

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - WEDNESDAY EVENING
MARCH 18, 2009

Present: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella, Barboza, & Herreshoff

Also Present: Diane C. Mederos, Town Administrator
John M. Day, Town Treasurer

The Council met in workshop session for the purposes of the 2009-2010 Town budget deliberations in the Town Hall, Council Chambers on Wednesday evening, March 18, 2009 beginning at 7:20 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Documents Received:

- 2008 Annual Report - Narragansett Council Boy Scouts of America
- Warren Rensehausen, President, King Philip Little League to Town Administrator Mederos re Budget Request
- Helga Piccoli, Treasurer, Bristol Art Museum re Grant Request
- (Joan Prescott) Rogers Free Library "Green List"
- Colt-Andrews School Playground Renovation Key Plan March 6, 2009
- Town Administrator Mederos re CDBG Application
- Director of Community Development Williamson et al re Grant Application for Feasibility Study - East Bay Energy Consortium (draft Memorandum of Agreement attached).

1. Budget Sessions per the Schedule

Human Resources - 805 - Various Agencies

Council Chairman Marshall informed those present that these are "unprecedented times." He also noted the establishment of a new organization called "East Bay Cares" this group being formed to provide food for the needy.

Council Chairman Marshall also informed those present of the relatively poor performance of the Town's Trust and Special Funds; these providing a large portion of the revenue to support the Human Resources budget. Council Chairman Marshall noted that the fund has produced approximately 50% of what it did last year and that additional expenditures must be supported by taxation. He also explained that the Council's desire is to assure that taxation does not force citizens from their homes.

Town Administrator Mederos explained the budget recommendations for Human Resources and noted that she found making these

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recommendations to be most difficult; trying to balance the anticipated need due to the national economic issues with the available funds. She further explained that she attempted to provide those with the greatest need while trimming back in other areas and that no new applicants were considered for first year funding.

Council Chairman Marshall noted that the requests for grants totaled over \$175,000 and Town Administrator Mederos proposed a budget of \$101,000. He reminded those present that the Trust and Special Funds yielded only \$50,000 in the past year.

Council Chairman Marshall also read a letter from King Philip Little League President Warren Rensehausen who informed the Council of his agency's decision to withdraw their request for funding due to the difficult economy. Mr. Rensehausen explained that King Philip Little League did not have an immediate need for Town funding and that the agency prefers if the Town distributes the available funds to more needy agencies. Council Chairman Marshall thanked the King Philip Little League for its candor, and also noted that similar messages were received from the Volunteer Center of RI, the Bristol Theater Company, and Bristol Pastime Theatre Foundation.

VNA of RI - (A)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$2500 grant.

East Bay ARC - (B)

Barboza/Herreshoff - Voted unanimously to increase this budget line by \$1000 for a total of \$2500.

Prior to the vote taken, several participants of the East Bay ARC program made presentations to the Council. It was noted that the group plans to use its funding for its van.

Women's Resource Center - (C)

Representatives from the Women's Resource Center informed the Council that the economic downturn has resulted in more incidents of domestic violence. It was also noted for the record an upcoming fundraiser entitled "Men who make a difference."

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The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos for \$2250.

East Bay Center - (D)

Representatives from the East Bay Center informed the Council that the organization provides mental health services for approximately 339 Bristol residents and 67 of these are uninsured. It was noted that the Town's contribution to the East Bay Center offsets the cost of treating uninsured clients.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$35000 grant.

East Bay Community Action Program - (E)

Representatives of the East Bay Community Action Program informed the Council of the Program's mission of offering community health services, dental services for children, foreclosure prevention, heating assistance, etc. It was also noted that this organization employs approximately twenty-two (22) Bristol residents.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$25000 grant.

Eastern RI Cooperative Extension Service - (F)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant. Council Chairman Marshall agreed that the Council may wish to revisit this request should additional funds become available.

Benjamin Church Manor Tenants' Association - (G)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$750 grant.

Visiting Nurse Service of Bristol and Newport Counties - (H)

Herreshoff/Barboza - Voted unanimously to increase the allocation for this agency by \$1000 to a total of \$6000.

Prior to the vote taken, representatives of this agency informed the Council of their mission; noting that they have staff from Bristol and also offer a sliding scale of fees.

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Bristol Senior Chorus - (I)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant.

Bristol Mustangs - (J)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1250 grant.

King Philip Little League - (K)

The Council acknowledged receipt of correspondence from League President Warren Rensehausen as noted above indicating that the League would not require funding this year in favor of the Council's support of other more worthy agencies.

The Council agreed to leave \$1 in the agency's line in order to keep it "open" for consideration in future years.

Franklin Court Tenant's Association - (L)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$750 grant.

