



# Town of East Greenwich Joint Town Council/School Committee Minutes May 7, 2012

Location and Time: Swift Community Center 121 Peirce Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818, 7:30pm

Council Members: Michael B. Isaacs, President  
Henry V. Boezi, Vice President (absent)  
Jeffrey B. Cianciolo, Councilor  
Mark Watkins Gee, Councilor  
Michael S. Kiernan, Councilor

Staff Members: William Sequino, Jr., Town Manager  
Leigh A. Botello, Town Clerk  
Col. Thomas Coyle, Chief of Police (arrives 9:00pm)  
Joseph Duarte, Public Works Director  
Wendy Schmidle, IT Director  
Kathy Raposa, Finance Director  
Lisa Bourbonnais, Planning Director (absent)  
Catherine Bradley, Parks and Recreation Director  
Erin McAndrew, Human and Senior Services Director  
Peter Clarkin, Town Solicitor (absent)

Others: School Committee Members: Gifford, Green, Winters  
Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent  
Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration

## **7:30pm CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG**

President Isaacs calls the session to order and leads the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

- 1) **BUDGET WORK SESSION**
  - a. Discussion/decision of Town Budget
  - b. Discussion/decision of School Budget/Allocation
  - c. FY 2012 Budget Reallocation
  - d. Main Street Stroll Transfer of Funds

Discussion/decision of School Budget/Allocation - Dr. Gifford begins by recapping the School Committee's original request and how they have made further reductions. She states that the Committee reduced the budget presented by the Superintendent by \$535K and now another \$146K has been taken out due to paying for the emergency generator from capital, revised retirement rates, revised state aid and revised transportation rates. She explains their budget process. In summary, they are respectfully requesting \$31,229,451 from the Town.



## Town of East Greenwich Joint Town Council/School Committee Minutes May 7, 2012

There is no further savings in health care since March 14<sup>th</sup> budget presented. President Isaacs asks them to consider taking out the three other capital items from the capital reserve fund which currently has \$1,200,000 instead of the operational budget. These items total \$99K. Dr. Gifford explains how the surplus fund originated from overages in FY2010 and FY2011. That is not the case this year as they are looking at being \$50K over budget which has to come out of Capital Reserves. They are cautious to use capital as they are subject to losses and unpredictable changes. When they reduce the budget in other categories, it is difficult to replenish. She suggests sharing some of the reductions and foresees a challenge in creating new educational programs if reserves are depleted.

Mr. Sequino inquired as to whether or not they have a corrective action plan as required by State to address the \$50K deficit. Ms. Crawford clarifies that it is a \$50K surplus, not a deficit.

Ms. Crawford adds that they need to begin to consider budgeting for OPEB liabilities.

Councilor Cianciolo asks if the Committee is still conversing on collaboration and consolidation in maintenance and facilities. Superintendent Mercurio replies yes.

The additional allocation requested by the Committee is \$254,331 from the amount proposed in the Town Manager's budget of March 2012.

Mr. Green adds that further reductions would diminish their capability to offer new services as requested by parents.

Councilor Cianciolo asks how increases in state aid and reimbursement amounts on bond financing which may fall in our favor affect the budget. Mr. Sequino explains that reimbursements come to the Town not the School and are used to offset debt service. State Aid comes to the Town but is earmarked for the School. Further discussion follows on the possibility of receiving increased funds for state aid and reimbursement on bonds and how they would be managed.

Dr. Gifford thinks that shared services for maintenance are too big of an issue to deal with now that would make an impact on the budget but all should continue to look for ways to collaborate.

Town Council has until Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> to vote and adopt the final budget.

