

**City of East Providence Budget Commission
City Hall
145 Taunton Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914
(401) 435-7500
Meeting Minutes January 17, 2013
3:00 PM Room 306, City Hall**

**Working Session 3:00 PM
Meeting Minutes January 17, 2013
Room 306, City Hall**

Members: Diane Brennan – present
Michael O’Keefe – present
Stephen Bannon – not present
Peter Graczykowski, City Manager – present
James Briden, Mayor – present

Other Attendees: Christy Healey, Deputy Director, Department of Revenue
Robert Eaton, Budget Commission Fiscal Advisor
Heather Martino, Interim Human Resource Director
John Cimino, Interim Finance Director
John DeGoes, Interim Superintendent
Joel Monteiro, School Committee Chair
Members of the Public

The Meeting was called to order at 3:07 PM.

Item #1: Review of Cash Flow – Malcolm Moore.

There will be two draw downs of \$5 million TANs to save on interest and costs. At the January 31st meeting there will be resolutions for the TANs.

Item#2: Review and approval of Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreements with EPPMTEA and Steelworkers. Review and approval of Tentative Collective Bargaining Gap Agreements with Teachers, Educational Secretaries and Police – Joe Whelan.

This item was held until later in the meeting as Commissioner O’Keefe would be arriving late.

Item #3: Request to hire Consolidated Human Resources Director – Peter Graczykowski and John DeGoes.

City Manager Graczykowski requests to hire a permanent position of Consolidated Human Resource Director, Kathleen Waterbury at a base salary of \$95,000. He notes that both he and Superintendent DeGoes are in agreement. City Manager Graczykowski introduces Kathleen

Waterbury. The item is approved noting that Commissioners Bannon and O'Keefe are not present to vote.

Item #4: Request to fill vacant School Department positions and approval of personnel actions – John DeGoes.

Superintendent DeGoes discusses the swim coach positions presented at the previous meeting, but which were not presented to the Budget Commission before hiring took place. Chair Brennan states that next time the Superintendent must ensure the process is correct in order to have oversight. School Committee Chair Monteiro states that proper conversations about process have now taken place. Superintendent DeGoes also reported on two additional retirements. The item is approved noting that Commissioners Bannon and O'Keefe are not present to vote.

Item #5: Requests to fill vacant City positions and approval of personnel actions – Peter Graczykowski.

Item #5A: Request to Post and Fill Senior Accountant Position as part of Consolidated Finance Department Reorganization – Malcolm Moore.

Finance Director Moore asks that instead of hiring a Deputy Finance Director the City hire an additional Senior Accountant position. This would not be a new position but rather a reallocation of the current position. Originally this was thought to be a Deputy/Treasurer. In 6-8 months review and maybe at that time the Controller would be promoted to Deputy Finance Director/Controller. He notes he is worried about having too many chiefs.

Commissioner O'Keefe states that we don't want to be in the position we were in before, the Budget Commission staff will not be here in the future, there will need to be a Deputy Finance Director position for the following reasons:

1. The Finance Department needs to have someone in place as the number 2 and who everyone knows and acknowledges as the number 2 and who can do what the number 1 can do if there is a vacancy for some reason.
2. Needs to have the same concentration for City as Schools.

Commissioner O'Keefe continued that the Controller did not have the capacity to do a School Budget. The City needs a Deputy Director. Chair Brennan states that the Deputy Director would help in all areas of finance including purchasing, tax collection and treasurer. Commissioner O'Keefe states that the organizational chart for the Finance Department seems city-side heavy. Mayor Briden adds that the Deputy Director position is important in case of turnover. Chair Brennan states that with the new data system coming into the Finance Department help to implement will really be needed.

The Finance Director is instructed that at the next Budget Commission meeting he should show the old proposed consolidated organizational chart. Commissioner O'Keefe states that the

Treasurer position would become the Deputy Finance Director. Mayor Briden requests three charts, before, current and after.

This item was held for further follow-up work.

Item #5B: Request to post and fill Highway Superintendent position – Steve Coutu.

City Manager Graczykowski states he is looking for the approval to hire the Superintendent for Highway and that there are savings in the budget. There were other consolidations in the division however at this point this position is desperately needed. Additionally, this position was never slated to be removed. It is essential to the operation of the division.

This item is approved.

Item #5C: Request to Extend Sunday Library Hours for FY 2012-2013 – Eileen Socha.

This item is approved.

The commission returned to Item #2: Review and approval of Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreements with EPPMTEA and Steelworkers. Review and approval of Tentative Collective Bargaining Gap Agreements with Teachers, Educational Secretaries and Police – Joe Whelan.

Chair Brennan states they will have to take a voice vote on the following items.

- EPPMTEA Agreement will be moved to an Executive Session following the regular working session. Commissioner O'Keefe states that the Social Security CPI is less than 2%.
- Steelworkers Agreement will be moved to an Executive Session.
- Teachers Gap Agreement is approved 4 votes to 0.
- Educational Secretaries Gap Agreement is approved 4 votes to 0.
- Police GAP Agreement is approved 4 votes to 0.
- Teachers Assistant GAP – this is a first review will have a vote at the 1/31/13 Budget Commission Meeting.

Item #6: Request for approval of procurement and/or payments in excess of \$25,000 and review of payments and/or procurements under \$25,000 – Malcolm Moore.

