

SPECIAL MEETING NORTH SMITHFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

JUNE 6, 2011

KENDALL-DEAN SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

7:00 P.M.

The meeting began at 7:00 P.M. with the prayer and the pledge to the flag. Council members present were Ms. Alves, Mr. McGee, Mr. Zwolenski and Mr. Yazbak. Mrs. Charest was away on vacation. Town Administrator Hamilton and Town Solicitor Nadeau were also in attendance.

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PUBLIC HEARING RE: FISCAL YEAR 2011/2012 BUDGET

Finance Director Brian Silvia gave an overview of the Administration's proposed budget. It includes state aid in the amount of \$5.1 million, which was the actual amount received in fiscal year 2011, and Housing Aid and General Education Aid at the same amount that was received this fiscal year. Under consideration by the General Assembly for the fiscal year 2012 budget is an increase to General Education Aid of \$212,000 as long as they fund the now-adopted funding formula. Also under consideration is unrestricting the previously restricted Education Aid. Total local non-property is going down approximately \$71,000 due to reductions in building permits, fire plan developments and revenue from the police department.

The net value of residential real estate is down about \$9 million so the proposed tax rate is \$15.51, an increase of \$.19.

Commercial property value has increased about \$17,000, and the proposed tax rate is \$17.63, a decrease of \$.02.

Tangible property value has increased approximately \$8,000 and the tax rate will remain at \$43.00.

Frozen property values (tax stabilizations) have increased by approximately \$700,000 which results in a levy change of \$11,898 from 2011.

The tax rate on motor vehicles should remain the same at \$37.62.

Based on the current average home value in North Smithfield of \$285,000, the proposed average tax increase per residence is about \$54.15. A collection rate of 98% has been proposed.

Ms. Hamilton noted there is a direct correlation between the decrease in state aid and the increase in local property taxes over the last several years.

Ms. Hamilton and Mr. Silvia reviewed expected expenses.

There are no funds being used from the town's unrestricted or surplus account to help balance this budget as the town has been advised by both its financial advisors and its auditors to avoid doing so if possible.

Superintendent of Schools Stephen Lindberg reviewed the proposed school budget. The net for salary increase obligations is \$122,455. There is \$281,000 for step movement by law and there are proposed staff reductions amounting to \$503,000. The cost for health care benefits increased by 13.5 percent and the cost for certified retirements increased 12.55 percent. Transportation, including for out of district vocational and charter schools, has gone up \$161,000. Oil, gas and electric and mandated service contracts have gone up \$223,000. The request for \$171,557 is for the restoration of the athletic program.

The School Department is requesting a budget of \$22 million. In 2008/2009 the budget was \$21 million; the present budget is \$20.6 million, which is \$472,831 or 2 percent less than three years ago.

Mr. Lindberg added that this proposed budget will not address the Basic Education Plan (BEP) standards in the areas of curriculum, academic support, expanded learning opportunities, comprehensive high school programming or academic enrichment. This budget does not restore electives at the high school, the exploratory program at the middle school, the Grade 5 instrumental program, the

building-based operational budgets, 15 years of level-funding coaches' stipends nor the possible addition of classrooms for Grades 1, 3 and 4 because of numbers.

Mr. Lindberg stated the increase in state aid to education for North Smithfield through the funding formula is recognizing that the school department is likely not meeting the BEP high quality, high function systems that must be in place.

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School Committee member Fran Johannis reviewed some of the state statutes governing education.

Several residents found fault with the school department proposed budget believing it to be fiscally irresponsible and doesn't do enough towards making reductions. One gentleman felt the school department needs to live within its budget as he has to live within his.

Several other residents were very supportive of the school department and its proposed budget and asked the Town Council to approve their request.

On the municipal side, Mrs. Linda Thibault of 83 St. Paul Street urged the Council members to support the small grant proposed for Senior Services Inc. noting that many North Smithfield residents are assisted

by this group.

Mr. Paul Soares, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, was concerned that the Budget Committee had slashed their budget request of \$800.00.

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to close the public hearing.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to approve payment of the following: General Fund - \$172,420.24; Sewer - \$3,938.74; Water - \$1,348.16; Wire Transfer School Department - \$0; and Wire Transfer Fire Department - \$195,146.67 for a total of \$372,853.81.

SECONDHAND DEALERS LICENSE – P. WINTERS D/B/A PBW

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to approve a secondhand dealers license for Patrick B. Winters d/b/a PBW.

LICENSES - TUROYO INC.

