

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORK SESSION

April 2, 2015

I. ROLL CALL

Town Council Members present:

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

Also in attendance:

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

II. CALL TO ORDER

The Town Council Work Session for Operating Budget Review and Capital Budget Review was called to order at 6:02 p.m. in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers of the Jamestown Town Hall at 93 Narragansett Avenue by President Trocki.

III. TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORK SESSION

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

1) Operating Budget, continued

Town Administrator Nota reviewed the budget process. The original projected tax rate was \$8.92. After revisions and adjustments made to the proposed budget since the first operating budget hearing the present estimated tax rate is \$8.79, a 4 cent increase over the current fiscal year. Tax Assessor Gray updates the tax roll value regularly and the current value is \$2,128,000,000, which represents approximately \$11,000,000 in growth. The PowerPoint presentation to accompany the discussion work sheet was noted.

a) Public Welfare

Town Administrator Nota stated the Public Welfare budget will be reviewed with presentations by supported agencies. Account 101 under Public Welfare for the Director's salary remains the same at \$3,964 for quarterly stipends for Margaret Grenier.

b) Public Health

Thundermist Health Center. Director Lauren Nocera in attendance explained the operations of Thundermist, a full service primary care facility located in South Kingstown, in operation for 45 years, serving all of southern RI. With a 30% patient growth over the last three years, they just completed a renovation that increased the size of their facility by 50%. Medical and dental services for uninsured Jamestown residents is \$15,000. Thundermist requested an additional one-time allocation of \$5,000 to help fund the renovation project in addition to the \$1,500 annual allocation. Further discussion of their extensive health and social services ensued. Copies of their annual report with contact information were distributed. Ms. Nocera was thanked for the presentation.

East Bay Community Action Program. Chief Operating Officer Susan Schenck in attendance gave an overview of their programs and operation, which has been in existence 50 years. They are a large agency, having merged with New Visions for Newport County and Self Help, Inc., serving 22,000 people annually from East Providence to Little Compton, many from Jamestown. Two of the new buildings are located on the Newport CCRI campus housing the Health Center and Head Start facility. Their facility at 19 Broadway encompasses the renovated, modern Dental Center. Other services include the Family Center, Social Services, Food Pantry, Fuel Assistance, Youth Counseling, Nutrition Services, and Employment and Training Program. The annual request is \$1,500. Ms. Schenk thanked Jamestown for their support and including them in the town's CDBG application. Council members were invited to tour their facilities.

VNS Home Health Services Director Sue Jamieson in attendance explained the agency's operation and extensive in-home services provided, including nursing, CNA, physical therapy, pain management, occupational and speech therapy, and routine health screenings at the Jamestown Meal Site, serving 81 Jamestown residents with 1,700 visits last year. They request a \$7,000 allocation again this year.

Visiting Nurses of Newport Bristol County representative Beth Wilcox in attendance explained the agency's operation and in-home services, which she stated are the same as those offered by VNS Home Health Services. The agency has been in existence for 65 years. Care provided to Jamestown last year included two flu clinics, 64 home care patients, 10 hospice care patients, palliative care patients, high risk newborns and family, life alert provided to 23 people, and tele-health. They request a \$1,000 allocation

Jamestown Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force. They agency requests \$4,000 for a grant match to serve teens and children through programs at the schools and in the community.

Samaritans for \$100 and Women's Resource Center for \$500 annual allocations were noted. Mr. Nota stated the draft budget carries \$16,000 in case there are additional requests. This can be reviewed later in the session.

Senior Program

Mr. Nota stated they requested level funding at \$71,693 for FY 2015-2016, with an estimated total budget of \$95,820. The additional \$25,000 for their budget comes from grants and donations. Review of the PowerPoint presentation continued; the group representing the Jamestown Seniors was noted. Jamestown has the oldest average age population in Newport County at 49. An increased need for expanded senior services will be realized in the near future. The \$3,000 for Transportation in the Recreation budget is to help get the senior bus operating. The Council thanks the Friends of the Jamestown Seniors for all they do for the seniors of Jamestown.

c) Miscellaneous

Mr. Nota reviewed items with requests under Miscellaneous that may appear under a different budget category in the future, Civic Organizations.

There is \$50,000 under the account for Incidentals and Emergencies for emergency expenditures that arise after the budget adoption during the fiscal year. Conservation Commission is allocated \$2,200.

Chamber of Commerce. President Trocki recuses, files the appropriate form, and turns the meeting over to Vice President Meagher due to her Chamber affiliation.

Chamber of Commerce Director John Macauley referenced the Chamber's \$4,000 request last year for funding an off-island advertising program to increase business on the Island. The Chamber's businesses were listed on their website which was advertised in publications, most notably Yankee Magazine, increasing business. They again request \$4,000 and propose to use the funding for an informational summer kiosk at East Ferry. Part of the funding will be used for maps, directions, and visitor information. The portable kiosk would be manned during July and August by paid individuals and Chamber volunteers. The kiosk is \$2,500 plus \$500 for materials. Mr. Macauley reviewed this previously with Town Administrator Nota. The kiosk would be available for other organizations and community events. It would be manned for 60 days for 4 hours of peak time with volunteers and paid staff 7 days per week. Discussion ensued of the design and placement of the kiosk, which need to be worked out. Mr. Macauley thanked the Council.

Eastern RI Cooperative Extension. Since the time of the original request, they have expanded to \$1,300.

Economic Development. Mr. Nota stated this is a new \$5,000 item for involvement in the Newport County Collaborative Group involving all Newport county communities seeking to secure a grant to study the feasibility and sustainability of an economic development committee for the County. Next steps should be available soon and the communities are in favor of supporting the initiative. Plans include hiring of a professional director. Start up costs are \$200,000 to \$300,000. Additional funding will be sought through the State

budget. Discussion ensued of the proposed function in relation to the local Chamber and State Economic Development and what this would provide Jamestown. Mr. Nota continues to attend meetings and keep the Council informed. Lengthy discussion ensued. The potential information to be gathered could be beneficial for our community and our commercial district. This will be continued.

Rotary Club. Mark Holland is here to request funding and review the history of events in town such as the Bike Race and Fools Rules Regatta in order to have a consistent approach to public safety support. Mr. Nota wants the information publicly explained so that Council can determine how to address such activities and funding. Rotary requests funding for details for the Bike Race, requiring \$1,800 to \$2,750 for police coverage for 5-8 officers as needed. Next year is Jamestown Rotary's 75th anniversary; their work and community support through donations were reviewed. Support for the Bike Race is important to keep it alive as numbers have dropped in recent years. It benefits the Island and visitors enjoy coming here. Council members discuss the event. Mr. Holland reviewed alternate parking locations to alleviate a negative impact on the business community. Chief Mello commented on the event and costs for overtime, as three quarters of the Police Department must commit to work on that date, and last year was an improvement. Rotary requests \$3,000 for the Bike Race. Discussion ensued of this event as part of economic development. This organization contributes to Jamestown. This is an organization that contributes to Jamestown, and the Bike Race is their major fundraiser.

- d) Public Safety
 - i) Police Protection.

Police Overtime was noted. Due to vacancies and extended absences, Salaries is at 67% of budget, but Overtime is at 138%. Mr. Nota reviewed the Salaries line item at \$912,000 with a \$5,000 reduction moved to a different line item. Salaries is also reduced due to senior members moving on and new recruits joining the department. Discussion ensued of line item revisions resulting in 1.87% budget reductions. The \$1,638,832 budget request for 2015-2016 is down from the current \$1,670,096 this year.

- ii) Emergency Management Agency

This is proposed at \$10,000.

- iii) Animal Control

The request has been reduced from \$10,000 to \$5,000. This may be modified in future years as needed.

Lyme Diseases Prevention through the Tick Task Force is new at \$15,000 for education, supplies and initiatives. \$12,000 was requested for education and outreach and \$3,500 for the incentive and cooler. The TTF thanked the town for getting the initiative started and the cooperative will be privately managed and funded and will not request support for hunting related activities from the town. The request is for the education portion only,

and it is anticipated the amount will go down. This amount can be revised prior to the April 20th meeting. Discussion ensued.

iv) Fire Protection

Mr. Nota stated an overall increase of 3.5% for \$396,246 is proposed, with a 2.5% increase in salaries. The rest is very conservative. Salary increases as related to town non-union department heads was discussed, as the Fire Chiefs are not town department heads but have consistently received the same salary increases. This is a cloudy issue that evolved over time. Defining the relationship between the Town and Fire Department under Goals and Objectives is on Monday's agenda. This proposed budget is the town's contribution, and the Fire Chiefs are the only members paid through the town.

v) Emergency Medical Services.

This is a 31.56 % increase for a \$402,130 proposed allocation due to the second six months of implementation of ALS services, which comprises most of the total increase. Additional vehicle, medications, and supplies required were noted. Only six months for the program was budgeted in the current fiscal. The major expense is for per diem paramedics and the Interceptor vehicle for the \$87,600 increase.

Chief Bryer commented on the smooth operation, success of the program, and increased training. Council members comment on the success and the caliber of paramedics chosen for the program. Donations and their use in purchasing ALS supplies were noted.

Public Health and Welfare continued. Finance Director Collins commented on the attendance by the agencies and their annual reports. Council members comment on the importance of learning what the agencies do, their programs and services, and what they provide for Jamestown residents. Discussion ensued of taking the funding that will not be used to provide additional funding for the agencies. A recommendation based on updated figures will be developed. Next year information on what other communities allocate for public health agencies will be included in the budget package.

2) Capital Budget review, if needed

Town Administrator Nota has updated information. For Website Enhancement an additional \$10,000 is proposed.

Roads. An overall assessment of town roads revealed they are not as bad as originally predicted. The roads have settled in after the difficult winter season, which is positive. Problem areas are Racquet Road at \$60,000, Starboard at \$36,000, and Summit Avenue at \$80,000 for reconstruction. This adds \$170,000 to \$180,000 to the road paving plan. Discussion ensued of overlaying and other relief activities if funding is not available. Discussion ensued of capital budget fluctuation due to potential grant awards for the generator and fuel tank. There could be some other built in dollars.

3) Open Forum

Jerry Scott of Racquet Road commented on the condition of Racquet Road, which he prefers remain the same, as it slows the traffic down. The residents should be consulted for their opinions prior to major reconstruction.

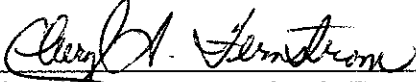
Mr. Nota stated figures will be refined prior to the next meeting for Council update and review.

President Trocki thanked everyone for their attendance and input.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the work session was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Attest:



Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
 Town Administrator
 Finance Director
 Town Solicitor