**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

**March 21, 2017**

1. **ROLL CALL**

Town Council Members present:

Kristine S. Trocki, President

Mary E. Meagher, Vice President

Blake A. Dickinson

Michael G. White

Eugene Mihaly

Also in attendance:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator

Christina D. Collins, Finance Director

Lisa Bryer, Town Planer

Ken Gray, Tax Assessor

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

Edward Mello, Police Chief

Andrew Wade, Recreation Director

Absent:

Chris Costa, Zoning Official

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

President Trocki call the Town Council Operating Budget Work Session to order at 6:06 p.m. on Tuesday, March 21, 2017 in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers of the Jamestown Town Hall at 93 Narragansett Avenue, Jamestown.

1. **TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

Town Administrator Andrew Nota presented the breakdown of the Town and School budgets. The estimated budget represents an increase of 2.36% or $547,827 of the proposed budget of $23,717,253. The Town budget is $10,655,159, an increase of 2.7% or $281,624. The school budget is $13,062,094 an increase of 2.1% or $266,203. The proposed estimated property tax rate is $8.68 up $.10 from last year’s rate of $8.58. This rate is the third lowest rate in the state behind Little Compton and Block Island. The Tax Levy would increase from $18,847,145 to $19,225,608 an increase of $378,463 or 2.01%. Review of the town’s five-year tax rate history, the average residential property assessed at $500,000 would result in an estimated tax of $4,340 an increase of $50.

The annual Capital Budget is $1,221,675 a decrease of $111,070. The unreserved fund balance at the end of FY 2016 was $4,608,201.

**Revenues.** Revenues by town departments were reviewed. Total town revenue for FY 2016-17 was budgeted at $1,591,805 and for FY 2017-18 $1,564,000. School Department revenue for FY 2016-17 was budgeted at $1,092,807 and for FY 2017-18 $1,124,621. Review of general revenue included interest on late tax payments, motor vehicle tax, and investment income. Anticipated state revenues to town included various state aid, public service corporation tax, meal and beverage tax, and hotel tax.

**Expenditure Program.** Review of the General Fund distribution proceeded with an increase of 2.02% for the Functional Distribution total of $439,647.

**Review of Expenditures by Department.**

**Town Council.** The salary line item is $13,800 an increase of $2,500. Fees, supplies and advertising are decreased, for a total of $16,050 for an increase of .78%.

**Town Administrator.** The total proposed is $195,471 a 0.83% increase.

**Probate Court.** The total proposed is $6,964, a 0.45% increase.

**Elections and Town Meetings.** A total of $11,215 is proposed, a decrease of 34.35%, because this is a non-election year. One election is always budgeted because of a special election that could be required.

**Legal.** The proposed budget is $95,000, level funded.

**Clerk and Records.** A total of $198,747 is proposed, a increase of 1.21%.

**Planning.** A total of $134,582 is proposed, a 2.18% increase.

**Zoning.** The proposed budget is $8,700, level funded.

**Personnel.** A total of $1,674,948 is proposed, an increase of 5.91%.

**Finance.** A total of $250,660 an increase of 2.13%.

**Tax Assessor.** A total of $70,850 is proposed a decrease of 4.11%.

**Professional Audit.** Proposed is $22,000 level funded

**Police Protection.** Proposed budget is $1,716,823 an increase of .77%. Emergency Management Agency level funding of $5,000 was proposed. Councilor Dickinson questioned the starting salary, retention and hiring of new Police Officers. Mr. Nota said Jamestown has 3 openings and are challenged, as the whole country is, by hiring new officers. Chief Mello noted the most pressing constraints are general sentiment of police around the country, pay not competitive for advanced education, shift work including long hours, weekend and night hours, the economy, benefits, professional advancement, and the fact that it is currently not a desirable job in the present market. For Jamestown, officers who use the police force as a stepping stone is not reasonable as we invest a lot of money and time for training. Chief Mello spoke of a new idea of using certified officers on a per diem basis to fill in for vacations, shifts and time off.

**Protective Services.** A total of 283,983 is proposed an increase of 0.80%.

**Parks and Recreation.** The proposed budget is $526,465 an increase of 2.45%. This is due to extra skilled staffing and extended programming reflecting the demands of the community. The department also has a new software program for making reservations and signing up for programs, including Senior programming. It is expected to go online in May.

**Senior Center.** The proposed budget is 73,353 an increase of 1.88%. The program in concert with the Recreation Department has been changing and evolving due to heightened interest, demand and the outreach of the Friends of Jamestown Seniors. Many more program offerings have been supported by the recreation department.

**Miscellaneous.** This account will be continued to work session #2.

**Debt service** is $949,260 an increase of 15.91%.

**Capital Improvement Fund, and School.** These have already been addressed at a previous work session.

Mr. Nota concluded with a recap of the Total School and the Town Bonds. He ended with a summary of the General Obligation and Anticipated Principal and Interest.

The second half of the Operating Budget workshop will be March 23, 2017.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.

Attest:

Karen Montoya

Deputy Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council

Town Administrator

Town Solicitor

Finance Director