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to continue this to the June 20, 2011 meeting since neither the Certificate of Good Standing nor the Department of Health Certificate had been received yet.

OUTDOOR SOUND SYSTEM PERMIT – E. PUCCETTI

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to approve an outdoor sound system for Ellen Puccetti of 51 Farm Street on Sunday, July 3, 2011 from 3:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Town Planner Robert Ericson explained he is asking for five items: 1.) Housing Rehabilitation - \$34,000; 2.) Senior Bus - \$58,000; 3.) Heritage Hall - \$8,250; 4.) Affordable Housing Land Trust Operations - \$3,000; and 5.) Marshfield Commons - \$325,000.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski and seconded by Ms. Alves to approve the following Authorizing Resolution for a Community Development Block Grant as presented by the Town Planner and approved as being consistent with the Comprehensive Plan by the town Planning Board: “This is certified as a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Council of the Town of North Smithfield at a meeting held on June 6, 2011. WHEREAS, funds are available under the Rhode Island Community Development Block Grant Program, administered by the Department of Administration, Division of Planning, Office of Housing and Community Development; and WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Rhode Island has authorized the Director of said Department/Office to disburse such funds; and WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the citizens of the Town of North Smithfield that application be made to undertake a local Community Development

Block Grant Program. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF NORTH SMITHFIELD: That the filing of this application for the amount of \$428,250 to implement the activities proposed herein hereby authorized and that Paulette Hamilton (Town Administrator) is hereby authorized and directed to file this application with the Office of Housing and Community Development, to provide any additional information or documents

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required by said office, to make any assurances required in connection with this program, to execute an agreement with the State of Rhode Island and to otherwise act as the Representative of the Town of North Smithfield in all matters relating to this application and any award which may be based upon this application.”

Mr. Yazbak felt North Smithfield is already a leader in the number of affordable housing units located in the town and questioned why the town would be bending over backwards to help a private developer attain a goal, which to some people may have already been met.

Mr. Ericson responded that the town is not at the goal yet. The 38 units would take us over if we did not have a new census in 2010 but by August there will be new census numbers that will show the town has a lot more housing units and will be required to keep going after the ten percent.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves and Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote at 10:00 P.M. to extend the meeting to 10:30 P.M.

Mr. Zwolenski commented that this is federal money and he would like to see it spent in North Smithfield.

Mr. Yazbak had concerns this project would entice families to the area and will end up costing the town money.

Mr. Ericson stated this will save the town from an adversarial comprehensive permit.

Mr. Nadeau added that this project is going to happen whether this grant is approved or not, but it may make it better.

On a roll call vote the MOTION passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

TRASH/RECYCLING COLLECTION FOR NON-PROFIT ENTITIES

The residents from the Gilfillan Road area had brought this to the Council's attention at the last meeting when group homes were discussed. It was noted at the time the group homes and other non-profit entities in town were having their trash picked up by the town.

MOTION by Mr. Yazbak and seconded by Mr. Zwolenski and Ms. Alves

to send notice to all non-profit entities that effective July 1, 2011 the town will continue to pick up recycling materials but not trash.

Trash and Recycling Co-Ordinator Donna Kaehler noted that the town is not picking up very much trash from non-profits. The group homes have limited amounts of trash at the curbs and most businesses have their own dumpsters.

Concerns were raised about having dumpsters in residential areas and there are no zoning ordinances at present that would address some of the concerns.

It was agreed that more research needed to be done and the discussion was continued to the July 18th meeting.

Mr. Yazbak withdrew his motion and Mr. Zwolenski and Ms. Alves withdrew their seconds.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote at 10:28 P.M. to extend the meeting to 11:00 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to enter into executive session at 10:29 P.M. pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or

litigation to discuss Contracts/Agreements for North Smithfield Police Department Recruits.

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MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to come out of executive session at 10:37 P.M. and to seal the minutes.

CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS FOR NS POLICE DEPARTMENT RECRUITS

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to approve the Agreement between the Town of North Smithfield and Jay Rainville as presented.

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Agreement.

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to approve the Agreement between the Town of North Smithfield and Robert William Maione, Jr. as presented.

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on

an aye vote to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Agreement.

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to re-enter executive session at 10:40 P.M. pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation to discuss Narragansett Improvement vs. Town of North Smithfield (Three Rhode Island Superior Court cases).

MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. McGee and Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to come out of executive session at 10:59 P.M. and to seal the minutes. No motions were made and no votes were taken.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to adjourn at 11:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Todd, Town Clerk