

**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - TUESDAY EVENING - MARCH 16, 2010**

PRESENT: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella, Barboza, and Herreshoff

ALSO PRESENT: Diane C. Mederos, Town Administrator  
John M. Day, Town Treasurer

The Council met in workshop session to consider the 2010-2011 Town Budget, on Tuesday evening, March 16, 2010, in the Town Hall, Council Chambers beginning at 7:10 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Documents Received:

- Council Clerk re Matters Referred to 2010-2011 Budget Deliberations
- (Town Treasurer Day) re excerpt from audit report "Financial Statement Overview"

Councilman Herreshoff asked if Town Treasurer Day could "enlighten" the Council on the status of the budget surplus with Town Treasurer Day referring to the audit report "explanation of financial statement overview" found on Page 9 of the report.

Town Treasurer Day reported that the auditing firm determined that the Town has a surplus of \$10,532,418 effective June 30, 2009.

A discussion ensued regarding the School budget with Councilman Barboza noting that the district anticipates a "shift" of 20 students.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that the aid to education formula as proposed by Commissioner Gist represents a "double-cross" to the Town since it agreed to become regionalized with Warren in consideration of a "regionalization bonus" and now the State appears to be reneging on its promise for same.

Councilman Cordeiro stated that the proposed formula appears to be a penalty for "doing the right thing."

**Department of Public Works - 603 - Fred Serbst, Director**

Council Chairman Marshall noted that some trucks at the Department of Public Works appear to be in need of attention with Public Works Director Serbst inviting Council members to the garage to see the condition of same first-hand.

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Public Works Director Serbst noted that the department is able to complete some repairs on its equipment and that he recently spent \$9,000 to restore a backhoe in order to "get another ten (10) years" of use from the vehicle.

Public Works Director Serbst also reported that the department regularly fixes-up older trucks for use in the plowing and sanding operation since new trucks can be easily ruined by the process within seven (7) years.

Public Works Director Serbst also noted that the Town is investigating a grant for a new recycling truck.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know if this would be a larger recycling truck with Public Works Director Serbst responding that he uses three (3) trucks on the road.

A discussion ensued regarding capital expenditures with Public Works Director Serbst noting that he would need a small truck and also that a stake-body truck should be retrofitted in order that it might be used to pick up furniture, etc.

Council Chairman Marshall noted that the Department does a good deal of work outside of what might be considered as "typical."

Town Administrator Mederos noted that Public Works Director Serbst has a "good crew."

Councilwoman Parella asked to know the status of the Snow and Ice account with Public Works Director Serbst responding that this year's account appears to be running approximately \$100,000 in the red and also that the need for the snow and ice materials is often simply guesswork due to changes in the weather.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know the Town's plan for overall capital appropriations with Town Administrator Mederos responding that she has budgeted \$300,000 for capital expenditures versus last year's \$400,000 appropriation. She further noted that last year's appropriation is approximately one-third (1/3) expended to date.

A discussion ensued regarding a drainage pipe that is located under Independence Park with Council members suggesting that any work on this pipe should be carefully coordinated within the departments.

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Councilwoman Parella suggested that the Council may wish to have a workshop regarding its recycling program and also that it may also wish to sponsor a public relations campaign to increase recycling. She noted that the City of Providence will not pick up trash if there is no accompanying recycling bin.

Town Administrator Mederos noted that she is aware of this program and noted that there are some difficulties associated with a no-bin no-trash approach.

Public Works Director Serbst noted that there are two (2) new recycling programs underway these being the condominium complex program and the business recycling. He noted that the latter was still in "infancy."

It was suggested that the Council and Administration should have a workshop devoted to the topic of increasing recycling in Town.

Councilwoman Parella suggested that there should be some budget for a public relations campaign with Town Administrator Mederos reporting that there may be funds available in this year's budget for a public relations campaign.

Council Chairman Marshall stated that it appears that Bristol citizens do a generally good job with recycling with Public Works Director Serbst in agreement. He explained that since the Town picks up trash from businesses, its recycling figures are slightly skewed since the business recycling is low as compared to the residential recycling.

Councilman Cordeiro asked to know if there was a plan to store cardboard for recycling with Public Works Director Serbst responding that this would require a capital outlay and expensive start-up costs.

Council Chairman Marshall suggested that there might be a five (5) year capital plan developed for cardboard recycling and also suggested that Public Works Director Serbst might investigate the recycling program in place in Middletown. Public Works Director Serbst agreed to do this.

The Council made no changes to the amounts as recommended by the Town Administrator.

**Water Pollution Control/Composting/Enterprise Fund - 604/606/607  
- Matthew Calderiso, Superintendent**

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Water Pollution Control Superintendent Calderiso stated that he was in agreement with the appropriation as recommended by Town Administrator Mederos.

Water Pollution Control Superintendent Calderiso noted that the utilities will finish the current fiscal year with a deficit of approximately \$80,000.

Council Chairman Marshall suggested that the Town may wish to have a bond issue to purchase a wind turbine for this department.

Water Pollution Control Superintendent Calderiso noted that the State Revolving Fund (SRF) may offset the borrowing cost for a wind turbine. He agreed to investigate the matter.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know the cost of the Portsmouth turbine with Council Chairman Marshall responding that the turbine cost \$3.5 million.

Town Treasurer Day noted that the budget requires a \$27 sewer use fee increase since the twenty (20) year sewer assessments are nearly all paid.

