

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
COUNTY OF NEWPORT**

The Town Council of the Town of Tiverton, County and State aforesaid held a Joint Workshop with the School Committee on Tuesday, the 3rd day of November 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Tiverton High School Library, 100 North Brayton Road.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilor President deMedeiros, Vice-President Chabot, Councilor Lambert, Councilor Mello, Councilor Pelletier, Councilor Perry and Councilor Sousa.

Town Administrator Matthew Wojcik and Town Clerk Nancy L. Mello were also present.

1. Call To Order

Council President deMedeiros called the Council portion to order with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

School Committee Chair Sally Black called the School Committee portion to order and conducted the roll call. Sally Black, Jerome Larkin, James Arruda, Carol Herrmann and Deborah Pallasch were present.

The Budget Committee did not have a quorum; five of the 11 members, Cecil Leonard, Deb Janick, Donna Cook, Nancy Driggs and John Souza were present.

2. School Facilities Study

School Superintendent William Rearick explained there were several questions at the last meeting. Dave DeQuattro, principal at RGB who did the facilities study was in attendance to further explain and answer questions. The Facilities Committee has removed everything that will be paid for this year. This study includes all 5 schools with items that need to be repaired or replaced. Categories are numbered 1-5 listing action required with the following letter code: C-Code Requirement, A-Accessibility, S-Safety/Health Issues, E-Energy Efficiency, M-Maintenance/Asset Protection and P-Program Issue. This analysis was done 2 years ago; emphasis then was on health and safety issues and was recommended at that time, some had quick fixes. Mr. Larkin explained there was a moratorium on reimbursement, has been lifted. Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) requires a plan and wants to know where the money is coming from when the plan is submitted. Since the last meeting \$700,000 has been taken out of the original document. Of that \$460k was approved by RIDE for reimbursement, the Town gets \$161k back. Mr. Larkin explained the numbers in the right hand column total between \$7-8 million for the High School and the Middle School; the numbers in the middle column come to \$15million. The buildings are viable for 20-30 years more if maintained. Councilor Sousa noted the structures were still sound, repairable, the roofs should be a priority, allowing them to leak creates more issues. Councilor Sousa opined, looking at a \$3million dollar bond. Mr. Larkin noted the buildings do not have to be replaced, have substantive deficiencies that need to be addressed.

President deMedeiros reminded the landfill closure may need to go out to bond within few years. T/A Wojcik agreed with Councilor Sousa about the roofs, should be a first priority, going to bond will cut into the annual operating budget, will possibly cut into services. Have roughly three quarters of a million dollars to work with. Ms. Pallasch noted RIDE was giving 40 cents on the dollar. Mr. Rearick explained the SC accepted the \$7million, can come before the Council with a formal proposal for the Council to consider what the SC can complete and what can be submitted to RIDE. President deMedeiros noted the Council has to consider the budget. Mr. Rearick explained reimbursement occurs in the following year. Mr. DeQuattro explained there is a new energy code in the State, RIDE requires energy efficient windows. Councilor Perry opined the savings from the bond refinancing for \$750k could be a wash for another bond. Councilor Pelletier suggested setting aside funds in every budget for a capital improvement

account. Mr. DeQuattro suggested taking into account inflation and adding that to the \$7million. Councilor Sousa questioned having geo thermal for energy, Mr. DeQuattro noted this was cost prohibitive, for one core it's about \$50k, best way is gas, if not available then high efficiency boilers. Questioned about the bond refinancing, Town Administrator Wojcik explained it was not refinancing but refunding the existing High School bond to use the remaining time to get a lower interest rate. Councilor Lambert noted if it gets past the Council then the issue would be to convince the taxpayers. Mr. Rearick suggested a series of workshops. Councilor Perry was concerned should show the options to the taxpayers. Councilor Lambert suggested the SC make the argument; is going to be a challenge. Mr. DeQuattro, having served on various committees suggested showing how much will be saved and how much it will cost. Mr. Leonard noted several good points were made including those from Councilors Sousa and Pelletier. Mr. Rearick expected this to be on the SC agenda for December to come before the Council for the next election. Speaking as members of the audience, John Souza opined it may take several years to convince the voters; in the meantime the buildings are deterioration even more; suggest get it going and get the statistics. Audience member, Nancy Driggs opined it would be hard to convince the people especially if the town is not putting money away. Ms. Pallasch pointed out in prior years this was done at the Financial Town Meeting. Audience member Donna Cook noted no increase in Social Security, the tax rate is too high, will be a hard sell. Councilor Sousa opined should continue to make more efficiency in both budgets by cutting expenses. One audience member opined school security and safety was paramount, the voters need to be educated.

3. Preliminary Budget Discussion

President deMedeiros noted the preliminary budget process has started will be meeting with John Souza, Councilor Perry and T/A Wojcik to try to streamline the process. Ms. Pallasch suggested another joint meeting in January.

Being no further discussion both Boards adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor Perry motioned, seconded by Councilor Sousa to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

The workshop adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

A True Copy.

ATTEST: _____
Nancy L. Mello, Town Clerk