

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

The Town Council of the Town of Tiverton, County and State aforesaid held a Special Meeting on Saturday, the 6th day of February 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Tiverton Town Hall, 343 Highland Ave.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Council President deMedeiros, Vice President Chabot, Councilor Lambert, Councilor Mello, Councilor Pelletier, Councilor Perry and Councilor Sousa
Town Administrator Matthew Wojcik and Solicitor Anthony DeSisto were also present

OPEN SESSION

Council President Denise deMedeiros opened the meeting. Town Clerk conducted the roll call.

Overall Discussion and Possible Votes on FY 2016/17 Budget

Town Administrator gave overall review of budget FY 2016/17. Debt service was given new updated page. Two bonds have combined to single lines. Library will be on revenue side of budget. Councilor Perry as liaison for School Building Committee, informed they will be looking for special line item for reimbursements of debt to be in capital account rather than in general fund to help offset future capital needs. Administrator explained that would mean the full amount of the debt would need to be expensed through budget. Councilor Lambert concerned effort to accumulate debt in Town and how much spending on interest payments. Requested Treasurer give breakdown; vehicles only paid over 225k in interest over last 5 years. Need to take care of obligations when occur.

Town Administrator continued stating Town has not done capital improvement plan. He will be providing narrative on each request shortly. Trying to smooth out purchases over 10 years. Benefit to installment purchases is the ability to purchase more when needed. Capital has been neglected and now too large to swallow as cash expenditures. Formula for disaster is narrow debt ceiling remaining, pattern followed over and over.

Councilor Lambert regarding landfill when all said and done still owe 500k. Should be adding 150k per year and will meet the goal in 5 years. Administrator added if don't have necessary funds to close and use PAYT funds then will be unable to use for other uses. DPW budget request is at today's tipping fees. Know closing is coming by FY 2018/19, have three years to get good plan together.

T/A collectively Town has not thought enough of capitol. Departments requested 725k without ladder truck. Reduced by priorities to 359k and a new ambulance under recurring notes. Largest chunk of increase within 10 accounts. Also CPI increase in trash hauling is signed contract, extraordinary increase in health insurance that had been held down by using savings of prior years. Rest of major accounts flat.

Councilor Perry questioned percent increase for this year in budget. Administrator responded increase is currently at 3.2%; combined with school will work out to approximately 1.7 percent. Councilor Pelletier reminded the school department has autonomy over expenditures. On municipal side budgets, small

changes are magnified. Any adverse situation can flatten you. Councilor Lambert suggested streets now reached point where need to spend time and money, sidewalks, potholes, etc. dangerous.

Tax collector – Toni Lynn McGowan

Councilor Sousa recused at this time – related to Tax Collector

Councilor Perry addressed supply account. Toni Lynn stated line item was cut 5k last year; tax bills themselves cost more. Has not been ordering anything for office supplies. Entire budget has been a challenge this year. Another account shorted is the consultant services. Use Rossi Collections and amount needed is always unknown. This year budgeted 5k and already spent 7,500 for what they collected. Councilor Pelletier added this is the product of the budget that has been dealt. Not ideal to run the cost of printing tax bills in arrears. Town Administrator added there are 6 to 10 examples in budget approved at the FTR as political stunts. Budget cuts have been hitting core function of municipal government. Next year will need increase to pay bottom line expenses. The theory is that we will always have some fat elsewhere to cut. If save money good effort, now need for necessary sending tax bills. Attempting some AFSCME shift in staffing. Administrator in contract negotiations with AFSCME and Teamsters. Projected increase for salary in Council contingency account. AFCSME salaries shown in budget are flat.

Council President requested any further questions. Being none moved on.

Senior Center – Director Janice Gomes

My Senior Center account was changed from 1500 to 1200. Inputs information on seniors. Put in wrong amount last year for maintenance fee. Director salary line item increase 2.5%. Slight increase in bus account for driver, new bus working well. Administrator added only difference in electric is 500 due to national grid rate down and improvements to building. Other than that accepted all requests submitted. Bottom line \$114,321 which is less than 3,000 over prior year.

Director commented on work done in building maintenance, can feel the difference with the new windows. James O'Dell and Joseph Sousa did nice job. In the process of getting all new window shades. Purchasing a new commercial refrigerator for kitchen.

Administrator discussed capital expense of 17k to connect to sewer. Problems with existing system. Agree with DPW Director that Canonicus Street needs sewer but met with Wastewater District and might be able get regulatory approval for septic drop tank in front of building and plumb for gravity sewer to Bay Street. Everything internal can be plumbed to right direction. Would cost 10-15k for a temporary fix but will be ready to go. May increase capital budget for that amount; in current CDBG request. Janice Gomes added need for additional capital repairs for shingles on south side of building, removing and replacing shingles and trim board and one new bulk head door estimated at 13k. Councilor Sousa discussed where need for repairs in building are priority.

Legal – Solicitor Anthony DeSisto

Consists of 3line items, Solicitor, Litigation and Land Use. No increase in Solicitor line, right spot. Litigation increase of 20k. Late start with taking some time to get transfers of records. Files very extensive. Now handle an inventory of cases, also deal with Interlocal. Trying to reduce inventory of cases and resolve cases in later stages one way or another. Goal is to get down to acceptable level for

community of this size. In order to get there will need more litigation activity. Started monthly appearances in Newport court and trying to bunch together cases for reduce cost. Tax appeals separate category. Tax Assessor does good job, some plaintiffs made procedural errors. Maybe capitalize and dismiss. Others have some merit and working toward settlements. None have material impact on finances of Town. Subject to trial allow 12% prejudgment interest. Councilor Perry noted actuals much higher than budgeted. Administrator added the FTR cut litigation. Councilor Perry continued so far 91k and year before 150k. Councilor Lambert suggests anticipate 200k over next 17 months. DeSisto commented if judgment received with attorney fees, etc recommends not set aside funds for any judgment. DeSisto land stated mistaken on land use when first looked and underestimated amount of development pressure in Town, commercially and residential. Surprised with amount of size and scope of applications on residential. Advice to zoning, planning, B/O and planner constant with issues. Appropriate legal advice should be given. Prior budget managed but not a lot of advice which unfortunately goes to litigation. Need better decision making and less Town litigation. The 12k is really not enough. Administrator added risk management identified without adequate legal help on land use. Important part of enforcement. Identified at LUPE Committee where some ideas were discussed. Administrator will try to transfer some funds. Councilor Chabot, in past received litigation reports on spread sheet including cost estimate over next fiscal year and strategy. Prosecution budget well in hand. Legal zoning inconsistencies, don't make sense. Need to clean up more.

Town Clerk reminded that the code of ordinances needs complete review including zoning. Councilor Pelletier commented someone needs to be leading the project. Council needs to get P/B to do land use. DeSisto opined some can do in-house but some will need to hire outside Planner. Starts at Council, then P/B, then back to Council under 45-24-61 for public hearing with P/B recommendations. DeSisto informed has to comply with comprehensive plan. Needs to fit the Town.

T/A referring to Labor budget stated no collective bargaining this year; request is 25k slightly below 5 yr average. This year higher arbitration litigation cleaning up labor issues and finalizing fire contract. Council 94 and Teamsters no arbitration. Also had workshop for dept heads regarding FMLA. All departments administered differently, where management had choice all chose differently. Now unified practice managed through his office. Revised all disciplinary ladder mill hearings. Avoid problems now. Hope is to avoid litigation in future. Don't take this year or last year trends for future. Slow down this year may; conduct negotiation sessions and arrive with or without legal services.

Council will table legal for more information. Councilor Mello left at 11:30

Art's Council

Requested \$1000 gave \$500. Administrator felt more active and not just gallery in Town Hall. Tree lighting event partner, Trunk a Treat, etc. Annual report in packet. Reduced Tree Committee since don't see much use to \$500.

Councilor Chabot stated the Art's Council also gets donations from companies in Town. Trying to fund refurbishing hanging technique in council chamber. System using to hang the art is least 15 years old. Administrator suggestion chamber should be celebration of history of Town and hope conference room returned for some art and public spaces. Councilor Perry has had few comments on using Town Hall as

selling point for artists. Don't think should be used for selling. Administrator added unavoidable tension. Arts created by individual promoting. Should be featuring Town in some way.

Town Council

Only increase is in advertising. No objections.

Town Administrator

League of Cities and Towns not budgeted for. Most department heads recently attended the 28th vendor's exhibits. Lot of information on savings from potholes to electronics. Administrator is on executive board. Relevant to Town. Follows legislation. Last year fire fighters wanted to take scheduling of shifts away from municipal government and make part of collective bargaining. League stood behind and resisted spending 15k for advertising, calling legislators to vote no. It failed or would have closed door on Town action. More recently disability pension process. Benefited with influence of League. We actively make use of resources.

Councilor Sousa would like to see Council go paperless. T/A to migrate Town to Gmail. Google chrome books for Council. Have own cloud access and apps. Agenda and other back up interact. Google has come a long way with Gmail now good level security. Cost is 4.50 per month per user. Hope to start right away in July. Town Clerk and Councilor Perry trying to get Randy Costa to get costs on laptops for Council.

Councilor Pelletier motioned, seconded by Councilor Perry to forward budgets for Tax Collector at \$129,169; Senior Center at \$114,321; Town Committees at \$13,900; Town Council at \$104,300 and Town Administrator at \$161,907. Motion passed 5-0-1. Councilor Sousa abstained from Tax Collector budget request.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor Pelletier motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Perry, passed 5-0-1. Councilor Sousa abstained. Council adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.

A True Copy.

ATTEST: _____

Nancy L. Mello, Town Clerk