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## New Haven Cuts in the Balance

By **AMANDA RAUS**

Updated 11:45 PM EDT, Thu, May 27, 2010

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The city of **New Haven** is finalizing its budget, but not before the Board of Aldermen throw out some last ditch efforts to save money and decrease taxes.

The Board debated different amendments, trying to take into account citizens' concerns. The budget already cuts funding to public safety and certain city perks like the downtown Christmas tree.

"Yeah, we're going to lose some officers, yes, we'll degrade in some services, and yes, this budget may cost \$18 dollars more a month for the average homeowner," said **New Haven Mayor John DeStefano**.

Aldermen have tried to cut out the tax hike altogether, but it looks like it will stay.

"I don't think that people are willing to live with the cuts that would entail. You're talking really substantial cuts to a lot of departments, which is huge," said **Board Chair Carl Goldfield**.

The four percent tax increase is less than the original 8.8 percent, but residents say it's still not affordable.

"Some of these people have very tight budgets, very tight budgets and it's going to be difficult for them," said **Thomas Ahern** of New Haven.

The board did vote to make cuts. One is to flat-fund the Board of Education by cutting \$1.5 million. Aldermen want the cuts to be to the central office and administrative staff, but residents worry it will cut

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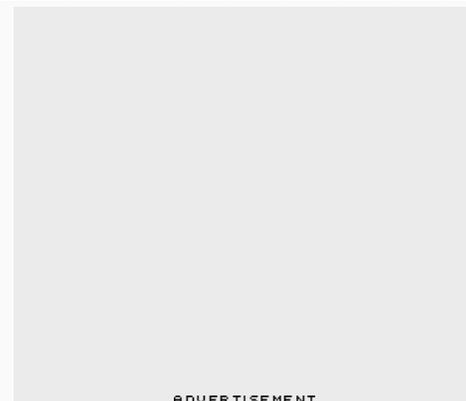
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The budget still leaves some things in limbo like a \$6.5 million gap that may be filled through contract negotiations, one of which may mean privatizing custodians for the schools.

"The custodians and maintenance people of local 287 would be out of work, or you can work for \$12.50 an hour," said Kevin Murphy, who represents the AFSCME union.

First Published: May 27, 2010 10:27 PM EDT

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