

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING
APRIL 2, 2009 (CONTINUED FROM MARCH 25, 2009)**

PRESENT: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella (arrived at 7:22 o'clock PM), Barboza, and Herreshoff

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator Mederos
Town Treasurer Day

The Council resumed its workshop session of Wednesday evening, March 25, 2009 on April 2, 2009 in the Sisson Court Room of the Bristol State House beginning at 7:05 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Town Treasurer Day recommended that the Council consider a modest increase in the tax rate (\$.07) to cover the cost of the increase in School Budget due to the increase in The Town's student population.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know if the salaries of Town employees were already negotiated with Town Treasurer Day responding affirmatively. A discussion ensued regarding reductions in Town employees or perhaps unpaid leave or furloughs.

Town Administrator Mederos reported that the proposed budget already considers an overall \$350,000 reduction in personnel costs.

Council Chairman Marshall, with Councilman Herreshoff in agreement asked that the budget for Animal Control should be considered along with that of the Police Department and that it appeared inappropriate for the Animal Control Officer to present her budget alone since she reports to the Police Department. Councilman Barboza suggested that the Police Chief might present the Animal Control budget in the future.

Town Administrator Mederos agreed to look into this matter and implement a new procedure.

Council Chairman Marshall asked if it might be appropriate to change the "Human Resources" procedure with the Council appropriating a "bottom line" amount and the individual appropriations being managed by a department head or committee and that the funding might be dependent upon the revenues generated by the trust fund.

Councilwoman Parella arrived at this point in the meeting (7:22 o'clock PM)

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING
APRIL 2, 2009 (CONTINUED FROM MARCH 25, 2009)**

Boards and Commissions - 405 - Substance Abuse

A discussion ensued regarding the request of the Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force with Councilman Herreshoff asking and Town Administrator Mederos confirming that the Town's matching funds can be in-kind. Town Administrator Mederos reported that the Task Force is in need of office space and that she has agreed to look for same.

The Council, at the request of Councilman Barboza, agreed to leave \$1 in the account for the Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force.

Fire Department - 704

A discussion ensued regarding the Rescue Stipend line item with Town Administrator Mederos reporting that she was mistaken when she recommended the \$20,000 cut since she was given the impression that this was for a rate increase. Town Administrator Mederos and the Council were later informed that the increase in this line was directly attributable to the number of rescue responses at the old rate.

The Clerk suggested that the revenue side of this budget might be increased since Fire Chief Martin reported that the revenue was "extremely conservative" and that he planned to exceed same.

The Council, with Councilman Barboza dissenting agreed to increase the Fire Department revenue line by \$20,000 and also increase the Rescue Stipend line by an equivalent amount.

Councilman Barboza stated that he objected to the Council's "nickel-and-diming" the Fire Department since it saves \$6 million per year with Councilwoman Parella stating that she did not understand Councilman Barboza's objection since the net result was an additional \$20,000 for the Department's budget.

A discussion ensued regarding the line item for "Maint. TBD" with Town Administrator Mederos reporting that it is likely that Fire Chief Martin will be appointing a new maintenance person to an existing position and that person is not yet identified.

It was agreed, by consensus, to level fund the Assistant Fire Marshal position at \$20,000 per the recommendation of Town Administrator Mederos.

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING
APRIL 2, 2009 (CONTINUED FROM MARCH 25, 2009)**

Human Resources - 805

A discussion ensued regarding the Human Resources budget with Town Treasurer Day reporting that approximately 6 agencies never picked up their checks from last year. Councilwoman Parella speculated that the agencies may not have realized that it was their responsibility to pick up the checks but rather expected any checks to appear in the mail.

A discussion ensued about the amount appropriated for Human Resources with Council Members in agreement that this amount was inflated to exceed the income from the trust funds over time when funds were available and the Council was generous with same.

It is hereby noted for the Record that the Clerk asked to be excused temporarily in order to attend another meeting and the following notes were taken by the Deputy Clerk.

After a discussion regarding the various line items the Council agreed to the following amounts:

VNA of RI	2,500
East Bay ARC	2,500
Women's Resource	2,250
East Bay Center	35,000
East Bay Community Action	25,000
Cooperative Extension	0
Benj. Church Tenants Assoc.	750
Visiting Nurses Service	7,500
Bristol Senior Chorus	500
Mustangs	1,250
King Philip Little League	1
Franklin Court Tenants	750
Bristol Wrestling	1,250
Bristol Senior Council	500
Boy Scouts of America	1,400
Mosaico	6,500
Bristol Museum Assoc.	1,000
Volunteer Center of RI	0
Bristol Merchants Assoc.	1,000
Destination Bristol	1,000
Bristol Youth Soccer	0
Arts Festival	500*
Banda Filarmonica	500
Harbor Lights	500
Cornerstone Adult Services	1,000

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING
APRIL 2, 2009 (CONTINUED FROM MARCH 25, 2009)**

WRARI	0
Samaritans	500
American Red Cross	750
Coggeshall Farm	1,000
Pawswatch	1,250
Literacy Volunteers	500
Portuguese School	625
BVFD Emergency Dialers	1**
Bristol Theater Company	1
Save Bristol Harbor	500
Meals on Wheels	1,000
Pastime Theatre Foundation	1
Bristol Art Museum	0
Colt/Andrews Playground	0***

* It was suggested that Mr. Margiotta should change the name of this festival since it is now the same name as his "for profit" gallery.

** This matter will be considered for a special appropriation from the Council Contingency on April 22, 2009.

*** This matter was considered for a special appropriation of \$5000 on April 1, 2009.

It is hereby noted for the record that the Clerk returned and resumed recording the minutes at this point in the meeting.

Capital Funds

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if the capital funding program of \$500,000 Town-wide remained intact in the budget with Town Treasurer Day responding affirmatively. Councilman Herreshoff stated that he was of the opinion that the entire \$500,000 would be needed for capital purchases and projects.

A discussion ensued regarding the amount that might be considered for a tax rate increase with the Council in agreement that the State cuts and the increase in school population ratio were generally the cause of any increases.

Town Treasurer Day noted that the tax base was yet to be determined and the amount of state aid remains a mystery this making the budget process at best a speculation.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if it might be possible to reduce the amount set aside for capital improvements with Town

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING
APRIL 2, 2009 (CONTINUED FROM MARCH 25, 2009)**

Treasurer Day recommending that the Council keep the capital budget intact. Town Treasurer Day noted that much of the State's problems are attributable to weak infrastructure and that Town Administrator Mederos had already trimmed from the \$900,000 departmental capital requests.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that the elimination of capital projects "will bite you later."

Councilwoman Parella asked to know what the anticipated average tax bill increase might be given the budget thus far with Town Treasurer Day responding that it would likely be approximately \$30 annually with Councilwoman Parella responding that although she was seeking a zero increase, a \$30 increase did not seem too difficult.

A further discussion ensued regarding the budgeting process with Councilman Barboza noting that the School District is informed about the school population in October and that the Town should receive this information at the same time. He and Town Administrator Mederos agreed to work on this 'disconnect.'

The Council asked that a press release might be prepared to explain the reasons for any tax rate increases. Councilman Herreshoff suggested that the press release should specifically explain the increase related to the school population shift.

Regarding the proposed transfer of funds, the Clerk noted that this will no longer be necessary since Ms. St. Angelo has announced her retirement and is no longer on sick leave.

Barboza/Parella - Voted unanimously to place this matter on the table.

There being no further business upon a motion by Councilman Barboza, seconded by Councilwoman Parella and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 9:17 o'clock PM.

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk