

**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**December 7, 2015**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Joint Jamestown Town Council and School Committee Pre-Budget Work Session was called to order at 5:01 p.m. in the Jamestown Town Hall Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers at 93 Narragansett Avenue by President Trocki.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Town Council members present:

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

School Committee members present:

Cathy Kaiser, Chair  
B. J. Whitehouse  
Julia Held

School Committee members absent:

Sarah Baines  
Melissa Mastrostefano

Also present:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator  
Peter D. Ruggiero, Town Solicitor  
Christina D. Collins, Finance Director  
Carol Blanchette, School Superintendent  
Jane Littlefield, School Director of Finance  
Nate Edmunds, Lawn School Principal  
Carol Peterson, Melrose School Principal  
Ken Duva, Director of Student Services  
Lewis Kitts, Director of Facilities Maintenance  
Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

A moment of reflection commenced in honor of Pearl Harbor Day.

**III. JOINT TOWN COUNCIL AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORK SESSION**  
**BUDGET ISSUES FOR FY 2015 (JULY 1, 2015 TO JUNE 30, 2016) and**  
**BUDGET ISSUES FOR FY 2016 (JULY 1, 2016 TO JUNE 30, 2017)**

Superintendent Blanchette distributed a proposed FY 2017 Budget for July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 reviewed as follows:

Program Budget – to fund expenses related to:

- Meet needs of known student population
- Achieving strategic goals set by the new strategic plan
- Zero based budgeting
- Uses RIDE’s Chart of Accounts
- New standards based curriculum
- Professional development
- Contract negotiations with JESP Association

Review and discussion ensued.

Zero Based Budgeting

- Budgeting method where all expenses are justified for each new period
- Continual improvement = Continual change
- Continual change = Need for budget fluidity
- Fluidity = As needs change so may allocations for: staffing, programs, instructional materials and technology

Review and discussion ensued. OPEB funding noted, which is currently pay as you go. Discussion ensued of fund balances, obligations, compensated absences, accrued liabilities, and surplus funds, bond rating and use of undesignated funds.

Factors Contributing to our Need for Budget Fluidity

- Student population shifts through the year
- Enrollment issues, grade levels and specific needs of new students, including: special education, K-8 v high school students, ADA Sec. 504 requirements, ELL requirements, military students, out-of-district students, charter schools, career and technical schools

Review and discussion ensued. Unexpected enrollment impact discussed. Current enrollment is 490. Students attend as follows: charter school students – 3 elementary, 3 high school; career and technical students – 10; North Kingstown High students – 138; Narragansett High students – 7; out-of-district special education students – 6. Discussion ensued of tuition and transportation costs.

Comprehensive Education Reform = Continual Changes Require  
New Learning by Administrators and Teachers

- Educator evaluation using RIDE model
- Increasing requirements for data collection, analysis and reporting
- Adoption of Common Core State Standards/New Generation science standards
- Development and teaching of guaranteed and viable curricula
- New uses of technology by teachers and administrators
- New technology for online PARCC Assessment

- Assess students mastery of New Math and ELA CCSS
- Review and discussion ensued.

#### Major Cost Factors

- Contractual obligations
- State and federal mandates
- Tuitions (NK, Narragansett, Charter Schools, Out of District)
- Transportation
- Plant operations
- Capital Budget

Review and discussion ensued. Town Administrator Nota will forward a summary of budget development issues to Superintendent Blanchette. Discussion ensued of the RI economy, property tax cap, tax roll projections, bonding, contractual obligations, six-year capital plan, and motor vehicle tax exemptions.

#### Special Services Budget Factors

- Compliance with federal and state regulations re: children with disabilities
- IEP requirements and impacts on staffing and programs
- Salaries and benefits for special services staff
- Strategies to close achievement gaps
- Out-of-district tuitions and transportation

Review and discussion ensued.

#### Unknowns

- Federal and state aid funding levels
- Increases in health insurance premiums
- Out-of-district transportation system costs (% cost for buses not determined until August)
- Tuition students (out-of-district special education, charter schools, CTE tuitions)
- Needs of incoming students

Review and discussion ensued. Health care costs and consolidation of town and school positions, fluctuating property values, special needs students, and English language students continued.

#### Operating Budget History

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| FY 2012 | \$11,822,753 |
| FY 2013 | \$11,923,787 |
| FY 2014 | \$11,638,648 |
| FY 2015 | \$11,583,891 |
| FY 2016 | \$11,652,671 |

FY 15 to FY 16      \$68,780 increase      .59%

#### Five Year Change

FY 12 to FY 16      \$170,082 decrease      (1.44%)

Review and discussion ensued.

Town Administrator Nota distributed a FY 2016-2017 Initial Budget Hearing document including:

- Budget development goals to be accomplished
- Budget calendar, discussed in detail.
- Discussion of budget process.
- Senate Bill 3050 adopted in 2006, requires a 4% maximum increase over prior year levy
- No major changes expected
- RI Economic landscape
- Municipal landscape
- Property Tax roll projection
- Property Tax roll classification
- Preliminary Budget development guidance
  - Preliminary expenditure considerations
  - Preliminary revenue considerations
- Pro forma budget template

Discussion ensued of State Aid received by Jamestown, educational formula follows the student and declining enrollment and how it affects the tax rate. The Town's bonding capacity is excellent at just under .5%

Budget review included:

- Motor vehicle exemption
- In FY 2015 93.74% of the budget is residential property tax dependent
- Not anticipating expansion of Town services
- Salary increases at 2%, with health insurance co-shares consistent
- Contract negotiations for NAGE 68 and 69
- JFD improvements referenced

Review and discussion ensued. Upcoming issues and factors were noted.

School Committee members and administrators were thanked for coming. Town Council and School Committee members look forward to a productive year ahead.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the pre-budget work session was adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Attest:

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Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to:   Town Council (5)  
                  Town Administrator  
                  Finance Director  
                  Town Solicitor