FY 2012 Budget Reallocation - President Isaacs explains the options available to fund the request submitted by the Chamber of Commerce for banners and hanging flower baskets. Mr. Steve Lombardi refers to a letter hand-delivered to the Town Manager today reflecting most recent costs for banners \$1600 (for 40) and \$6,350 for flowers and watering. The Chamber and Merchants pledge to seek out a private contractor or volunteers to help reduce labor for watering, to seek



## Town of East Greenwich Joint Town Council/School Committee Minutes May 7, 2012

sponsorship for the project and investigate other options to eliminate the need for the Town's support in the future. Their total request is \$8,036. Further discussion follows on timing and budget options. Diane Villari contacted Barrington, Bristol and Warren who use Flower Power, a group of volunteers who fundraise, grow and take care of the flowers. Wickford is also sponsored by merchants and volunteers. She states that is something the EG Merchants are planning to do as well. The Merchants are prepared to order the flowers and Mr. Duarte offered to hang them up. After Council's comments on their views of the projects, Councilor Kiernan moves to appropriate funds in FY2012 in the amount of \$8,036 for banners, flower baskets and watering expenses for Main Street, seconded by Councilor Gee. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.

Main Street Stroll Transfer of Funds - Mr. Sequino explains that in the proposed budget for FY 2013, the part time position of Main Street Coordinator is being laid off as of July 1st. The Main Street Coordinator funds the strolls by seeking contributions from downtown merchants. Monies that have already been collected need to be transferred to the Chamber of Commerce. Councilor Gee moves to transfer to the EG Chamber of Commerce funds that have been collected for contributions and sponsorships for the funding of Main Street Stroll, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.

Discussion/decision of Town Budget - Council reviews the current list of proposed budget items to be revised such as realty transfer taxes. The Town Clerk will research the distribution of the tax as well as the number of transactions going back to 2010.

Council discusses the list of past capital projects with balances remaining such as tennis court repairs, tractor, police radios, cabling and HVAC vault in Town Clerk office. This money is currently in a designated surplus account and was approved at Town meeting. If undesignated, the funds would remain in surplus but as undesignated.

Councilor Gee moves to convert the Vehicle Replacement Fund into a Capital Fund and direct the Town Manager and Town Solicitor to prepare a warrant for the Financial Town Meeting that accomplishes that, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.

Councilor Gee moves to direct the Town Manager and Town Solicitor to prepare a warrant article for the transfer of \$16,101.86 from assigned fund balance into the committed capital outlay account, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.

Formal bids will be presented to Council on tennis court repairs and the tractor.

Discussion returns to the items listed on the errata sheet dated May 2, 2012. The Animal Protection League and the Main Street Association items are tabled until further information is provided. Councilor Cianciolo moves to reduce the Street Light line item by \$2,250, seconded by Councilor



# Town of East Greenwich Joint Town Council/School Committee Minutes May 7, 2012

Kiernan. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.

The Capital Improvement Program and the projects slated for FY 2013 and FY 2014 are discussed in detail.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm at Swift Community Center. There is a tentatively scheduled meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup> if needed.

Ms. Botello presents the budgets for the Town Clerk's office and the Board of Canvassers. Redistricting is completed and as a result, precincts are being reduced from 8 to 5. Councilor Cianciolo moves to reduce the Police Detail line in the Canvasser's budget by \$1,500 and Food line by \$500, seconded by Councilor Kiernan. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0. Members of the Board of Canvassers who are in the audience feel this will not work.

Ms. Raposa gives highlights of the Finance Department's budget which reflect reductions in Printing and GASB.

- 2) **EXECUTIVE SESSION** per RIGL §42-46-5 (a) (2) to discuss collective bargaining and litigation.

Councilor Cianciolo moves to go into Executive Session per RIGL §42-46-5 (a) (2) to discuss collective bargaining and litigation, seconded by Councilor Gee. Council takes a roll call vote and the motion passes 3-1 with Councilor Kiernan voting no.

The motion is subsequently withdrawn.

Councilor Cianciolo moves to adjourn at 9:45pm, seconded by Councilor Kiernan. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

*Leigh*

Leigh A. Botello  
Town Clerk

APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL JUNE 11, 2012