

**SPECIAL MEETING NORTH SMITHFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

**DECEMBER 11, 2014**

**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 Mr. Alter, Ms. Alves, Mrs. Nadeau, Mr. Zwolenski and Mr. Boucher. Town Administrator Hamilton and Town Solicitor Igliazzi were also in attendance.

**APPOINTMENTS TO BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**MOTION** by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted unanimously on a roll call vote to appoint Michael Rapko to the Budget Committee. This is a three-year term that will expire on December 1, 2017.

**MOTION** by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted unanimously on a roll call vote to appoint Brian Ahern to the Budget Committee as well. This is a three-year term that will expire on December 1, 2016.

**JOINT MEETING WITH BUDGET COMMITTEE AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Budget Committee members present were Mr. Ahern, Mr. Clifford, Mr. Rapko and Mr. Clifford. Absent was Mr. Zambarano. School Committee members present were Mr. Bassett, Mrs. Bonas and Mrs. Nadeau. Absent were Mr. Connell and Mr. Lafleur.

## **Pre-Budget Consultation**

**Finance Director Brenda MacDonald commented that the potential tax revenue that can be raised by the town this year is \$1,235,727, which is the four percent cap. Total revenue for last year was \$39,347,668. This amount added to the \$1,235,727 makes the projected tax revenue for 2016 \$40,583,387.**

**School Committee Vice Chair Christine Bonas stated the School Committee has not seen any budget documents as of yet and would like to reschedule a meeting with the Budget Committee once the entire School Committee has reviewed documents.**

**Budget Committee Chairman Michael Clifford noted that the town is entering an era of declining new revenues and depreciation of tangible property. There are concerns about the number of abatements and revenue will drop by at least \$75,000 this year because of them. There has been the additional expense of having two assessors for nearly six months. Just to start off the year the town will have to raise the tax rate possibly one-half to one percent just to recover from the loss of tangible property and the abatements.**

**Most of the National Grid infrastructure is done and their assessed value on tangibles will depreciate by probably five percent. There is not a lot of new revenue coming from Dowling Village either. He added that if the town chooses to go with the four percent maximum tax levy this year, the taxpayers are going to pay.**

**Mr. Clifford stated the town currently has on the books \$41,716,661 in bonded indebtedness. Those translate into \$3,432,177 a year in annual payments. Prior to 2007 there was only one bond on the books and it was for \$5,000,000. Approximately \$38,000,000 of the indebtedness is related to schools. The bonds that were just approved for the rehabilitation of the municipal buildings and the schools will add an additional \$775,000 per year for repayment.**

**Mr. Clifford asked for some guidance from the Town Council as to what type of tax increase they are contemplating and every town department is going to have to look for ways to achieve greater efficiencies.**

**With the Charter amendment approved, the Budget Committee needs to have a three-year expenditure history by line item and they would like electronic excel spread sheets from the School Department. The Committee still wants the three-inch binder with all the details supporting each line item purchase.**

**In 2013 the School Department submitted a budget that exceeded the four percent cap by \$375,530. Following that, a new teacher contract was approved, a new budget was resubmitted at 6.7 percent and was now over the cap by \$578,242. Mr. Clifford suggested that contracts not be ratified until the appropriation is known, especially with the Charter amendments that were approved at the November election.**

**Award of Bid for Technology Funding for School Department**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted unanimously on a roll call vote to approve the purchase of \$141,947 for computers, consisting of approximately 420 Chrome books and 14 storage/charging carts to be paid for as follows: \$91,866 from the approved capital budget and authorizing the school department to utilize \$50,081 from their fund balance.**

**(Mrs. Bonas left at 7:46 P.M. and therefore there no longer was a quorum for the School Committee)**

**1ST READING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT RE: PUBLIC BUILDINGS IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION**

**Mr. Zwolenski suggested making the Superintendent of Schools and the Police Chief ex-officio, non-voting members and thus the number of voting members will be reduced from nine to seven throughout the document. There were additional changes to numbering of paragraphs.**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted unanimously on a roll call vote to accept this as the first reading as amended.**

**SELECTION PROCESS FOR TOWN SOLICITOR, ASSISTANT TOWN SOLICITOR, MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE AND PROBATE COURT**

**JUDGE**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted unanimously on a roll call vote to interview applicants separately in executive session and once that process is completed to come out into open session for discussion.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted unanimously on a roll call vote to start interviews on January 10, 2015.**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Ms. Alves, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to adjourn at 8:53 P.M.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Debra A. Todd, Acting Town Clerk**