

**New Shoreham Town Council Budget Meeting  
Town Hall, Old Town Road, Block Island  
Wednesday, March 31, 2010  
6:30 p.m.**

**Present:** First Warden Kimberley H. Gaffett, Second Warden Raymond J. Torrey, Council members Richard P. Martin, Peter B. Baute and Kenneth C. Lacoste. Also present were Town Manager Nancy Dodge and Finance Director Amy Land. Town Clerk Fiona Fitzpatrick was present to record the minutes.

**Call to order:** First Warden Kimberley H. Gaffett called the budget meeting to order at 6:30.

**1. Discussion of Collective Bargaining [this discussion may be held in closed session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-5 (a)(2)]**

At 6:30 Ms. Gaffett moved to enter closed session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(2) for the discussion of collective bargaining. Motion was seconded by Mr. Lacoste.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

At 7:00, First Warden Gaffett moved to recess the closed session discussion meeting until after the evening's scheduled budget hearing is concluded, seconded by Dr. Baute.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

**2. 7:00 p.m. Town Council Meeting: Budget Work Session**

The First Warden announced the Town has negotiated a lower price on Plat 6, Lot 147. The owners have agreed to sell at \$720,000 instead of \$900,000. The Town's title insurance company will review the title before the sale is closed. Debt service at \$52,640 is incorporated into this budget draft. This draft includes a deficit of \$43,915.

Town Highways; State Roads: Road Superintendent Mike Shea was present for questions. He was questioned regarding the increases in Contract Services Roads and Road Materials. Mr. Shea explained the last application of road oil was in September 2007. (The program began in the 1990's with the petroleum derivative Pennsuppress, later the Town switched to Dustkill made from soybean oil.) Mr. Shea said the oil preserves the roads and saves money on road material and contract services for road repairs. An application of Dustkill under good conditions should last two or even three years. This year's road material budget increase from \$20,000 to \$30,000 will be for either \$10,000 in road material plus \$20,000 in Dustkill, or for \$30,000 in road material in anticipation of greater erosion in 2011. Mr. Shea budgeted \$14,000 for contract services which will be needed for additional grading if Dustkill is not applied. The line increased \$10,000 from \$4,000 in the current year. A discussion of the merits and drawbacks of Dustkill ensued, including whether to use the oil at the transfer station. Ms. Gaffett noted that based on Mr. Shea's information, using Dustkill will save money in FY 11 and FY 12. The Council accepted Mr. Shea's recommendation that the soybean oil be applied to selected roads in September 2010, and directed that the public be notified of the application days and locations. The Council removed \$10,000 from budget line Contract Services, anticipating the additional grading will not be needed because Dustkill will be applied.

Recreation: Recreation Director Rob Closter was present to answer questions about his budget. Wages Fred Benson Beach increased by \$3,796. Mr. Closter explained there is no change in staffing levels, he asked for a salary increase or rent reduction for lifeguards, who clear approximately \$100 per week at the job after the Town deducts rent. He wants to prevent moonlighting. The \$1,500 increase in Fred Benson Rental Equipment is routine replacement for beach rental equipment and will not result in an increase of rental income. Heinz Field Maintenance is \$13,600 higher than last year. The installer's maintenance contract expires in May, and the Town will take over the maintenance costs. Organic fertilizers and overseeding grass cost more than chemical field management.

Dr. Baute moved, seconded by Mr. Martin, that the Council approve the use of standard fertilizer at Heinz Field, and reduce budget by \$5,000 to go to nonorganic management.

- Mr. Lacoste recalled that he voted against the IPM policy. He said the policy was recommended by the Conservation Commission and had public support at two meetings. Now that the policy has been adopted, he does not want to override it on a case-by-case basis.
- Mr. Torrey agreed.
- Members of the audience asked that the Conservation Commission's work be respected.

Ayes: 2 (Baute, Martin)      Nays: 3 (Gaffett, Torrey, Lacoste)

In response to a question, Finance Director Land said Recreation income is about 66 – 70% of costs. Revenues cover the program costs and not the personnel costs of the department. No changes were made to the Recreation budget.

Harbors: The Harbormaster line is a placeholder. The Council directed that it be reduced to the 2009 level or lower, at a savings of about \$4,800. There was a discussion of the variables involved with shellfish license revenues, which include weather and the availability of shellfish stock. The Assistant Harbormaster salary, funded at \$13,420 for May through October, was questioned. Wages and benefits for the department were questioned. Wages Other represents 5,500 hours for 12 seasonal positions, some part time (wardens, licensing clerks, and pumpout crews). The hours have been reduced from last year, most schedule cuts were on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

GIS: The department was discussed, no changes were made.

Library: Library Director Lonnie Todd and several members of the Library Board were present to answer questions. Under state law the Library's appropriation is made by the Town, but the Trustees decide the line item breakdown. A half-time library aide resigned recently. There was a discussion of the Town's requirement for "maintenance of effort" to continue to receive some state funds for the library. Current state law requires funding 80% of last year's budget, but the law is due to expire June 30, 2010 and revert back to 100%. The Town may apply for an exemption. Ms. Gaffett repeated her assertion that eliminating part time positions through attrition was preferable to laying off workers. The Finance Director said eliminating the position would save about \$25,000. The Library Director argued against eliminating the funding for the position. The position was filled earlier this week by the Library Board so training could be completed before the beginning of summer. It was not known what it would cost the Town to lay off the aide.

Ms. Gaffett moved, seconded by Dr. Baute, to reduce the bottom line of the Library budget by \$20,000.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin)      Nays: 0

Police: The Finance Director does not recommend reducing the vehicle maintenance line. Benefits have increased because more than one officer changed from single to family benefits. NSPD will not be housed in the motor pool. Because the State Police are promising more coverage, the Town is providing housing in the motor pool. No changes were made to the Police budget.

Boards & Commissions:

There was discussion of cutting the Planner's hours by \$5,000. The position is by contract with an hourly rate, with a not-to-exceed. It is budgeted at \$25,000.

Dr. Baute suggested level funding the salaries of the four non-union workers at Town Hall. The Town Manager explained two are executive positions, and two are nonunion because they are confidential employees. Ms. Gaffett, Mr. Torrey and Mr. Martin spoke against the suggestion.

Ms. Gaffett asked the Finance Director and Town Manager to balance the budget by funding the remaining \$2,250 budget deficit from cuts to supplies or Harbors by Monday.

Sean McGarry asked the Town to fund improvements to infrastructure by petitioning the state to waive the Town's cap on property tax increases.

The vote to adopt the budget will be taken at Monday's Town Council meeting.

At 9:40, a motion to reconvene in closed session was made by First Warden Gaffett, and seconded by Dr. Baute.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

At 10:05, Ms. Gaffett moved to come out of closed session, and to seal the minutes of the meeting.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Ms. Gaffett reported one motion was made during the closed session meeting, which will be kept confidential until the issue is settled because its disclosure would jeopardize a strategy or negotiation, undertaken pursuant to discussions conducted under RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2).

At 10:05, a motion to adjourn was made by First Warden Gaffett and seconded by Second Warden Torrey.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Minutes approved: June 7, 2010

Fiona Fitzpatrick  
Town Clerk