

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - MONDAY EVENING  
MARCH 23, 2009**

Present: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella (arrived at 7:10 o'clock PM), Barboza, & Herreshoff (arrived at 7:08 o'clock PM)

The Council met in workshop session for the purposes of the 2009-2010 Town budget deliberations and other purposes in the Town Hall, Council Chambers on Monday evening, March 23, 2009 beginning at 7:05 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Documents Received:

- Human Resources funding request Destination Bristol (T)
- Gina Farrell, Bristol Chapter of PawsWatch re Budget Request
- Town Administrator Mederos re CDBG proposal for 2009 (Application list attached)
- N. Diane Davis, Mt. Hope High School Band Parents re Cherry Blossom Festival
- Interview Schedule back-up information as previously provided

It is hereby noted for the record that the Council changed the order of the published workshop schedule and heard the CDBG Block Grant application at this time:

**CDBG Application - Geraldine Turbeville, Project Manager**

Geraldine Turbeville, CDBG Manager outlined the basic components of the application per the attached list.

Councilman Herreshoff arrived at this point in the meeting (7:08 o'clock PM).

A discussion ensued about the applicability of the Community Center with Ms. Turbeville explaining that Recreation Director Burke proved that the served population of the Center were nearly all from low-moderate income level families and that he would have to do so again. She stated that she did not think it would be difficult to prove this since the previous analysis of income levels was very credible.

Councilwoman Parella arrived at this point in the meeting (7:10 o'clock PM).

Council Chairman Marshall asked if the administrative fees outlined in the "Non-neighborhood Revitalization" section of the

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application outline would be used to pay the salary of Ms. Turbeville with Director of Community Development Williamson reporting that these would be used to pay consultants.

Responding to questions posed by members of the Council, Ms. Turbeville reported that last year's CDBG funds totaled \$196,000 and the year previously totaled \$238,000.

Council Chairman Marshall asked Director of Community Development Williamson to explain the CDBG funds that may become available through the Federal Stimulus package with Director of Community Development Williamson responding that these funds would be independent of the regular CDBG block grant program and must be applied for separately in an additional application.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if the Town of Warren was contributing to the "Smiles" program since the program serves the Regional School District with Director of Community Development Williamson responding affirmatively.

Director of Community Development Williamson also informed the Council that the Town has "reached out" to Warren concerning a job development program and that Warren will fund a person to work on same.

A discussion ensued regarding the applicability of the Colt School playground with Councilwoman Parella noting that Pawtucket playgrounds are ordinarily supported through CDBG funding. Ms. Turbeville explained that the household income demographic for Pawtucket was much lower than that same indicator for Bristol and since the playground would be planned for town-wide use it would not qualify for CDBG.

Director of Community Development Williamson suggested that the playground might receive favorable response for special Congressional funding and Ms. Turbeville suggested that the project might apply for funding through the Federal Stimulus package.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know the particulars of the Community Land Trust with Director of Community Development Williamson responding that this land trust was for residential uses and should not be confused with the land conservation efforts of other land trusts.

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Director of Community Development Williamson also noted that this project funds the development of model deeds, ordinances, etc.

A discussion ensued regarding the track record of obtaining the maximum amount of CDBG funds for the community with Ms. Turbeville noting that the Town may not have enough citizens on "benefits" to qualify for additional funding. She further stated that large-scale "affordable" housing projects tend to bring-in more CDBG funding.

Ms. Turbeville agreed to provide an indicator's list for affordable housing for the Council's edification.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know who makes the final decision on which projects will be funded with Ms. Turbeville responding that the State makes the final determination.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know if Ms. Turbeville was also employed by the Town of Warren with Ms. Turbeville responding that she used to be but now the CDBG work is completed by the Warren Town Planner.

Responding to questions posed by the Council, Ms. Turbeville reported that she works one-half time alternating between two (2) or three (3) days per week.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that his preferred portion of the CDBG application concerns job training. A discussion ensued regarding the job training programs currently in place with Ms. Turbeville reporting that Mosaico CDC has a considerable balance remaining in its job training fund.

Councilman Cordeiro asked to know if some of the job training issues might be resolved through a partnership with the East Bay Educational Collaborative in Warren.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know how much remains in the CDBG fund from previous years' grants with Ms. Turbeville responding that she was not certain of this figure. Council Chairman Marshall stated that he was concerned that the Town has not completed its intended use for the funds.

Councilman Herreshoff expressed concern that if the amount is not spent completely the future applications might be jeopardized.

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Ms. Turbeville informed the Council that the formal application will be presented to its honorable body for final consideration and approval at its meeting to be held on April 22, 2009.

