

City of East Providence Budget Commission
City Hall
145 Taunton Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914
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Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
October 4, 2012, 3:00 pm
Room 306, City Hall

Members: Diane Brennan – present
Michael O’Keefe – present
Stephen Bannon – present
Peter Graczykowski, City Manager – present
Mayor Bruce Rogers – present

Other Attendees: Christy Healey, Budget Commission Fiscal Advisor
Rob Eaton, Budget Commission Fiscal Advisor
Heather Martino, Interim Human Resource Director
Malcolm Moore, Finance Director
John Cimino, Interim Finance Director
John DeGoes, Interim Superintendent

The meeting commenced at 3:13 pm.

Agenda Item #1: First reading of an Ordinance Ordering the Assessment and Collection of Property Tax on the Ratable Real Estate, Tangible Personal Property, and an Excise Tax on Registered Motor Vehicles and Trailers.

Diane Brennan began the public hearing by discussing the Ordinance on the proposed Levy for the City of East Providence. She stated that there would not be an increase on any of the tax rates. Budget Commission Approved.

Agenda Item #2: First reading of an Ordinance Making Appropriations in support of FY 2013.

Peter Graczykowski stated that this proposed budget is more detailed than it ever has been before in the past. It now includes enterprise funds and detailed rosters of both City and School employees. This proposed budget was presented to the City Council on Tuesday 10/2/12. The Council recommended that the budget document should show revenue generated from each department. Michael O’Keefe asked if this would be set-up in the same format as the State. Mr. Graczykowski indicated that that was his expectation. He continued that he wanted to thank the Budget Commission, City, and School staff for their effort in preparing the proposed budget. Michael O’Keefe asked if the YTD “Year to Date” column was actually in fact year to date through October 4, 2012. Mr. Graczykowski indicated that it

was only through June 30, 2012 and that a label would have to be included in order to avoid confusion. Mr. O'Keefe then asked if it is possible to find out what funding was put back into the budget as he knew that travel was. He stated that a justification would be needed for all funding that was put back into the budget.

Christy Healey explained the process of preparing the budget. The FY 2013 base was created based on the FY 2012 budget. Then the base was deducted or increased based on the BPR (Budget Planning Report) changes. Some numbers on the BPR were estimates and/or haven't made significant progress yet to be included in the FY 2013 budget. Some of these changes were either included or eliminated on a case-by-case basis for the FY 2013 budget. She stated that the BPR would be updated for the next Budget Commission meeting on October 18th to include the revised FY 2013 figures.

Diane Brennan asked for the next Budget Commission meeting on October 18th to include the Year to Date numbers updated through July or possibly August. John Cimino stated that the Year to Date numbers through July is included in the regular Budget Commission meeting supporting documents for later.

Superintendent John DeGoes asked why on Page 63 there were no budgeted secretaries for the Silver Spring Elementary School. Malcolm Moore stated that the secretary was most likely accidentally grouped into another school as the labeling was incorrect. He stated that this error would be corrected for the revised budget. Michael O'Keefe asked if employees that are funded by grants are included on the roster. Mr. Graczykowski indicated that they were not, but will be on the revised budget. Mr. O'Keefe also suggested that there should be totals on each page for the individual schools.

Diane Brennan then opened up the meeting to the public for comment.

Member of the public asked why Oldham Elementary School only had two secretaries (Page 64). He followed up asking that there used to be a floating principle between Waddington and Oldham, but why did the school hire a full-time principle. Superintendent DeGoes stated that having a floating principle between those two schools was dangerous as Waddington has a significant amount of students.

Mayor Bruce Rogers asked whether Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funded employees were shown on roster for budget. Mr. Graczykowski stated that these employees were not shown, but will be as it is important for transparency. Mr. O'Keefe stated that for the record we're trying to make this a better budget document than in the past. It is more important to show the overall funding source than employee by employee breakdown on the roster. Mayor Rogers agreed that it is the best budget he has seen in years. He recommended that the budget include anything that is mandated by federal, state, or city law. Diane Brennan asked how this could be done. Mr. O'Keefe stated that there should be narratives for each department and it should be included there.

Diane Brennan summarized the format changes needed for the budget: department narratives, totals for individual schools, improvements on the roster, and an all funds budget. Mr. O'Keefe suggested that the budget document also have a one-page narrative to send to

the credit agencies to say what the City and School has accomplished to date and tell the public what the budget intends to accomplish. It should be more than just numbers.

Chrissy Rossi from the School Committee asked why there was a Deputy Finance Director in the roster for the School budget. Christy Healey stated that it is a position yet to be hired in the newly consolidated finance department. Ms. Rossi asked how the IT Department allocation worked. Christy Healey stated that the IT Department roster is listed on the school side, but 50% of the roster is allocated to the City IT budget. Ms. Rossi asked about two maintenance positions and if they were being eliminated. Heather Martino stated that the two positions aren't indentified so it's difficult to tell which school they are coming from. However, this can be a follow-up task.

Mayor Rogers asked why the Loeff Carousel employees were not showing up on the City roster. Malcolm Moore stated that the roster just consisted of general fund employees, but they will be added.

Stephen Furtado from the School Committee asked why the budget line item for the Athletics did not show a \$106,000 reduction from FY 2012 to FY 2013. John Cimino stated the reductions were across multiple line items including salaries as coach's stipends were reduced in that item.

Mr. O'Keefe stated that the Maintenance of Effort and Special Education for the School budget is fine for FY 2013, but in future years we are showing significant savings. This is an important topic that can result in more costs to the city and school if not dealt with properly.

Budget Commission approved the first reading with the provision of the revisions discussed made.

Agenda Item #3: Ordinance Authorizing the Director of Finance to Borrow in anticipation of taxes. Budget Commission Approved.

Agenda Item #4: Ordinance Authorizing the Director of Finance to Borrow in anticipation of revenue. Budget Commission Approved.

The public hearing adjourned at 4:17 pm.

Approved by the East Providence Budget Commission
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