

At a Special Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Middletown, RI held at the Middletown Town Hall, 350 East Main Road, Middletown, RI on Wednesday, May 30, 2018 at 6:00 P.M.

Council President Robert J. Sylvia, Presiding

Vice President Paul M. Rodrigues

Councillor Henry F. Lombardi, Jr.

Councillor M. Theresa Santos

Councillor Dennis B. Turano

Councillor Antone C. Viveiros

Councillor Barbara A. VonVillas, Members Present

POSTED – May 24, 2018

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 was open on Wednesday, May 23, 2018.

An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (First Reading)

An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown General Fund, Parks and Recreation Fund, Sewer Fund and Refuse and Recycling Fund, Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

Council action is to receive on its first reading.

2. 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 and Refuse and Recycling Fund, Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

3. Resolution of the Council, re: Terms & Conditions of Employment – Police Officers.

4. Resolution of the Council, re: Levy Resolution.

Said meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 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.

The Middletown High School Women's Ensemble Chorus sang the

National Anthem.

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Council action is to receive on its first reading.

On motion of Vice President Rodrigues, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said ordinance on its first reading.

2. 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 and Refuse and Recycling Fund, Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

Vice President Rodrigues announced that the public hearing remains open.

Council President Sylvia reminded all that each person present

desiring to speak during the public hearing has five minutes.

Tom Kowalczyk, 9 Beechland Place, addressed the Council thanking them for their service to the Town and presented handouts updating information regarding the Advanced Course Network for students, entered here:

Mr. Kowalczyk noted that Middletown High School is a member of the Advanced Course Network.

Kimberly Darpino, North Providence, Teacher at Middletown Gaudet School addressed the Council explaining that teachers and students deserve everything negotiated in the contract. Ms. Darpino invited the Council to join her for a day to truly understand what she does and requested the Council to fully fund the proposed school budget. Ms. Darpino noted the students have already lost too much.

Tallya Maciel, MHS student, addressed the Council noting she will be the first in her family to attend college. Ms. Maciel explained that she loves being part of Middletown and explained the importance of band, chorus and sports. Tallya Maciel noted that she is worried that her nieces will not have the same opportunities as she has.

Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 18 Pocahontas Drive, Chair of the Middletown School Committee addressed the Council regarding performance based bonuses received each year by the School

Administration and Clerical staff, which are not part of a contract or built into their yearly salary. Mrs. Simeone also noted teacher and administration salary increases. Kellie DiPalma Simeone explained that state aid decreased by \$284,000, the school department cannot grow and improve if it is not fully funded.

Arleen Kaull, Director of the Senior Citizens Center, addressed the Council noting support for students, but requests the Council to consider the senior population who need to afford to stay in Middletown.

Tyrone Francis, Jr., MHS Student, Military Child, addressed the Council noting that he has been to many schools, which have never been concerned with cutting programs. Mr. Francis requests the Town Council to fully fund the 4% proposed budget.

Kelly Tabor Hann, 132 Center Avenue, addressed the Council noting support for music and band. Ms. Hann explained that teenage years are socially stressful and the importance for students to have activities to participate in.

Douglas Arnold, 23 Reardon Drive, School Committee Member, addressed the Council explaining that students need to be well rounded. Times have changed; what was good in the past, is not necessarily what is right for the present. Mr. Arnold suggested tax

breaks for seniors.

Shelley Coleman, 57 Warren Avenue, addressed the Council noting concern with the lack of librarians in the schools. Ms. Coleman requests the Council to support the proposed school budget.

Paul Mankofsky, 20 Pequot Lane, addressed the Council requesting them to level fund the schools, noting money is not the answer.

Theresa Spengler, 1111 Wapping Road, Vice Chair of the School Committee, addressed the Council explaining that the School Committee does their due diligence when developing a budget. Ms. Spengler noted that expenses have increased including gas and electric. Theresa Spengler requests the Council to support the proposed school budget.

Laurie Hall, MHS Student, addressed the Council noting that she is terrified that the music programs may be cut at the schools.

Janine Brown, 107 Niagara Street, addressed the Council explaining the schools request is only 2%, with an overall 4% increase.

Clarissa Yama, MHS Student, addressed the Council noting that cutting programs that benefit students is shameful. Ms.Yama urged the Council to support the 4% budget proposal.

Marin Holden, MHS Student, addressed the Council explaining that her teachers are great and extracurricular activities are needed. Ms. Holden requests the Council to listen to the students.

August Hann, MHS Student, addressed the Council noting music is part of his life, explaining that cutting music and band is a disservice to the students.

Pamela Rooney, 4 Tuckerman Terrace, addressed the Council noting that she feels for the students. Ms. Rooney explained that senior longevity in the Town is important.

Kelly Tabor Hann, 132 Center Avenue, addressed the Council noting the Middletown Teachers are exceptional and the need for music in the schools. Ms. Hann read a poem "I Am of Need of Music" by Elizabeth Bishop.

Paula Hawes, 208 Weschler Road, addressed the Council noting the kids care about programs being cut, not what happened in the past. Ms. Hawes explained that she understands the needs of senior citizens. Paula Hawes noted that it will be difficult to attract great teachers, if the budget is not fully funded.

Alisa McClymonds, MHS Student, addressed the Council noting that music has gotten her through difficult times. Ms. McClymonds explained that music and extracurricular activities are important to

the students and requests the Council to fund the proposed school budget.

