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Darien Adopts OpenGov for Financial Reporting.

With the start of the 2017-18 fiscal year the Town of Darien has adopted a new platform for financial reporting. Detailed budget information dating back to 2013 can now be accessed by the public through the [OpenDarien link](#) on the town's website, DarienCT.gov.

Darien's Department of Finance has implemented a module called OpenGov to provide the public with greater financial transparency and clarity on the town budget. Finance Director Jennifer Charneski briefed the Board of Selectmen with an overview of the reporting platform on Monday.

"Darien is excited about our partnership with OpenGov, and the immediate improvements this new platform can bring to our town," Charneski said in a statement. "Through this new site, we will be able to make budgeting and decision making more efficient and effective, and most importantly, better communicate with Darien residents."

Using the online module visitors can organize budget information by department and review monthly expenditures. Data within the program can be organized into a number of different graphs at the user's request and all of the data is available for export. Information for the OpenDarien platform is provided directly from the Department of Finance's accounting software and will be updated on a monthly basis to reflect ongoing changes to the budget. The OpenDarien portal will also be updated to include information about the town's capital projects, such as the upcoming redevelopment of the town's public works garage.

For town officials the OpenGov platform will make financial information more readily available and organized. The Department of Finance will be able to create specific user groups for town officials to access and organize more specific data within the town's budget. Members of the Board of Selectmen suggested those user groups would be useful during budget season, when members of the Board of Finance or RTM Finance & Budget Committee need to review a wide range of information. Furthermore, OpenGov provides another module that can be used to directly generate budgets and related documents, if the town chooses to adopt it.

"This could be the end for the budget books," Selectmen Marc Thorne joked, referring to the nearly 300-page document used by town officials during budget review.

Currently OpenDarien does not include detailed information on the Board of Education budget as their budget is managed independently from the town's. Charneski said the Board of Education could choose to adopt the software at a lower cost and be connected to the same OpenGov portal. She said that while the town's adoption of OpenGov took several weeks to complete, the company has changed its implementation process.

If more local towns adopt the OpenGov it would also allow them to easily share and compare budgeting information through the platform. Charneski said Darien is the sixth town in Connecticut to move to OpenGov. Contrasting what Darien's peer towns earn in parking revenues or how much they pay in police overtime could provide more clarity on financial decisions and trends in the future. For now, the public can use the [OpenDarien portal](#) to access budget data for the new fiscal

year.

DarienTimes.com

By Kevin Webb on July 14, 2017

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