Bristol Wrestling Club - (M)

Rebecca St. Vincent of the Bristol Wrestling Club informed the Council that the Club must pay the Regional School District for custodians and also for those "supervisors" who are assigned by the School District so as to prevent spectators from bringing food and beverages into the gymnasium.

Ms. St. Vincent stated that the bill for both of these amounts to approximately \$1200 and although she understands the need to pay for the custodian she takes exception to the Club being assessed for the supervisors. She further noted that her own Club's volunteers might be recruited to perform the supervisory duties and save money. She also noted that the persons being paid by the School District to perform the supervisory function were School secretaries.

Councilman Cordeiro expressed concern that this Club was required to pay these supervisory fees. He asked that Ms. St. Vincent might provide copies of the bills to the Clerk.

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Councilwoman Parella agreed with Councilman Cordeiro that the payment for supervisors appeared to be unnecessary.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1250 grant.

Bristol Senior Citizens Council - (N)

Paula Ferreira, representing the Senior Citizens Council, informed the Council that the group represents those seniors who still live in their own homes and provides for socialization activities for same. She also noted that the group makes donations to the fire department and the human services department during the holidays.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant.

Narragansett Council Boy Scouts of America - (O)

Jonathan Widmark of the Narragansett Council informed those present that there were approximately 20,000 Boy Scouts in Rhode Island and 130 participants in Bristol. He also informed the Council that membership in the Boy Scouts is \$10 for each scout and that the Narragansett Council will use its grant from the Town to defray costs.

It was suggested that Bristol might wish to have a troop of Sea Scouts.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1400 grant.

Mosaico CDC - (P)

Morgan Lowis of Mosaico informed the Council that its support of Mosaico is used for the organization's mentoring program and also for job training.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$6500 grant with the further proviso that the Council may provide additional financial support for this agency should funds become available.

Bristol Museum Association - (Q)

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The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1000 grant.

Volunteer Centers of RI - (R)

It was noted for the record that this agency willingly declined Town of Bristol funding for this year.

The Council agreed to leave \$1 in the agency's line in order to keep it "open" for consideration in future years.

Bristol Merchants Association - (S)

Linda Arruda, representing the Merchants Association reported that local business appears to be approximately 20-30% lower than the same period last year. She informed the Council that the Association's funding request is for "start-up" of a local business website so as to track inquiries and promote a "buy local" campaign.

A discussion ensued regarding the visiting cruise ships with Councilman Herreshoff explaining his understanding that there may be fewer ship visits in the upcoming season. It was also noted for the record that Roger Williams University will be providing transportation for the cruise ship visitors to reach downtown.

Councilwoman Parella suggested that there might be economic development funds available to aid the merchants outside of the Town budget.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1000 grant.

Destination Bristol - (T)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to "zero" this item since there was no request for funding submitted and to reallocate the funding recommended by Town Administrator Mederos.

East Bay Fast Pitch (Girls) Softball - (U)

Steve Zina, representing East Bay Fast Pitch Softball informed the Council that his agency plans to use its grant to purchase safety equipment and first aid supplies.

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The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1250 grant.

Bristol Youth Soccer - (V)

It was noted for the record that no request for funding was submitted by this agency.

Uncommon Art (festival) - (W)

Tony Margiotta, representing Uncommon Art told the Council that he is informed that every \$1 spend on the arts returns \$36 to the economy.

Councilman Barboza noted that there appeared to be a schedule conflict between the planned boat show and Mr. Margiotta's art festival. Mr. Margiotta informed the Council that he was "remiss" in not securing a reservation to utilize the park for the festival but there seemed to be no reason why both activities could not take place at the same time, since there did not appear to be competing interest.

Mr. Margiotta also informed the Council that he met with Recreation Director Burke and Harbormaster Cabral and that both activities will be run concurrently.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant.

Banda Filarmonica - (X)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to hold this matter in abeyance pending further consideration of this organization's request.

Harbor Lights - (Y)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant.

Cornerstone Adult Services - (Z)

A representative of Cornerstone Adult Services reminded the Council of its program to provide a day service program for adults.

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Councilwoman Parella asked if the agency's enrollment was up with the respondent replying that it was.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1000 grant.

Wildlife Rehabilitators of RI - (AA)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve no funding for this agency.

Samaritans - (BB)

Parella/Barboza - Voted unanimously to provide an additional \$250 above the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos for a total of \$500 to this agency

Prior to the vote taken, Denise Panichas, Executive Director, addressed the Council and informed its honorable body of the need to maintain level funding so as to match a grant obtained through the offices of Senator Jack Reed.

American Red Cross - (CC)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant.