**Board of Canvassers - 406 - Frances C. O'Donnell, Chairman**

Ms. O'Donnell informed the Council that no elections are anticipated during the next fiscal year. She also noted that the Board "zeroed" its Maintenance line for this year.

Responding to questions posed by Council members, Ms. O'Donnell explained that the Maintenance line was typically used for signage, tables, etc.

**Building Inspection - 602 - Richard Pimenta, Building Inspector**

Building Inspector Pimenta explained that he is in agreement with the Town Administrator regarding her recommendations for this department's budget. He also informed the Council of the Community Development Department's overall plan to collaborate on new software to improve departmental record keeping and coordination.

Responding to questions posed by Council members, Building Inspector Pimenta informed the Council that the "travel" line item is for gasoline charges incurred by him, Electrical Inspector Gablinske, Plumbing Inspector Ferreira, and Code Compliance Coordinator Evans. He further explained that the four share a gasoline card that is used at the Department of Public Works pump.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that he was pleased to learn that this department has reduced its expenses.

A discussion ensued regarding building permit fees with the Council in agreement that recent years' fee totals were exceptionally high due to the rate of building activity at Roger Williams University.

**Senior Center - 807 - Rita P. Ayres-Gaulin, Director**

Council Chairman Marshall commented that Director Ayres-Gaulin "does a great job." He noted the apparent need for exterior building maintenance with Director Ayres-Gaulin responding that the Benjamin Church Trust will be undertaking this maintenance - preparing and repainting the building - at no cost to the Town.

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Director Ayres-Gaulin noted that the Center's van is no longer in use and is rather temporarily replaced by the Recreation Department bus. Director Ayres-Gaulin stated that the bus is not suitable for transportation of seniors.

Responding to questions posed by the Council, driver John Black informed its honorable body that the Center's vehicle is twelve (12) years old and no longer serviceable.

Councilman Herreshoff suggested that the Center may consider the purchase of a vehicle on a three (3) year plan and further noted that automobile manufacturers and dealers have been reducing prices due to the economy.

It was noted that Public Works Director Serbst has good experience with obtaining serviceable used vehicles at reasonable prices. Council Chairman Marshall agreed to contact Public Works Director Serbst to determine if a senior van might be available. Councilman Cordeiro agreed to contact Roger Williams University so as to determine if one of their vans might be suitable for senior transportation.

**Boards and Commissions - 405**

**Historic District Commission - Oryann Lima, Vice-chairman**

Ms. Lima stated that she was not certain as to the budget cuts as recommended by Town Administrator Mederos but suggested that the Commission might be able to have a smaller budget for dues and subscriptions.

A discussion ensued regarding the Board's attorney with Ms. Lima informing the Council that Assistant Solicitor Teitz represents the Board on an as-needed basis; this being only for difficult cases perhaps three (3) or four (4) per year.

Ms. Lima also reminded the Council that the Commission now charges a modest application fee and that this fee is reflected on the revenue page of the budget.

**Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force - Victoria White, Chairman**

Ms. White outlined some of the Task Force's accomplishments to date including \$6000 for surveillance cameras at the Town Beach and also \$10000 to support police "party patrols."

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She also outlined several other of the SAPTF's supported/sponsored programs including:

"Chance to Dance," "Sense of Pride," King Philip Little League, Boy Scouts of America, student administrative counselor at Mt. Hope High School, after school program in Warren, and others.

Ms. White noted that the Town is required to provide in-kind matching contributions of approximately \$6,000.

Councilwoman Parella stated that "in-kind" does not usually mean payment in cash but rather covers expenses for housing, office supplies, mailing, telephone, etc.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know the value of the grant funds received by the SAPTF with Ms. White responding that the SAPTF receives \$ .5 million over a three (3) year period.

Council Chairman Marshall stated that Town Administrator Mederos' thoughts concerning this agency were not apparent in the budget presentation and that he was of the opinion that the Council should hold this matter in abeyance pending a report from the Town Administrator.

**Personnel Board - No representative Present**

It was noted for the record that the minimum amount of \$250 remaining in this line would cover the cost of memberships.

**Fire Department - 704 - Robert J. Martin, Chief**

Fire Chief Martin reported that the revenue projections provided as part of this budget were "very conservative" and that he fully expects to exceed these.

Councilman Barboza asked about the reimbursement billing related to Haz-mat services with Fire Chief Martin responding that the bills are being sent out to the insurance companies and these companies are not reacting to the bills. He explained that it might be some time before the billing is accepted as common practice and the revenues will increase with these billings also.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know the "typical amount" for a Haz-mat billing with Fire Chief Martin responding that these will average approximately \$450 each.