Matthew Skirzenski, MHS Student, addressed the Council noting that the band has had a strong influence on him and others. Mr. Skirzenski explained removing funding removes opportunities and requests the Council to please fund the proposed budget.

Tyrone Francis, Jr., MHS Student, addressed the Council quoting Albert Einstein and noted that colleges look for participation in extracurricular activities.

Councillor VonVillas explained that she has been in the education business for 47 years, she is impressed with the teachers and worried about the students going forward. Ms. VonVillas noted the importance of extracurricular activities, explaining programs are being cut, why not technology. Councillor VonVillas explained that the budget is difficult, the schools are just one part of the Town and need to care about the Town as a whole.

Councillor Turano noted that he was a MHS graduate, education costs are rising and enrollment is decreasing. Mr. Turano noted that he believes in education and sports. Councillor Turano explained that his position is hard, the Town is addressing issues with seniors, roads and infrastructure.

Councillor Viveiros noted that senior exemptions will be reviewed. Mr. Viveiros explained the need to keep a balance throughout the Town. Councillor Viveiros noted respect for School Administration, Teachers and Town Administration.

Councillor Lombardi explained that he will not support level funding, the Council is not giving a mandate or marching orders on what will be cut from the school budget. Mr. Lombardi noted that the budget is a difficult decision, the Council needs to consider the entire town. Councillor Lombardi thanked all who spoke during the public hearings.

Councillor Santos noted that each year it is harder to pass a budget. Ms. Santos noted seniors on fixed incomes. Councillor Santos thanked all who spoke during the public hearings.

Vice President Rodrigues explained that he has a son in school, Middletown has great teachers and sports and academics are important. Mr. Rodrigues noted that the budget is a hard decision and 4% is not sustainable. Vice President Rodrigues thanked all who spoke during the public hearings.

Council President Sylvia explained that at the first public hearing on the school and town budget the Council heard from a number of residents, parents, teachers and students, who all spoke in favor of the school budget, especially band, sports and chorus. Mr. Sylvia

noted the different funding scenarios requested by the Town Council from the School Department, the School Department was reluctant in supplying the information, due to the information creating anxiety in the schools. The scenarios supplied by the School Department showed no cuts to salaries, benefits or annual bonuses. The Town Council does not make decisions on educational related programs, explaining the council only addresses the one total school allocation. Council President Sylvia explained that the Council requested the Town Solicitor to research the possibility of the Council funding programs such as sports, band and chorus, which they are unable to do because it would violate Rhode Island General Law. Mr. Sylvia compared the Middletown School budget data to Portsmouth and Newport's school budgets.

On motion of Council President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to allocate a total Town Expenditure for the FY2018-FY2019 Budget of \$72,333,387 Total, giving the School Department an additional 282,000, in their appropriation to off-set this year's loss in State and Federal aid; the appropriation will be funded by not filling 2 town vacancies, by reducing other general fund expenditures and by postponing a few capital expenditures, the \$72,333,387 is \$273,943.00 less than the FY2017-FY2018 budget, which results in a zero tax increase.

Council President Sylvia requested that Town Administrator Shawn Brown review the proposal to amend the budget.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown noted that Town Charter Section 208 provides that the Town Council may change the budget proposed by the Town Administrator provided that the Council also makes provision(s) for balancing out the consolidated budget.

Mr. Brown proposed the following amendment the budget ordinance as follows: -

Item Page Line Change Amount

Police expenditures 1 33 decreased by \$82,410

Senior Center expenditures 1 37 increased by \$10,404

Non-Department Specific expenditures 1 45 decreased by \$712,006

Police Capital Improvement expenditures 2 5 decreased by \$42,500

School Capital Improvement expenditures 2 8 decreased by \$145,100

Senior Ctr Capital Improvement expenditures 2 9 increased by \$56,000

Education expenditures 2 10 decreased by \$767,039

Taxes Levied by Municipality 2 15 decreased by \$1,483,282

Other Revenue from Local Sources 2 18 increased by \$56,000

Funds Transfer In Revenue 2 21 decreased by \$42,500

School Dept CIP Appropriation 2 32 decreased by \$145,100

Section 1B Appropriation to the School Department 3 28 decreased by \$767,039

with all subtotals and totals adjusted accordingly.

Further, that Section 1D., page 4, line 7, is amended to read: The Police Department shall be comprised of up to, but no more than, 42 full-time employees to include up to, but no more than, 38 sworn

police officers including the Chief and up to, but no more than, 4 civilian employees. In accordance with Town Charter §701 and after conferring with the Police Chief, the Town Administrator will prepare his recommendation for an organizational structure for the department which falls within the parameters of the approved FY2019 budget appropriations. This recommendation shall be submitted to the Town Council for adoption at its regular meeting on July 2, 2018.

On motion of Council President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to recess this meeting at 7:59 p.m.

On motion of Vice President Rodrigues, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to reconvene this meeting at 8:20 p.m.

On motion of Council President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to amend the budget ordinance as proposed by the Town Administration above.

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

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

**3. Resolution of the Council, re: Terms & Conditions of Employment
– Police Officers.**

On motion of Vice President Rodrigues, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to pass said resolution.

Town Administrator Shawn Brown reviewed the resolution above.

4. Resolution of the Council, re: Levy Resolution.

On motion of Vice President Rodrigues, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to pass said resolution.

On motion of Vice President Rodrigues, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to adjourn said meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Wendy J.W. Marshall, CMC

Council Clerk

**Supporting documentation is available at
<http://clerkshq.com/default.ashx?clientsite=Middletown-ri>**