Bristol Historical Society - (DD)

Derwent "Derry" Riding, President of the Historical Society informed the Council that the Society plans to use its funding for walking tours and other community services.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$2250 grant.

Coggeshall Farm Museum - (EE)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$1000 grant.

Pawswatch - (FF)

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The Council, by consensus, agreed to hold this matter in abeyance pending further consideration of this organization's request.

Literacy Volunteers of East Bay - (GG)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to hold this matter in abeyance pending further consideration of this organization's request.

Fred McDonald, representing the Literacy Volunteers informed the Council of his agency's effort on behalf of Bristol residents. He noted that approximately 95% of those served are considered as low income and most are also younger than age 50.

Mr. McDonald also informed the Council that his agency provides the only English as a second language program for adults and also provides a citizenship program.

Portuguese School - (HH)

Barboza/Cordeiro - Voted unanimously to reduce the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos for funding this agency by \$125 providing a total grant of \$500.

BVFD Emergency Dialer Program - (II)

Barboza/Cordeiro - Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the regular Town Council meeting of April 1, 2009 and to commend Mr. Carusi for his efforts.

Also, the Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$750 grant.

Prior to the vote taken, Edward Carusi, Human Services Director and administrator of this program informed the Council that he receives approximately 3-5 applications per week for an emergency dialer. He reminded the Council that the focus of the program is to allow persons to remain in their own homes and to help assure their safety and their families' peace of mind.

Mr. Carusi also noted that this program has a twenty five (25) person waiting list with Councilman Barboza recommending that

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the Council might consider an appropriation from this year's Council Contingency fund to reduce or eliminate the backlog.

Bristol Theater Company - (JJ)

It was noted for the record that this agency willingly declined Town of Bristol funding for this year.

The Council agreed to leave \$1 in the agency's line in order to keep it "open" for consideration in future years.

Save Bristol Harbor - (KK)

Cara Cromwell, representing Save Bristol Harbor informed the Council that her agency would like to purchase a hand-held Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth (CTD) meter and the cost of this device is \$2000. She asked that the Council might provide as much as \$1000 for this purpose.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve a \$500 grant.

Meals on Wheels - (LL)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to hold this matter in abeyance pending further consideration of this organization's request.

Pastime Theatre Foundation - (MM)

It was noted for the record that this agency willingly declined Town of Bristol funding for this year.

The Council agreed to leave \$1 in the agency's line in order to keep it "open" for consideration in future years.

Bristol Art Museum - (NN)

The Council, by consensus, agreed to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos and approve no funding for this agency.

Colt-Andrews School Playground - (OO)

Cara Cromwell, also representing this agency, informed the Council that her committee spent considerable time to gain the support of the School Committee concerning the installation of a

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playground. She also noted that the group plans to landscape a large portion of the Colt School lot; removing asphalt paving and replacing same with a grassy area surrounded by a hedge.

Ms. Cromwell also explained that the playground will be available to the public in general when school is not in session.

Ms. Cromwell stated that she was aware of an inordinate amount of injuries which she attributed to the type of pavement extant.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know the overall budget for this playground with Ms. Cromwell noting that the cost estimate for site work alone is approximately \$100,000.

Councilman Herreshoff expressed concern that the parking lot will be eliminated with Ms. Cromwell explaining that the current plan allows space for twenty-two (22) vehicles.

Councilwoman Parella questioned as to whether or not the playground might be partially funded through the Community Development Block Grant.

Councilman Barboza suggested that the Council might be able to support this activity through its current Contingency fund.

After further discussion, the Council agreed that the matter might be referred to the regular Town Council meeting of April 1, 2009.

Human Services - 801 - Edward Carusi, Director

Barboza/Herreshoff - Voted unanimously to approve the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos concerning this department.

Prior to the vote taken, Director Carusi explained his program and noted that the requests for assistance have increased with the economic climate change.

Barboza/Herreshoff - Voted unanimously to continue all remaining budget workshop items for further consideration on March 25, 2009, in the Town Hall, Council Chambers beginning at 7:00 o'clock PM.

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2. Memorandum of Agreement - East Bay Energy Consortium

Barboza/Cordeiro - Voted unanimously to adopt this memorandum of agreement as prepared and presented.

Prior to the vote taken, Councilman Herreshoff expressed concern that the Council might be subrogating some of its authority. It was noted for the record that the purpose of this agreement was solely to obtain study funding from the State and that the Town of Bristol was assuming a leadership position regarding same.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that he did understand this plan but expressed concern that sometimes these matters may morph into something beyond its original scope.

There being no further business upon a motion by Councilman Barboza seconded by Councilwoman Parella and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this workshop to be adjourned at 10:25 o'clock PM.

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk