

June 1, 2010 - 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 Tuesday, June 1, 2010 at 6:00 P.M.

Council President Christopher T. Semonelli, Presiding

Vice Chairman Richard Cambra

Councillor Frank A. Bozyan

Councillor M. Theresa Santos

Councillor Edward J. Silveira, Jr.

Councillor Robert J. Sylvia

Councillor Barbara A. VonVillas, Members Present

POSTED – May 28, 2010

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 items of business:

Memorandum of Town Administrator, re: Confirmation of Appointment –Tax Assessor.

Meeting with School Committee – Review of School Budget and matters related thereto

Meeting with Library Board of Directors – Review of Library Budget and matters related thereto

Memorandum of Town Administrator, re: Bond Act and Memorializing Resolution – Middletown Road Construction, Drainage & Sidewalk Improvements and Resolution – Middletown Wastewater System Improvements.

Resolution of the Council, re: Memorializing the General Assembly to Enact Legislation Authorizing the Town of Middletown, with the approval of the Qualified Electors, To Issue Bonds and Notes for Road Construction and Drainage and Sidewalk Improvements in the Town.

Resolution of the Council, re: Approving the Financing of Improvements to the Middletown Wastewater system and Approving the Issuance of Wastewater System Revenue Bonds and Notes therefore in an Amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

Said meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 1, 2010, 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

Public Library
Finance Director

Town Administrator
Town Solicitor
School Department

Human Resource Manager

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.

Vice Chairman Cambra requested a moment of silence in recognition of Memorial Day.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said communication.

Also present were Town Administrator Shawn Brown, Finance Director Lynne Dible, Deputy Finance Director Marc Tanguay and Accounting Manager Deborah Barrett.

1. Memorandum of Town Administrator, re: Confirmation of Appointment –Tax Assessor.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown requested the confirmation of the new Tax Assessor, Tammy Boss.

Discussion centered around Tax Assessor salaries within the State,

probationary period, certification and benefits.

Carol Cummings, 738 Indian Avenue, noted the importance that the Tax Assessor have previous experience similar to Aquidneck Island and be properly certified.

2. Meeting with School Committee – Review of School Budget and matters related thereto

Present, representing the School Department, were Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, Assistant Superintendent Linda Savastano, Business Manager Raquel Pellerin, Facilities Director Ed Collins, School Committee Chair Michael Crowley and School Committee Members Kellie DiPalma, Lianna Ferreira-Fenton, and William O'Connell.

Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger reviewed materials provided by the School Department, which is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk. Mrs. Kraeger noted the School Department created a short video that demonstrates the diversity the schools offer to the students. The video was viewed at this time.

School Committee Chairman Michael Crowley reviewed the 2010-2011 Budget Reduction Plan Impact Statement entered here:

Mr. Crowley noted the list is not completed by priority, but by the largest amount of funding to the smallest; explaining reductions were considered by eliminating all line items which are not State mandated.

Discussion centered around student to teacher ratio, challenges faced by teachers, additional funding for the school department, athletics, after school programs, how additional funding would impact the tax rate, and the proposed State funding formula.

Council President noted his inability to support the proposed level of devastation to the School budget suggesting the need for Council to consider contributing an additional \$200,000. to the school budget.

Councillor VonVillas noted that it is inappropriate for the Council to discuss school budget line items.

Councillor Silveira noted the importance of education to the community and requests the School Department to review their budget and develop a priority list of items.

Councillor Santos noted her support to hold the School budget at the original allocation of \$200,000.

Councillor Sylvia noted that if additional funding is to be added to the school budget, where the funds would be allocated from. Mr. Sylvia explained he is still in favor of a zero percent increase to the budget.

Councillor Bozyan noted his support for an additional \$200,000. to be allocated to the schools.

Vice Chairman Cambra requests more information concerning the reductions made by the School Department. Mr. Cambra requests a priority list be provided.

On motion of Councillor VonVillas, duly seconded, it was voted to allocate an additional \$400,000 total to the School budget; Council President Semonelli, Councillor Bozyan and Councillor VonVillas voted YES; Vice Chairman Cambra, Councillors Santos, Silveira and Sylvia noted NO to said motion; MOTION FAILED TO PASS.

Vice Chairman Cambra and Councillor Silveira noted support for an increase to the school budget, however, requests a priority list from the School Administration.

Councillor VonVillas noted concern about the Council making decisions based on a priority list provided by the school administration.

Town Solicitor Michael W. Miller explained that the Council cannot evaluate reductions, only have authority over the bottom line.

School representatives left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

3. Meeting with Library Board of Directors – Review of Library Budget and matters related thereto

Present, representing the Library, were Library Chairman Paul Lamond, Vice Chairman Stephen Arendt and Library Director Theresa Coish.

Town Administrator Brown noted the proposed 0% budget increase would reduce funding to the library by \$25,000. This would have an impact on library services.

Steve Arendt noted the reduction in appropriation to the library would impact services to residents. Mr. Arendt explained that if the Town reduces funding, then the State will also reduce funding. The reduction in funds to the library will affect the materials line item.

Discussion centered around the number of Middletown residents utilizing library services, professional training and development expense, general office supplies, library supplies and staffing.

On motion of Councillor Bozyan, duly seconded, it was voted to return \$20,000 to the library budget; Council President Semonelli, Councillors Bozyan and VonVillas voted YES; Vice Chairman Cambra, Councillors Santos, Silveira and Sylvia voted NO to said motion; MOTION FAILED TO PASS.

Library representatives left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

4. Memorandum of Town Administrator, re: Bond Act and Memorializing Resolution – Middletown Road Construction, Drainage & Sidewalk Improvements and Resolution – Middletown Wastewater System Improvements.

Town Administrator Brown reviewed the need to place a question on the November General Election ballot to issue Bonds and Notes for Road Construction, Drainage and Sidewalk Improvements in the Town. Mr. Brown reviewed the following memo entered here:

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said memorandum.

5. Resolution of the Council, re: Memorializing the General Assembly to Enact Legislation Authorizing the Town of Middletown, with the approval of the Qualified Electors, To Issue Bonds and Notes for Road Construction and Drainage and Sidewalk Improvements in the Town.

On motion of Councillor Silveira, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to pass said resolution.

6. Resolution of the Council, re: Approving the Financing of Improvements to the Middletown Wastewater system and Approving the Issuance of Wastewater System Revenue Bonds and Notes therefore in an Amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

On motion of Councillor Silveira, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to pass said resolution.

On motion of Vice Chairman Cambra, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to adjourn this meeting at 8:22 P.M.

Wendy J.W. Marshall, CMC

Council Clerk

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