

**At a Special Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Middletown,
RI held at the Middletown Town Hall on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at
6:00 P.M.**

Council President Robert J. Sylvia, Presiding

Vice President Robert Kempenaar, II

Councillor Henry F. Lombardi, Jr.

Councillor Paul M. Rodrigues

Councillor M. Theresa Santos

Councillor Antone C. Viveiros

Councillor Barbara A. VonVillas, Members Present

POSTED – May 19, 2016

Wendy J.W. Marshall, Town Clerk

Town of Middletown

Town Hall – 350 East Main Road

Middletown, Rhode Island 02842

Dear Ms. Marshall:

Pursuant to the provisions of Article II, Section 203 of the Town Charter and in accordance with Sections 42-46-2., 42-46-3, 42-46-4.,

42-46-5 and 42-46-6., RIGL, I hereby call a Special Meeting of the Town Council to formally consider, discuss and vote upon the following items of business:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

1. Public Hearing (Advertised)

(Public Hearing Remains Open)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown General Fund, Parks and Recreation Fund, Sewer Fund, Refuse and Recycling Fund and Stormwater Utility Fund, Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

2. Resolution of the Council, re: Tax Levy Resolution.

Said meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 6:00 P.M. at the Middletown Town Hall, 350 East Main Road, Middletown, Rhode Island 02842.

Robert J. Sylvia, 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

Town Engineer

Human Resource Director

School Department

Recycling Coordinator

Prevention Coalition Coordinator

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.

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

1. Public Hearing (Advertised)

(Public Hearing Remains Open)

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (Second Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown General Fund, Parks and Recreation Fund, Sewer Fund, Refuse and Recycling Fund and Stormwater Utility Fund, Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Public Hearing remains open.

Ronald Heroux, 51 Bayridge Drive, addressed the Council in support of the budget including the 4% for the schools. Mr. Heroux noted the need for librarians at all the Middletown schools.

Sara Churgan, 36 Heritage Drive, representing the Eastern RI Conservation District, addressed the Council requesting Civic support in the amount of \$1,000 to be used for environmental educational programs in the Middletown schools.

Dennis Turano, 195 Tuckerman Avenue, suggesting the purchase of equipment in the budget be held off a year. Mr. Turano noted the need to find additional dollars to alleviate the tax burden.

Francis Gutierrez, 303 Forest Avenue, addressed the Council noting concern with the increase in the tax rate, due to his limited income. Mr. Gutierrez inquired what the cost of education per student is in Middletown and other communities.

Councillor Viveiros inquired if librarians were dismissed because of the computer purchase? When would the laptops be replaced? Will money be set aside for computer replacement/upgrades?

Assistant Superintendent Linda Savastano, responding to Councillor Viveiros, explained that librarians were not dismissed because of the computer purchase, it was not their intention to eliminate the library service, the school is currently reexamining the library program, the computers were purchased from CIP and one time funds and there is a replacement plan for computers in place.

Councillor Rodrigues inquired about the purchase of a tractor for the beach noting concern with the elements effecting the equipment. Mr. Rodrigues asked about the \$200,000 in the Town Planner budget and reviewed the proposed increases to the tax rate.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown, responding to Councillor Rodrigues, noted that the new tractor would not be at the beach and an older tractor will be used at the beach. Mr. Brown explained that the funding in the Town Planner budget is for zoning compliance with the Comprehensive Community Plan and for the West Main Road BRAC property and Green Lane property project. The tax rate if the budget is passed would be 3.12%.

Councillor Rodrigues inquired if the residents reject the bonds what would be the next step taken by the Town? Mr. Rodrigues asked if the sewer bond question will come back to the Council before being placed on the November ballot.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown responding to Councillor Rodrigues, noted that the Town would have to address infrastructure items immediately, nothing would be done until the following fiscal year. The bond questions will be brought back to the Council to authorize submission to the Secretary of State for the November 2016 ballot.

Discussion centered around how much it will cost to bring the Comprehensive Community Plan and Zoning into compliance, the cost for updating the zoning is unknown but the Town continually looks for resources to assist in the costs, a zoning ordinance for municipal and recreational marijuana use, the priority list adopted by the Council for bringing the zoning into compliance with the Comprehensive Community Plan, limited income for seniors in the Town, placing an item on the docket to assist residents who have a limited income, the price of water meters, young people moving out of Middletown, six vehicles to be purchased in the budget which are in the Town maintenance program, the replacements of the vehicles are for public health and safety, the amount of employees at DPW (4 in Sewer, 2 in Recreation, 2 in Garage and 10 in Highway) and vehicles which are replaced are sold to a junk yard.

