

June 22, 2009 - Special Town Council Meeting

At a Special Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Middletown, RI, held at the Middletown Town Hall on Monday, June 22, 2009 at 6:00 P.M.

Council President Christopher T. Semonelli, Presiding

Vice Chairman Richard Cambra

Councillor Frank A. Bozyan

Councillor M. Theresa Santos

Councillor Robert J. Sylvia

Councillor Barbara A. VonVillas, Members Present

Councillor Edward J. Silveira, Jr., Absent

POSTED – June 18, 2009

Wendy J.W. Marshall, Town Clerk

Town of Middletown

Town Hall – 350 East Main Road

Middletown, Rhode Island 02842

Dear Mrs. Marshall:

Pursuant to the provisions of Article II, Section 203 of the Town Charter and in accordance with Sections 42-46-2., 42-46-4. and 42-46-6., RIGL, I hereby call a Special Meeting of the Town Council to formally consider, discuss and act upon the following item of business:

1. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenues of the General Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

2. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenues of the Parks and Recreation Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

3. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenues of the Sewer Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

4. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenue of the Refuse and Recycling Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

Said meeting will be held on Monday, June 22, 2009, at 6:00 P.M. at the Middletown Town Hall, 350 East Main Road, Middletown, Rhode Island 02842.

Christopher T. Semonelli,

President

Middletown Town Council

CC:

Town Council

School Department

Town Administrator

Senior Center

Town Solicitor

Police Dept.

Finance Director

Fire Dept.

Public Library

Public Works

Tax Assessor

Building Inspector

Town Planner

IT Director

Parks/Recreation

Town Engineer

Human Resource Director

School Department

This meeting location is accessible to the handicapped. Individuals requiring interpreter services for the hearing-impaired should notify the Town Clerk's Office at 847-0009 not less than 48 hours before the meeting.

Present, representing the School Department, were Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, Assistant Superintendent Linda Savastano, Business Manager Catherine McLeish, Director of Facilities Edward Collins, School Committee Chair Michael Crowley, Members William O'Connell and Kellie DiPalma.

1. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled "Appropriating Revenues of the General Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended".

Public Hearing was declared open.

Antone Viveiros, 110 Indian Hill Road, questioned the decrease of

school department salaries and who negotiates with the teachers union. Mr. Viveiros feels that the taxpayers need a break and the School Department should entertain a zero percent salary increase. He requests the use of the fund balance to assist with a reduction in the tax rate.

Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, responding to Mr. Viveiros, noted that retirees will need to be replaced.

School Committee Chair Michael Crowley responding to Mr. Viveiros, explained that there are three teachers, the School Department attorney and himself on the negotiating team.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown, responding to Antone Viveiros, explained that when the revaluation was completed, the tax rate was normalized. Mr. Brown reviewed the process to prepare a municipal budget.

Arthur Benner, 3 Namquid Drive, reviewed school department contractual increases expressing concern on how the School Department arrived at the number within the budget. Mr. Benner also expressed concern with School Department staffing.

Manuel Mello, 31 Beacon Terrace North, expressed concern with school's financial requests to the Town noting the school should use their reserve fund to support school projects. Mr. Mello questioned future use of the John F. Kennedy School.

Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, responding to Mr. Mello, noted that the School Department is investigating options for the property.

At the first public hearing on the budget, June 17, 2009, resident Maryalice Huggins, 65 Gray Craig Road, raised several questions which were addressed by Fire Chief Ronald Dorie, Police Chief Anthony Pesare and Superintendent of Schools Rosemarie Kraeger.

Fire Chief Ronald Doire, responding to previous questions of Maryalice Huggins, addressed the Council explaining that the department consists of 32 firefighters, 3 administrative positions, 4 shifts of 7 firefighters, 365 days a year and 24 hours a day. Middletown is below the national standard for firefighting staffing. The department responds not only to fires, but also to rescue calls which average 2000 yearly.

Police Chief Anthony Pesare, responding to previous inquires of Maryalice Huggins, addressed the Council explaining that video cameras are governed by RIGL and are only for intersections with traffic lights not to monitor speed. The device used must be approved by the Department of Transportation. The use of a video camera is not a viable way to monitor or control speed. The Middletown Police Department traffic control is not a revenue generating function, it is for public safety.

Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, responding to previous questions of Maryalice Huggins, explained that to pay teachers according to merit based on test scores of their students was not feasible, hiring consultants to work with the principals to improve performance of underperforming teachers is unnecessary, noting that

the teachers are doing an outstanding job having met state standards and year round schooling is not allowed per RIGL, students are only allowed to be in school for 180 days.

Stacy McBride, 66 Atlantic Drive, expressed concern with the closing of John F. Kennedy School, safety issues with busing and traffic patterns, elimination of programs such as foreign language and limited fine arts, library books, administrative salaries and class size. Mrs. McBride requests the Council to have more involvement with the School Committee.

Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger responding to Mrs. McBride explained that the foreign language curriculum was reorganized for eighth grade only, there will be a full time nurse in each building, the buses will be moved to the high school and a bus safety and traffic study has been completed. Fine arts have not been reduced and the library books have not been eliminated.

John McBride, 66 Atlantic Drive, suggested a full time rescue and volunteer fire department with assistance from the police for rescue

calls. Mr. McBride noted that since we are partially regionalized through mutual aid he does not see the need to purchase a new ladder truck.

Antone Viveiros, 110 Indian Hill Road, questioned the School Department's purchasing of text books for the upcoming school year.

Superintendent of Schools Rosemarie Kraeger, responding to Mr. Viveiros, noted that text books will be purchased.

Manuel Mello, 31 Beacon Terrace North, noted that he does not support the reduction of sports programs.

Council President Semonelli noted that last year there was a 3.3% increase on the tax rate. This year the proposal is 2% the Council is working to reduce the burden on the taxpayers.

There being no other persons present desiring to be heard on this matter, the public hearing was declared closed.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said FY10 General Fund budget ordinance, as amended, on its second reading.

2. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenues of the Parks and Recreation Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

Public Hearing was declared open.

There being no persons present desiring to be heard on this matter, the public hearing was declared closed.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said FY10 Parks and Recreation Fund budget ordinance, as amended, on its second reading.

3. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenues of the Sewer Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

Public Hearing was declared open.

There being no persons present desiring to be heard on this matter, the public hearing was declared closed.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said FY10 Sewer Fund budget ordinance, as amended, on its second reading.

4. Public Hearing (Advertised)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown entitled “Appropriating Revenue of the Refuse and Recycling Fund for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, as amended”.

Public Hearing was declared open.

Arthur Benner, 3 Namquid Drive, spoke in support of the PAYT program noting that within a few years the program should pay for itself.

Antone Viveiros, 110 Indian Hill Road, addressed the Council noting his support for the PAYT program however, is concerned with the short fall of the program and requests the Council not to fund the program through the tax rate. Mr. Viveiros suggest the Council to place the hauling service out to bid and award contract to the lowest bidder.

Councillor Sylvia noted that residents using the program are recycling more. Mr. Sylvia is concerned that the program does not support itself and does not want to fund the shortfall from the designated unrestricted fund.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown reviewed the following options entered here:

Councillor Santos questioned the Waste Management Contract and extra totes.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown, responding to Councillor Santos, noted that the current Waste Management contract expires November 2010 and extra totes are free to residents; some totes will be returned after the budget is adopted.

Deb Anthony, 106 Wyatt Road, addressed the Council in support of the PAYT program however expressed concern with the bag price increasing. Ms. Anthony requested the Town to place recycling bins on Town fields.

Payson Fugitt, 1 Kent Road, addressed the Council noting the PAYT program operates inefficiently. Mr. Fugitt suggests the program be mandatory, totes be picked up from one side of the street only and have a drop off for recycling at collection stations to eliminate a truck.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown explained that the budget proposal consists of the elimination of two trucks and rerouting.

Councillor VonVillas explained that the options are used for comparisons.

Council President Semonelli noted his support for the PAYT program explaining the need for an increase in participation.

There being no other persons present desiring to be heard on this matter, the public hearing was declared closed.

On motion of Vice Chairman Camba, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to approve FY10 Refuse/Recycling Funding Option 1, Small Bag rate \$1.75, Large Bag rate \$2.00 and Annual Sticker fee \$75.00.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said FY10 Refuse and Recycling Fund budget ordinance, as amended, on its second reading.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to adjourn this meeting at 8:02 P.M.

Wendy J.W. Marshall, CMC

Council Clerk

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