep grades 1-6 in elem. schools 7-9 in middle school 10-12 in high school
- 132 tax increase in unacceptable , look for waste
- 133 disgusted with the Town of Vernon
- 134 We need to do more that just make small adjustments to the existing budget - need big changes
- 135 Budget should be separated into 3 areas - General govt., Capitol Improvements, Education and voted on separately
- 136 In this economy homeowners should not bear the brunt of increased taxes
- 137 Voters for education should be paying land owner only. No renters to much is too much
- 138 Need to find ways to work within current revenue
- 139 No raises, cut services
- 140 Residents paychecks are being cut. Taxes are going up, are you crazy?
- 141 The town should be able to make do with last years budget
- 142 CT residents can not afford any more taxes
- 143 TOWN: Eliminate autos for DH's , I drive own vehicle when I get called in. BOE: without reconfig, these should be \$ to spare for transportation
- 144 If you fire A.D. at high school, the sports teams would improve, and save pay.
- 145 You saved a lot of money on snow removal - you're getting 6 figures for poor performance of our schools - Binding Arbitration has to go
- 146 We pay enough taxes already we are being taxed right out of state of CT
- 147 No mill rate increase
- 148 Enough for the schools
- 149 I can't express enough my disappointment that Vernon leaders are trying to sneak a budget through without explaining what % increase this is
- 150 No new taxes
- 151 Vernon is low 30% of state, but we pay teachers in top 10% of all CT towns. School salaries must be cut. Bring in outsiders, no educators to fix system

152 Even revaluation required an increase. Let's keep the budget as is or lower. Find cuts somewhere else and add \$ for streets and sidewalks

153 Even though I feel budget is too high, I voted yes because I didn't expect significant changes and further referendum only waste more \$

154 The budget should be based on Income just as any individual household budget is based

155 \$\$\$\$ doesn't buy education. Parents working with the teachers is the answer

156 Do not give any more money to the BOE

157 Will not vote accept until allowed to vote on teachers contract

158 The assessment was favorable also put our homes at market values in line with the times.

159 Our schools need to be well funded in light of recent news. Paras are needed in regular ed. classrooms. Cutting positions is not solution

160 We need to support education in this town Its our future.

161 BOE should have better knowledge of insurance costs

162 Education and children first

163 Schools should be a priority. Town ballfields and parks need to be maintained at much higher level

164 I grew up in NY and we had 2 budgets - Town and School. It was clearer what people wanted

165 More money should be in the school budget for late busses and the non existing gifted and talented program

166 It takes \$ to help kids who come from homes with fewer pre-school resources

167 More for education and paras

168 Voted yes even though BOE budget was too low

169 More funding for schools please Full day kindergarten and universal curriculum for all schools Thank you

170 Lots more for schools please

171 Our schools need all day kindergarten

172 Close enough - would like more for BOE - but not too far off

173 Investing in our schools will only increase property values and ensure future of our town

174 I think Council did a great job balancing town needs with overall cost, but education needs more serious attention and investment - in jeopardy

175 Bd of Ed needs funds to keep up with schools at higher level. Reinstate para's /More preschool/give breakfast/parenting programs. No time to cut budget

176 Put children first Make our town great. Education is important

177 Need to support education

178 Need to focus on schools given our need for reform

179 All day kindergarten

180 Education and programs for kids benefit all the community

181 Let's get school system fixed. You should be ashamed

182 Youth are greatest resource. Without good education, nothing else matters . I am a 60 year old homeowner

183 Separate Board of Ed and make it a line item for all to see

184 Vernon should be thinking about putting more \$\$ into the schools and updating them with technology.

185 We need our paras in our schools, students would not be served if the town BOE cuts them

186 Education needs to be invested in, and not reduced any more

187 Save our schools

188 This town has kept BOE budget so small we are no longer keep up with per pupil costs. Kids facing social ills, need smaller classes and more services

189 Police budget should be higher. Education should receive more \$ to fix poor performing schools

190 As a taxpayer, I am very unhappy about proposed school reforms which are too radical. Less costly options are not being considered

191 Town needs to do more for the youth/future of Vernon
192 Pay me now or pay me more later
193 Its critical to Vernon's future to be sure we are funding education fully
194 Please support education, and projects like road repair and sidewalks
195 Support education, now is the time Vernon
196 I voted yes because I don't trust republican-led council to see referendum for what it is -dissatisfaction with constant cutting of Educ. We need more not less
197 It's vital we invest in our community. Very frustrating that Council invariable takes a NO vote as mandate to cut. Urge council to increase if this budget fails
198 Stop balancing budget on the backs of children. Cut the Administrative "fat" downtown. Too many top salaries
199 Council needs to be more concerned about Vernon's current' education status and give more money back to BOE
200 Too many seniors here in Vernon don't want increased taxes, however young families should not foot the bill for everything
201 More money, keep neighborhood schools, add \$ to schools that NEED it
202 In order to continue providing a quality education & other services our budget needs to match the cost of services, particularly education
203 More support of Education
204 Our schools need more money
205 Let's get with the times. Vernon needs to clean house, Florida bound. Best of luck with the future of Vernon
206 Should go to vote always
207 I voted for the budget, however I feel if it were not passed it would only be cut, so I did not vote against it
208 We need to spend more on our kid education. I'll be glad to pay more if it went directly to education
209 I thought referendum was a waste of tax-payer \$\$
210 Not much notice to community about this vote. Newspaper on Monday 4/30 was 1st time I heard about this
211 Don't cut maintenance when things go to hell,we end up doing bond projects & paying through nose. BOE use data to figure what is wrong with schools
212 Need to spend money to improve our schools, and investment in our children and town as whole
213 Cuts in RDA were not a good decision
214 BOE always needs more money. Any cuts that need to be made are unnecessary. BOE needs all the money they can get
215 Our town is falling apart. If we don't fund schools to get acceptable student performance & fund infrastructure repairs/maintenance who will want to live here?
216 Voted yes because felt it would only be reduced if declined
217 We need more money put into education
218 Education budget should be higher in light of failing schools
219 Schools and town amounts should be higher to over more to the people living in town
220 You get what you pay for - f we want town services, and better schools system - we need to be willing to pay
221 Good job
222 Still voted yes
223 BOE must vote NO to reconfiguration of Vernon schools
224 Must vote no reconfiguration
225 Must vote no for school reconfiguration in Vernon
226 BOE budget is too low, Schools are horrible and we should be doing everything possible to ensure our kids are getting the best education possible
227 I voted in support of budget - if it fails, I would like to see both Town and BOE funding increased
228 We need all day kindergarten. Please make part of budget
229 BOE: more teaching not moving schools around. Keep neighborhood teachers and schools

- 230 Stop waste and educate our kids
- 231 I voted no because I do not believe the town can turn the schools around with this funding
- 232 Lower administration costs (salary)
- 233 Why does BOE always take the biggest hit?
- 234 Time to start outsourcing town services and projects
- 235 Fund BOE reform. You get what you pay for
- 236 Taxpayers need to educate our future. Who paid to educate their children?
- 237 Raise education budget
- 238 If this doesn't pass, please don't cut from the BOE side
- 239 Town needs to look at excessive cost of Administration in Vernon. Especially bonuses and extra employees
- 240 Keep neighborhood schools
- 241 Full day kindergarten in budget for next year
- 242 Voice of Vernon parents is not heard. BOE budget gets cut too quickly. Bottom 30 is unacceptable
- 243 Too many high paid TOWN administrators: Public Works, Mayor's Executive Asst. - pay them less and put more services in the town
- 244 We need to better support our schools and infrastructure in order to assure Vernon is an attractive community for families
- 245 High but okay