Water Pollution Control Superintendent Calderiso noted that the DEM continues to "slap around" the Town when system failures occur.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know if the Town received emergency funds when the sewer overflows with Water Pollution Control Superintendent Calderiso noting that the system sustained no damage. The problem resulted from the excessive water in the system.

Council Chairman Marshall suggested that the Town should invite Curt Spalding to Town so that he might examine our remediation efforts first hand. The Clerk and Town Administrator Mederos agreed to send an invitation to Mr. Spalding.

The Council made no changes to the amounts as recommended by the Town Administrator.

**Municipal Observances - 806**

**Fourth of July Celebration** - Judy Squires, Chairman and Donna Falcoa

Ms. Squires informed the Council that the Chief Marshal announcement is planned for April 7. She invited the Council to attend the event.

The Council, by consensus agreed to raise the Town Administrator's recommendation for the Fourth of July from \$10,000 to \$12,500.

**Patriotism**

Councilman Herreshoff suggested that the flags might be flown more often.

Council Chairman Marshall suggested that the Council may wish to revisit this particular line item prior to finalizing the budget.

**Christmas Festival Committee - Denise Asciola**

Ms. Asciola noted that Patricia Baccus, Chairman, could not be present this evening but asked Ms. Asciola to extend her thanks to the Council for its support of the Festival.

Councilman Cordeiro asked Ms. Asciola if the \$5,000 was sufficient with Ms. Asciola responding affirmatively. Ms. Asciola also noted that the Committee approved a shorter route for the lights in order to save funds.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that the lighting along the shorter route appeared to be better than the previous route with Councilwoman Parella stating that she preferred the longer route. Denise also noted that the School Department "didn't want" the second snowflake on Guiteras School grounds. She also noted that there remains some difficulty with National Grid concerning placing the snowflakes on the street with Councilman Herreshoff volunteering to be part of any negotiations with the utility company.

The Council reviewed the remainder of the lines and approved same as recommended by Town Administrator Mederos with the exception of the possible reconsideration of the "patriotism." line prior to adoption.

**Rogers Free Library - 802 - Joan Prescott, Librarian**

Librarian Prescott informed the Council that the one (1) year warranty period for most of the buildings' systems has expired

and that there is a need to establish and fund service contracts for same this leading to a \$10,000 increase in the maintenance line item.

Council Chairman Marshall noted that Capital expenditures will be funded through a "pool" of funds as the procedure in the current year's budget.

A discussion ensued regarding the "battery backup system" that is installed in the Library with Librarian Prescott describing same as a "Cadillac." She noted that she would prefer a less-elaborate system but was reluctant to remove and abandon new equipment at this point.

The Council made no changes to the amounts as recommended by the Town Administrator.

**Parks and Recreation - 802 - Walter Burke, Director**

Recreation Director Burke explained that the Summer Camp will be increased by two (2) days due to this year's calendar.

Recreation Director Burke also explained that lifeguards will now be on duty until Labor Day; a practice that is typical at other public beaches.

Councilwoman Parella suggested that the Town may wish to consider having lifeguards on duty for longer hours on particularly hot days since beachgoers may wish to find relief from the heat later in the day than what would be typical.

Recreation Director Burke reported that the access to the beach will be determined based upon the crowds using same and that he was in agreement that lifeguard hours could be extended if the need arises.

A discussion ensued regarding the use of Trek bicycles at Independence Park. It was noted for the record that Councilman Cordeiro and Town Administrator Mederos would prefer if these were not commonly used in the park.

It was noted that there are discussions concerning the drainage pipe under Independence Park in need of repair. It was suggested that the various departments should coordinate this repair as previously noted.

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Councilwoman Parella suggested that any repair to this pipe might take place after the Fourth of July with Town Administrator Mederos noting that she would discuss same with Public Works Director Serbst and Recreation Director Burke.

Councilwoman Parella noted that the pathway leading from the new parking lot at the Town Beach was difficult to locate since these appear to be footpaths through a thicket of brush. It was suggested that the pathways might be better defined and graded for easier passage.

Recreation Director Burke outlined a \$100,000 plan for trails, walkways, etc, including three miles of trails nearby the Town Beach leading up to the Quinta-Gamelin building.

Councilwoman Parella stated that she thought that the project outlined by Recreation Director Burke was "nice" but that she was looking for a fairly simple improvement to connect the new gravel parking lot to the athletic field area. She noted that the Town should be able to improve the pathways at minimal cost and effort.

Town Administrator Mederos suggested that Recreation Director Burke might provide the Council with an update regarding the Quinta-Gamelin Center.

Recreation Director Burke reported that he heard from representatives from the National Park Service last week and also from the BRAC officials. He noted that the target date for the Town's acquisition of the property is September 15, 2011 but this date remains tentative.

He noted that the government has installed two (2) new boilers, a new roof on the building, and new sprinklers. He will ask the Army to remove the second floor installed some time ago in the gymnasium.

It was suggested that the Recreation department might develop a pre-acquisition budget plan for the Quinta-Gamelin center.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know if the Bristol YMCA Fund might be available for this purpose.

The Council made no changes to the amounts as recommended by the Town Administrator.

**Town Administrator - 402 - Diane C. Mederos, Town Administrator**

The Council made no changes to the amounts as recommended by the Town Administrator.

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

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