

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - MONDAY EVENING - APRIL 13, 2009

Present: Marshall, Parella (arrived at 7:30 o'clock PM), and Barboza

Also Present: Town Administrator Mederos
Town Treasurer Day

Absent: Cordeiro and Herreshoff

The Council met in special session on Monday evening, April 13, 2009 in the Town Hall, Council Chambers beginning at 7:30 o'clock PM for the purposes of conducting interviews and the adoption of the Provisional Budget for 2009-2010.

It is hereby noted for the record that the call to order was delayed until the arrival of Councilwoman Parella at 7:30 o'clock PM but the Council members present beforehand informally began their interviews of prospective candidates at 7:15 o'clock PM.

Interviews

Crystal Pacheco - Recreation Board

Ms. Pacheco stated that she appreciates the opportunity to be considered for the alternate position on the Recreation Board and informed the Council that she believed she possesses the energy level needed for the position.

She also noted that she is aware of the needs of the Board since she currently serves as Board Secretary; a position due to expire in July with the new budget.

Ms. Pacheco stated that she was in support of the efforts of Recreation Director Burke and Assistant Director Klein and that the program needs the direct participation and encouragement of the Board members.

Council Chairman Marshall stated that it was not the role of the Board to micromanage the day to day operation of the department but the Board should rather be an "arm of the Council" recommending policy, program and facility improvements. He further stated that the Board "going line by line" on the monthly budget reports was a waste of time and best left to the administration.

Council Chairman Marshall informed Ms. Pacheco that the Council recently "moved-up" the former alternate member and asked her if

she was interested in becoming the new alternate albeit that she applied for full membership. Ms. Pacheco stated that she did not mind becoming an alternate member.

Councilman Barboza stated that he was in favor of elevating alternate members of boards for full membership as the positions become available.

Councilman Barboza asked Ms. Pacheco if the Board needed a secretary with Ms. Pacheco stating that the position was probably not necessary in its present form and that she was surprised that it was not eliminated sooner. Councilman Barboza also commented that the experience as Board secretary would be useful for Ms. Pacheco since she would be familiar with the other members and the Board's plans and issues.

Ms. Pacheco also informed the Council that she recently resigned from the Hopeworth Association and will have sufficient time to devote to the Recreation Board.

John Stafford - Conservation Commission

Mr. Stafford explained that he was "settled" in Bristol having lived here for six years and was the father of a one year old son. He noted that his work causes him to "travel all over New England" and that he appreciates Bristol because it is "classic and not flashy."

He stated that he found it "shocking" that persons he knows in New Hampshire are aware of Bristol and consider it a "hidden secret" destination spot.

Mr. Stafford also informed the Council that he was pleased with the Town's right of way program and that the marker at the end of his street has clarified same.

Mr. Stafford informed the Council that one of his goals as a member of the Conservation Commission would be to afford more people access to the Town's natural resources.

Mr. Stafford noted that he spent his childhood in Washington, D.C. and that he now works at Raytheon Company in Portsmouth.

Council Chairman Marshall stated that one of the goals of the Conservation Commission is to "mirror" the Aquidneck Land Trust and to help the Council preserve open space and natural resources.

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - MONDAY EVENING - APRIL 13, 2009

Mr. Stafford stated that it may be useful for the Town to inventory its assets and provide a plan for balanced growth.

Councilman Barboza stated that he was pleased to hear Mr. Stafford articulate a long-range vision.

Councilwoman Parella arrived at this point in the meeting (7:30 o'clock PM).

Council Chairman Marshall noted that the Conservation Commission was "a good group" and that Chairman Payson is in need of energetic members to help with the Commission's many goals and responsibilities.

In closing, Mr. Stafford stated that he would appreciate the opportunity to serve and fill the vacancy on the Commission.

Michael DeMello - Charter Review Commission

Council Chairman Marshall stated that the Charter Review Commission has a "beginning and end" with Mr. DeMello explaining that he finds the aspects of a Charter Review Commission more in line with his educational pursuits. He also explained that although he enjoys the Redevelopment Agency, his responsibility as third-alternate might be better traded for a more direct role on the Charter Review Commission.

Mr. DeMello also informed the Council that he is seeking a Master's degree in Public Administration and that a Charter Review will likely provide practical experience for him.

Responding to a question posed by Councilwoman Parella, Mr. DeMello explained that he knew of no particular area that "jumped out" as a potential amendment although he would be most willing to examine the entire document as part of the process. Mr. DeMello also informed the Council that there were likely many "housekeeping" issues that should be addressed since the document is somewhat dated.

Councilman Barboza stated that Mr. DeMello would be a good candidate to "look at the Fire Chief" qualifications for the future and also that he was of the opinion that the Charter was in need of "tightening."

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - MONDAY EVENING - APRIL 13, 2009

Councilwoman Parella noted her concerns that the Personnel Section and also the Recreation Section might need adjusting in both the Charter and Town Code.

Mr. DeMello agreed that these areas deserved a careful examination and that a goal of the Commission should be to consider efficiencies and to look at the charters of other towns as examples.

Mr. DeMello also noted that he considered the Redevelopment Agency as a "good board" but he was of the opinion that the Charter Review Commission would have work with "long standing effects."

Mr. DeMello thanked the Council for the opportunity for this interview.

Provisional Budget

Councilwoman Parella asked to know the effect of \$.01 increase to the tax rate with Town Treasurer Day explaining that each \$.01 yields approximately \$32,000 in revenue.

Town Treasurer Day reported that the motor vehicle tax roll might be lower than originally anticipated. He also noted that the Town Ordinance regarding the surplus level is set at 10% and that the current budget proposal lowers same to 9%.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if a 7% surplus was problematic with Town Treasurer Day responding that this would not be in compliance with the ordinance.

Barboza asked Town Treasurer Day to provide his "best advice" with Town Treasurer Day responding that next year may be more difficult if this year's budget is insufficiently funded. He recommended that the Council consider proposing a tax rate increase of \$.12 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation based upon the budget as presented.

Council members present discussed various scenarios with Councilwoman Parella explaining that the Council was attempting to resolve the budget questions having less information than what is typical.

After additional discussion, the Council considered the following budget for Schedule A, Schedule B and Schedule C as follows:

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - MONDAY EVENING - APRIL 13, 2009

Schedule "A" Operating \$ 38,921,430
Schedule "B" Capital \$ 500,000 (component of Sch. A)
Schedule "C" Enterprise \$ 4,699,623

Barboza/Parella - Voted unanimously to adopt the Provisional Budget Schedules A, B, and C as presented above and to authorize the publication of same and to call for a Public Hearing on Monday, April 27, 2009 beginning at 7:00 o'clock PM.

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 8:35 o'clock PM.

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk