

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING - MARCH 18, 2010

PRESENT: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella (arrived at 7:15 o'clock PM), 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 Thursday evening, March 18, 2010, in the Town Hall, Council Chambers beginning at 7:10 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Documents Received:

- Jonathan Stone, Executive Director, Save the Bay to Councilman Herreshoff re town contribution for LNG opposition (no action taken on this matter)
- Richard Pimenta, Building Official re Municipal Permit Administration Fee (no action taken on this matter)
- Geraldine Turbeville, CDBG Program Manager, re CDBG Application Discussion

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

Chairman O'Donnell reported that the Board anticipates a September primary and the regular election to be held in November.

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

Councilman Herreshoff asked Town Treasurer Day if there was an anticipated increase in property assessments with Town Treasurer Day responding that Tax Assessor Spagnolo anticipates that any increases in assessments may be offset by abatements.

Councilwoman Parella arrived at this point in the workshop (7:15 o'clock PM).

Benjamin Church Senior Center - 807 - Rita Ayres-Gaulin, Director

Director Ayres-Gaulin reported that her budget request is for level-funding with the exception of salaries. For salaries, Director Ayres-Gaulin reported that she included a three percent (3%) increase for the Senior Center employees.

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING - MARCH 18, 2010

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

Boards and Commissions - 405

North and East Burial Ground

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

Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force

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

Personnel Board

Town Administrator Mederos reported that the budgeted amount (\$250) is for professional dues.

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

Historic District Commission - Oryann Lima, Chairman

Chairman Lima reported that the Commission will allow "sign-offs" as of April and also that the duties of Susan Church, Staff Assistant, have increased. She added that the funding will allow for additional office hours and that these would be beneficial to the work of the Commission.

Councilman Herreshoff expressed concern that the amount specified was excessive and asked what would happen if the workload of the Staff Assistant diminished with Chairman Lima reporting that Staff Assistant Church has an hourly rate and that if there was no work for her she would not be paid the additional available funds.

Council members noted that some of the cost of this commission is offset by fees and fines collected.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to raise the appropriation for this account to \$25,000.

Fire Department/Emergency Management - 704 - Robert Martin, Chief

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING - MARCH 18, 2010

Council Chairman Marshall enquired concerning the salary for the Assistant Fire Marshal with Fire Chief Martin responding that this position is funded from fees for plan review and that only a portion of the salary was budgeted in the past; the remainder paid directly from the revenue line.

Council Chairman Marshall expressed concern that the Council was unaware of this process with Fire Chief Martin explaining that this practice was established initially and that the salary is tentative since the Fire Marshal's hours depends upon the amount of service needed.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that the typical established practice is that all non-specified fees are placed in the General Fund and that the Council budgets from the General Fund.

Town Treasurer Day noted that there is a specific fund established to support fire prevention and that this fund is expended at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

Councilwoman Parella asked Fire Chief Martin to clarify the arrangement for the Fire Marshal's pay with Fire Chief Martin confirming that these wages are currently paid with fifty percent (50%) from the salary account and the remaining fifty percent (50%) from revenues.

Town Treasurer Day suggested that if the Council determines that the Fire Marshal might receive a larger portion of his wages from the salary line, there should be an offset added to department revenues since this would reflect a net-zero change and also mirror what has been the established practice.

Council Chairman Marshall suggested that the entire amount of the Fire Marshal's wages might be paid from fees.

Councilman Herreshoff agreed that any change to the salary line might be reflected as "in (revenue) and out (expenditure)" with a net-zero effect.

A discussion ensued regarding the Fire Marshal with Fire Chief Martin noting that this person is needed to inspect businesses regularly and that the need to do so is a fairly new practice since the Station Nightclub fire.

Councilman Cordeiro noted that he has received complaints regarding the Fire Marshal in that residents appear unaware as to why this position is necessary with Fire Chief Martin

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP - THURSDAY EVENING - MARCH 18, 2010

agreeing to speak to any and all constituents who wish to know the rationale for having a Fire Marshal.

Councilwoman Parella agreed that there are many new State mandates that amount to an over-reaction to the Station Nightclub fire.

A discussion ensued regarding the various responsibilities of the Town for fire inspections, etc.

Council Chairman Marshall informed Fire Chief Martin and the Council that he has "a problem" with the individual serving in the capacity of Fire Marshal with Fire Chief Martin noting that he would address any performance issues with the individual.

The Council, by consensus, agreed to increase the line item for the Fire Marshal from the recommended \$30,000 to \$40,000 and increase the department revenue line by \$20,000.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know the rationale for the salary of the Administrative Assistant with Town Treasurer Day responding that this salary is set to commensurate with the union salaries of Town Hall clerks and secretaries.

A discussion ensued regarding the amount obtained per the Town's third party billing for emergencies with Fire Chief Martin reporting that this billing is approximately \$450,000 annually.

Councilman Herreshoff speculated that the new fire building will result in more staffing with Fire Chief Martin stating that he did not anticipate any need for additional staffing due to the new building.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know when the building will be fully occupied with Fire Chief Martin responding that he plans to occupy the building within one week of this date.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know if the Water Authority has provided sprinklers in the new building at no cost with Fire Chief Martin responding that this was not the case but that he would prefer if the Water Authority would provide better water pressure in the Tupelo Street area.

Councilwoman Parella noted that lights are observed in the new building late at night with Fire Chief Martin reporting that some lights in the building are designed to be on "24-7" due to

the nature of the operation. He added that some are on timers needing adjustment and some are activated by motion sensors.

Council Chairman Marshall asked if there were any priorities for capital funding with Fire Chief Martin responding that his priorities include protective gear (1st) and a new Jaws of Life (2nd).

Councilwoman Parella asked to know the condition of the Jaws of Life currently in service with Fire Chief Martin responding that the device is twenty (20) years old and that it is not suitable for all new car designs.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if new hybrid cars were problematic with Fire Chief Martin responding that his department has attended training specific to hybrids.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know the amount in the planned capital "pool" with Town Administrator Mederos responding that her budget includes pooled capital funds of \$300,000.

Beyond the change relative to the Fire Marshal's wages as noted above, the Council made no changes to the amounts as recommended by the Town Administrator.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application - Geraldine Turbeville, Program Manager

Program Manager Turbeville explained the information provided in her letter to the Council, noting that the "new" category entitled "Technical Assistance Bristol Industrial Park" was formerly entitled "Mount Hope Enterprise Zone" and that the initiatives funded through this line item are essentially unchanged.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if the funding for the Literacy Volunteers would be forthcoming with Program Manager Turbeville responding that it was likely that this agency would receive its funding.

Councilwoman Parella expressed concern that the Literacy Volunteers and also the Women's Resource Center appear both in the Human Resources budget and in the Town's CDBG application.

Council Chairman Marshall suggested that the name of the Bristol Industrial Park should be changed to "500 Wood Street" with Program Manager Turbeville responding that this may be

inadvisable since those who approve this application are aware of the "Bristol Industrial Park" and a name change may lead to confusion on their part.

A discussion ensued regarding the sewer use fee with no resolution concerning same.

The Council agreed, by consensus, to continue all matters relative to the 2010-2011 operating budget, etc., until Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at 7:00 o'clock PM (this meeting scheduled as "extra day if needed" in original posting of the Budget schedule)

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC
Council Clerk

DRAFT