Francis Gutierrez, 303 Forest Avenue, addressed the Council inquiring what the area in the budget labeled non-department specific is used for.

Finance Director Marc Tanguay, responding to Mr. Gutierrez, explained that Non-Department Specific is for budgeted items which are not specific to one budget, for example retirement benefits and street lighting.

Dennis Turano, 195 Tuckerman Avenue, addressed the Council noting that elderly residents do not have resources to pay their taxes.

On June 2nd, there is a meeting of the Tax Exploration Sub-Committee to discuss the methodology in which the Town assesses taxes.

Lianna Ferreira Fenton, 53 Berkeley Avenue, noted that the School Bond will be partially reimbursed from the state.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to amend the General Fund, Expenditures, page 2, line 10 Education to increase from \$ 38,018,102.00 to \$38,522,498.00.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to amend the General Fund Budget, anticipated revenues, page 2, line 16 Taxes Levied by Municipality to increase from \$46,672,489.00 to \$47,176,885.00.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to amend the General Fund Budget, page 3 line 30 Section 1B. Appropriation to School Department to increase from \$25,724,193.00 to \$26,228,589.00.

Councillor Santos recused herself from acting on the Civic Appropriation portion of the budget, due to a possible conflict of interest.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to amend the General Fund, Expenditures, page 1, line 42 and page 3, line 33 Civic Support to increase from \$123,926.00 to 124,926.00, page 1, line 22 Finance/HR to decrease from \$578,228.00 to \$577,728.00., page 1, line 34 Public Works to decrease from \$1,751,390.00 to \$1,750,890.00., to add an appropriation for Clean Ocean Access in the amount of \$2,000.00, to add an appropriation for Eastern RI Conservation District in the amount of \$1,000.00, to reduce the appropriation on page 3, line 39 James L. Maher Center from \$5,000.00 to \$3,000.00, within Section 2 Parks and Recreation Fund, page 4, line 16 and page 5, line 2, Civic Support to increase from \$65,750.00 to \$77,750.00, to add an appropriation for East Bay Community Action Program in the amount of \$7,000.00, to increase an appropriation, page 5, line 12 Middletown Youth Wrestling Club from \$5,000.00 to \$8,000.00, to add an appropriation for RI District II Challenger Division in the amount of \$2,000.00, and reduce page 4, line 9 Beach Operations from \$816,402.00 to \$804,402.00 and all subtotals and totals be adjusted accordingly.

There being no other persons present desiring to be heard, public hearing is declared closed.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to adopt said ordinance on its second reading, as amended.

On motion of Council President Sylvia, duly seconded, to reconsider said motion to adopt said ordinance on its second reading, as amended.

Councillor Rodrigues noted that he would like to vote for each budget separately, he supports the School Appropriation, Beach Fund and Refuse and Recycling Fund, but not the Sewer Fund. Mr. Rodrigues explained that there are opportunities to consolidate and restructure with the Schools.

Councillor Santos noted that she does not support the Sewer Fund or Stormwater and requests a smaller trash bag.

Councillor Viveiros suggests holding off on vehicle purchases requested in the budget.

Council President Sylvia explained that the charter requires one consolidated budget.

Voted taken here on reconsideration.

On motion of Council President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to reconsider said motion to adopt said ordinance on its second reading, as amended.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted to adopt said ordinance on its second reading, as amended, Council President Sylvia, Vice President Kempenaar, Councillor Lombardi and Councillor VonVillas voted YES; Councillor Rodrigues, Councillor Santos and Councillor Viveiros vote NO to said motion .

2. Resolution of the Council, re: Tax Levy Resolution.

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted to pass said resolution, Council President Sylvia, Vice President Kempenaar, Councillor Lombardi and Councillor VonVillas voted YES; Councillor Rodrigues, Councillor Santos and Councillor Viveiros vote NO to said motion .

On motion of Vice President Kempenaar, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to adjourn said meeting at 8:00 pm.

Wendy J.W. Marshall, CMC

Council Clerk

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