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Council Chairman Marshall suggested that the Council may wish to pose this question to Town Solicitor Ursillo. He further speculated that the matter may require legislative action.

Councilman Herreshoff suggested that the matter may remain unsettled until one of the parties has a "conspicuous victory."

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know why there was a salary increase for the Fire Chief with Fire Chief Martin responding that he has an independent contract with the Town that allows for this increase.

Fire Chief Martin also noted that he understood that capital expenditures will be considered on a priority basis and noted that his account for "rescue stipends" will be in deficit this year. He explained that the budget request amount of \$95,000 was more realistic for this line.

Fire Chief Martin further explained that he foresees over 3000 calls and these average more than \$30 per call. He also noted that the rescue service is running effectively.

Councilwoman Parella asked if Fire Chief Martin could potentially take lower amounts in other line items to offset an increase in the Rescue Stipend line item with Fire Chief Martin responding that the other lines "will be close."

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know if the new building will escalate the operational cost of the Fire Department overall with Fire Chief Martin responding that the new building will be more efficient and also the Franklin Street building will be de-accessioned and the present headquarters will no longer be used full-time thus saving on utilities.

Councilwoman Parella suggested that a plan for energy efficiencies might be developed for all of the fire houses.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to hold the matter of the Rescue Stipends in abeyance pending further Council consideration.

The Council received the back-up materials from Destination Bristol and PawsWatch but took no specific action regarding same.

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Councilman Herreshoff suggested that the Council may wish to revisit the entire matter of the Human Resources budget and shift some funding to "human" programs.

2. N. Diane Davis re Mt. Hope High School Marching Band

Barboza/Parella - Voted unanimously to appropriate \$400 from Council Contingency to support this endeavor.

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk noted receipt of the letter from Ms. Davis and recalled that Ms. Davis asked the Council for its support of the MHHS Band trip to Washington, D.C.

3. Interviews

**Robert Aldrich - Charter Review Commission**

Council Chairman Marshall noted that since Mr. Aldrich is a member of the Redevelopment Agency he would not qualify to serve in an additional capacity. He asked Mr. Aldrich if he might be willing to relinquish one position in favor of the other with Mr. Aldrich responding that he was enjoying the Redevelopment Agency.

**Antonio Teixeira - Charter Review Commission**

Mr. Teixeira noted that he was a member of the Christmas Festival Committee. It was noted that the Charter Review Commission may have members of other boards and commission as part of its ranks. The Clerk noted that only certain other boards are restrictive; these being the Zoning Board of Review, the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Redevelopment Agency, etc.

Mr. Teixeira stated that he was of the opinion that service on the Charter Review Commission would be a good way for him to "give back" something to the Town that would draw upon his thirty-one (31) years of experience working for the town schools.

Council Chairman Marshall explained that although the Charter Review Commission represents a good deal of work and commitment it does have "a beginning and an end."

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Councilman Herreshoff asked Mr. Teixeira if he had read the Charter thoroughly with Mr. Teixeira responding that he has not yet done this.

Councilwoman Parella explained that the Charter Review Commission will have approximately one year to complete their work and prepare their findings and recommendations for the Council's approval and the general election ballot. She also stated that she was in favor of the Commission selecting "work groups" which might examine components of the Charter independently.

Mr. Teixeira thanked the Council for the interview and stated that he would look forward to the opportunity to be of service.

**Edward Correia - Charter Review Commission**

Mr. Correia informed the Council that he served recently on the Zoning Board of Review and enjoyed his tenure on same.

Councilman Cordeiro asked to know if Mr. Correia had read the Charter with Mr. Correia stating that he had not yet read the Charter but that he was familiar with some of its provisions.

Mr. Correia also explained that he was of the opinion that some of the Council's restrictions of authority should be examined and further explained that he was of the opinion that appeals from decisions of the Zoning Board of Review might be better handled by the Council than the Superior Court. He noted that there were likely other restrictions in need of loosening.

Councilwoman Parella stated that the budget dates might be examined since there appear to be some need to amend these to allow for more flexibility.

Councilman Herreshoff suggested that Mr. Correia's life experience appears suitable for the Charter Review with Mr. Correia noting that he has monitored Council and School Committee business closely for several years.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that any recommendations for Charter change should be done carefully.

Councilwoman Parella noted that some of the provisions of the Charter considered certain responsibilities of positions when these were part time and that now that these may be full time different rules should apply.

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Councilman Herreshoff stated that the Council's selection of Charter Review Commission members should allow for a "variety of inputs" and that he would like the members to be "stable" people without a "radical approach." Councilman Herreshoff also explained his opinion that the document requires a "fine tuning."

Councilwoman Parella suggested that the Council may wish to sponsor an "educational forum" on the proposed Charter changes once these are going to be put before the voters.