City Greater Than \$25,000 is approved.

City Less Than \$25,000 is approved.

It is noted that there are no school payments to be reviewed and approved because items were not submitted by the 4PM Friday deadline.

Item #6A: Request for extension of AMS contract for Finance Department Support Services – Malcolm Moore.

Approved.

Item #6B: Request to approve extension for Police & Fire Pension Board Financial Advisor Wainwright pricing for six months – Malcolm Moore.

Approved.

Item #6C: Request for purchase of minivan & generators for Family Services with Asset Forfeiture Funds – Police Chief Tavares.

Approved.

Item #6D: Request to advertise bid for Compost Screener – Steve Coutu.

Approved.

Item 6E: Request to accept funds for Economic Development Loan for Waterfront Commission – Jeanne Boyle.

Approved. It is noted that this is not a request to accept funds, but to approve the loan. This is to clarify the agenda wording.

Item #7: Receipt of minutes from Tax Appeal Board and recommendation of decisions from Tax Assessor – Steve Hazard.

The Tax Assessor, Steve Hazard, is only in agreement of #4 to exempt property of \$17,000 as the use was confirmed. The others should be reviewed including #1 \$99,000 and #2 and #3 having housing components. Chair Brennan states that in their role of Budget Commission they can override the Tax Appeals Board. Commissioner O'Keefe states this is because they are exempting items that are not exempt according to the statute.

Chair Brennan states that the Commission needs the official minutes. Assessor Hazard states that the Tax Board of Review will vote to approve their minutes on 1/28/13 and then send the official minutes to the Commission.

Chair Brennan states no action will be needed until then.

Item #8: Update on Superintendent and City Manager action items/work plans – John DeGoes and Peter Graczykowski.

Item #8A: Recommendation to close Oldham Elementary School beginning September 2013 – John DeGoes.

Chair Brennan states this is an informational item only there will be no action taken at today's meeting.

Superintendent DeGoes states that the recommendation to close the Oldham School was presented at the 1/10/13 School Committee meeting. He adds that he is asking no action be taken but allow a public hearing at the Riverside Middle School on Wednesday 1/23/13 at 7PM for residents to voice their concerns with the proposal which the Budget Commission can review at their next meeting.

Commissioner O'Keefe states that the capital needs of the school in the City exceed \$100 million. He states he has not heard yet heard from anyone that the City needs to raise this money. What is the argument for bonds in the community and what are the City's priorities.

Item #8B: Update of Income Tax Refund Offset Program – Peter Graczykowski.

City Manager Graczykowski provides a Tax Refund Offset Program update.

Item #8C: Update on RFP for ERP Financial System advertised Sunday 1/13/13 – Peter Graczykowski and Malcolm Moore.

Finance Director Moore provides an update on the RFP for ERP Financial System. It was advertised on Sunday. The due date is Friday 2/1. The city has sent eight interested bidders the RFP directly. Some other communities could piggyback on this and this would get a better price for the City.

Item #9: Review and approval of City Council appointees on 12/3/12 and update on Legal Services RFP – Diane Brennan, Peter Graczykowski, and Rob Eaton.

Chair Brennan states that on page 136 there are the minutes of the City Council Inauguration meeting of 12/3/12 with the actual appointments. Also are the minutes from the City Council's 12/4/12 meeting which list the appointment of Bruce Rogers to the Carousel Commission.

Commissioner O'Keefe states is it the Council's wish to have us approve these in the interim until the RFP process plays out. There needs to be a clear understanding that these appointments could end in 30 days if the RFP is approved.

Mayor Briden states that the Council was thinking the RFP decision would be made sooner.

City Manager states that it could be as soon as two weeks so does the Commission really want to approve these today.

Commissioner O'Keefe states we can say that if in two weeks from now the Commission decides there is no qualified firm to take over the legal services we would make these appointments. If there is a firm then we wouldn't do these. Adding he would make a motion to disapprove the three attorney positions and then on January 31st if they do not approve an RFP, that negates the need, then we would make the appointments.

Bruce Rogers speaks stating that a temporary attorney would in the very least need to be appointed as there is none legally in place.

Commissioner O'Keefe states confirm the appointments for two weeks and then do it again on January 31st.

Mayor Briden states he feels based on the analysis they should be confirmed and made aware that this is pending the RFP. City Manager Graczykowski states it really is exactly the motion the Council passed with is pending the RFP.

Discussion ensues regarding how the Solicitor and Assistant Solicitors will be paid.

Commissioner O'Keefe asks if the City Solicitor is a City employee or a 1099 and asks same for the Assistant Solicitors adding how can the Commission approve without knowing the cost?

The Budget Commission removes the 3 solicitor appointments from their approvals of the other appointments and the City Council is directed to reappoint these three positions at their next meeting on 1/22/13 with budgetary figures and set salaries.

The Budget Commission will get these recommendations at their 1/31/13 meeting.

All appointments not including the City Solicitor and two Assistant Solicitor positions made by the City Council on 12/3/12 are approved.

Item #10: Additional Commission Items.

Budget Commission submission policy second reading approval. Policy is approved.

Google Money Update is provided.

Item #11: Approval of Minutes from January 3, 2013.

The next meeting is set for January 31, 2013.

The meeting is adjourned at 4:40PM.

Approved by the East Providence Budget Commission January 31, 2013.

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