

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION
March 23, 2015

I. ROLL CALL

Town Council members present:

Mary E. Meagher, Vice President
Blake A. Dickinson
Michael G. White
Thomas P. Tighe

Town Council members absent:

Kristine S. Trocki, President

Also in attendance:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator
Christina D. Collins, Finance Director
Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

II. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Meagher calls the Town Council Operating Budget Work Session and Hearing for FY 2016 to order at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2015 in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers of the Jamestown Town Hall at 93 Narragansett Avenue, Jamestown.

III. TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION

A) Town Operating Budget Work Session and Hearing for FY 2016 (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

1) Review and Discussion

Town Administrator Nota stated this is the first Operating Budget Work Session to review the operating budgets for: Town Council, Town Administrator, Probate Court, Elections and Town Meetings, Legal Services, Clerk and Records, Planning, Building and Zoning, Personnel, Finance, Tax Assessor, Public Works, Library, Parks and Recreation, and Debt Service. The second Operating Budget Work Session will cover Public Safety, Public Health, Miscellaneous, and review of the Capital budget. A brief overview proceeded.

The estimated Town and School Budget represents an increase of 1.96% or \$455,136 at \$23,103,940. The Town budget is \$10,449,742, an increase of 1.62% or \$166,456. The School budget is \$12,654,198, an increase of 2.25% or \$278,680. Review of the Property Tax Program proceeded with an estimated property tax rate of \$8.92 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation, a \$.17 increase from the \$8.75 for FY 2015. The Tax Levy would increase from \$18,483,757 to \$18,896,325 or \$412,568, a 2.2% increase (\$326,782 below Town Council Budget Work Session 03.23.2015

the statutory 4% tax cap). Review of the town's five-year tax rate history proceeded. The average residential property assessed at \$500,000 would result in an estimated tax of \$4,460, an increase of \$85.

The annual Capital Budget is \$1,244,000, a decrease of \$163,000 or 13.1%. The unassigned fund balance at the end of FY 2014 (June 30, 2014) was \$3,767,245, 18.5% of the total general fund expenditures.

Revenues. Revenues by town department were reviewed. Total town revenue for FY 2015 was budgeted at \$1,705,195 and for FY 2016 at \$1,738,550. School Department revenues was budgeted at \$1,038,637 for FY 2015 and \$1,082,329 for FY 2016. Review of general revenue, including interest on late tax payments, motor vehicle tax, and investment income, proceeded. Total local revenue budgeted for FY 2015 is \$3,353,832 and for FY 2016 \$3,445,879, an increase of \$92,047. Review of proposed sources of revenue other than taxes and total state revenues continued, including the Meals and Beverage Tax and Hotel Tax. Review of the Municipal Incentive Aid Program and Public Service Corporation Tax continued.

Expenditure Program. Review of the General Fund distribution proceeded with a \$188,159 increase or 2.43% in the Operating Program, and a \$389,409 increase or 1.85% for the Functional Distribution total.

Review of Expenditures by Department.

Town Council. The salary line item is \$11,300, level funded, and fees and supplies and advertising are reduced, for a total of \$14,550, a 4.90% reduction for FY 2016.

Town Administrator. The total proposed is \$186,074.00, a \$7,820 or 4.39% increase.

Probate Court. A \$126 or 1.81% budget reduction is proposed at \$6,831.

Elections and Towns Meetings. A total of \$11,184 is proposed, a reduction of \$6,259 or 35.88%, as this is not an election year.

Legal. \$95,000 is proposed, level funded from the current fiscal year.

Clerk and Records. A total of \$191,230 is proposed, a \$491 increase or .26%.

Planning. A total of \$127,190 is proposed, a \$2,475 increase or 1.99%. Explanation of operating expenses and capital expenditures proceeded.

Zoning. \$10,700 is proposed, level funded from the current fiscal year.

Protective Service. The total proposed is \$279,473, a \$37,209 increase or 15.36%. The major increase is for Hydrant Rental at \$160,000 a \$35,000 increase or 28%. This expense also covers the cost of water for fighting fires. Discussion ensued.

Personnel. A total of \$1,644,600 is proposed an increase of .96% or \$15,692. Discussion ensued of line item increases, including Blue Cross. More information will be available for the next session.

Finance. A total of \$232,586 is proposed, a 1.46% increase or \$3,357.

Tax Assessor. A total of \$67,108 is proposed, a \$13,151 decrease or 16.39%, due to decreased hours for the Tax Assessor (five day to four day work week).

Town Audit. Proposed is \$22,000, down \$3,000 or 12% from the current fiscal year.

Public Works Department.

Administration. The proposed budget reflects a 1.79% increase at \$51,557.

Engineering. The proposed budget of \$50,127 is a reduction of 1.91% or \$975 from the current budget.

Highway. The proposed total budget is \$857,333, an increase of \$6,135 or .72%. Discussion of cold patch and paving ensued.

Snow Removal. The proposed budget is \$77,000, an increase of \$4,000 or 5.48%. The increase is to cover price increases for supplies. Discussion ensued of overtime, compensatory time and time off. Town staff did a great job this winter.

Waste Removal. The proposed budget is \$416,342 a decrease of \$1,658 or .4%. Council reviewed expenses for the Transfer Station due to deregulation of electricity rates. Discussion ensued of Solid Waste expenses.

Street Lighting. The proposed budget is \$82,500, an increase of \$27,500 or 50% due to electricity cost increases. Discussion of trending ensued. Town Administrator Nota referenced collaboration with WCRPC for the PRISM Program allowing municipalities to purchase street lights instead of leasing them. Discussion ensued.

Town Cemetery and Parade. The proposed budget is level funded at \$2,100.

Public Buildings. The total proposed budget is \$248,300, an increase of \$24,800 or 11.1%. The major increases are for electricity (50%) and custodial contract services (13.21%).

Tree Management Program. The proposed budget is \$31,400, which is level funded.

Library. The proposed budget is \$422,158, an increase of \$18,761 or 4.65%. Increases for electricity and salaries were noted; decreases for telephone and custodial services were noted. Discussion ensued of maintenance work to be performed by Parks and Town Council Budget Work Session 03.23.2015

Recreation Department employees.

Parks and Recreation. The proposed budget is \$527,903, an increase of \$14,704 or 2.87%. Increased expenses for salaries/wages, insurance and electricity were noted; reductions for Fort Getty waste removal and water were noted. Additional line items for Senior Programs (\$3,000) and the place holder for PAC operational costs (\$15,000) pending outcome of the referenda. Seasonal staff salaries/wages is now listed on a separate line item.

Debt Service. The proposed budget is \$923,672, an increase of \$89,042 or 10.67%. The major increase represents interest for the PAC purchase and the fire station renovation and new truck, if the referenda and FTM votes are successful. Golf Course building and Library renovation project were noted. Discussion ensued.

- B) Open Forum
 - 1) Scheduled to address. None
 - 2) Non-scheduled to address. None

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the work session was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Attest:

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
Town Administrator
Town Solicitor
Finance Director