**Joseph Parella - Charter Review Commission**

Former Town Administrator Parella stated that he was interested in promoting some Charter changes that he proposed during his tenure as Town Administrator one being the change of the Town Administrator's title to "mayor." He explained his thoughts on this change in that some State officials consider a "town administrator" as a "hired gun" rather than an elected official which usually commands greater consideration.

Mr. Parella also informed the Council that the provisions in the Town Code for the Recreation Department were antiquated and in need of revision as are some in the Town Charter relating to the Personnel Board.

A discussion ensued regarding the Personnel Board's role and the provisions of the Charter.

Councilwoman Parella stated that it may be advisable to have a member of the Charter Review Commission who has "lived with it."

Mr. Parella stated that although he has shied away from public roles since leaving office, he decided to place his name in consideration for this appointment since he did in-fact "live" with the Charter for many years and has something to offer to the process.

Mr. Parella also informed the Council that he was of the opinion that the Town has "an efficient government that needs tweaking."

**Bruce Kogan - Zoning Board of Review member or alternate**

Mr. Kogan informed the Council that he established the mediation clinic at Roger Williams University since this will likely be the wave of the future since the cost of litigation too

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expensive. He also stated that this is used as a learning tool for students.

He also noted that the cases brought to mediation tend to settle 80-85% of the time.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know if the mediation clinic at Roger Williams University was a "model" program with Mr. Kogan responding that several other schools have similar programs albeit most of them specialize in one or several particular areas.

Councilman Barboza asked to know why Mr. Kogan would like to be elevated to full-membership versus remaining the alternate with Mr. Kogan noting that he has not missed a meeting since becoming an alternate member and he has a "good familiarity" with the operation of the Board. He also noted that he feels comfortable "framing motions" when other members appear ill at ease regarding same.

Mr. Kogan noted that Mr. McMullen tends to frame most of the motions of the Board and that these must be done properly in consideration of findings of fact otherwise the Board's decisions might be overturned in Superior Court or remanded back to the Board.

Mr. Kogan noted that boards in other Towns which rely upon properly framed motions "building a record" based upon findings of fact tend to have greater successes and are not typically overturned or remanded.

**David Raposa - Zoning Board of Review member or alternate**

Mr. Raposa informed the Council that he considered himself "pretty much" a candidate for alternate member. He stated that he would like to "get involved" with the Town and "give (something) back" since he "loves it here."

Council Chairman Marshall noted that Mr. Raposa was skilled in construction and civil engineering with Mr. Raposa responding affirmatively and that he has worked as a construction foreman and also on the new Fire Department Headquarters.

Councilwoman Parella noted that there were many boards and commissions in Town service and asked why Mr. Raposa chose to enquire about this one in particular with Mr. Raposa responding that he had expertise in the field and chose to "pick one."

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Mr. Raposa also stated that he believes he can contribute to improve the board.

Councilwoman Parella asked if Mr. Raposa was aware of any particular problems with the Zoning Board of Review with Mr. Raposa explaining that he was not aware of any but that he would like to become involved.

Councilman Barboza stated that it was apparent that Mr. Raposa's skill set was applicable to the Zoning Board of Review.

Council Chairman Marshall stated that he began his public service as an alternate to the Zoning Board of Review and that this was a great learning experience for him. He noted that during his tenure as an alternate member he was called to sit many times and that he was of the opinion that the Board was "always fair to all who apply."

Councilwoman Parella commented that the Zoning Board of Review has been non-controversial in recent years.

**Edward Stuart Jr. - Zoning Board of Review alternate member**

Responding to questions posed by Councilman Herreshoff, Mr. Stuart informed the Council that he was first appointed as Zoning Board alternate member in November of 2008 and that his tenure thus far has been a "good learning experience."

Mr. Stuart stated that he was in agreement with Mr. Kogan regarding the framing of findings of fact and that he would appreciate the opportunity to be "part of the team."

Responding to questions posed by Council Chairman Marshall, Mr. Stuart explained that although he does seek reappointment to the position of alternate member he would accept a full membership should the Council choose to appoint him to same.

Responding to questions posed by Councilwoman Parella, Mr. Stuart noted that he was a linesman for Verizon and that he worked for the Town of Bristol for nine (9) years in the past during which time he was not able to volunteer for Town boards.

Mr. Stuart also informed the Council that he would like to do his part to preserve the "gem" that is Bristol. He noted that he metaphorically considered himself part of the "Brinks team."

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There being no further business upon a motion by Councilman Herreshoff seconded by Councilman Barboza and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this workshop to be adjourned at 9:30 o'clock PM.

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Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk