

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORK SESSION
March 25, 2019

I. ROLL CALL

Town Council Members present:

Michael White, President
Mary E. Meagher, Vice President
Randal White
Nancy Beye
William Piva

Also in attendance:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator
Christina D. Collins, Finance Director
Lisa Bryer, Town Planer
Christine Brochu, Tax Assessor
Chris Costa, Zoning Official
Michael Gray, Public Works Director
Edward Mello, Chief of Police
Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

II. CALL TO ORDER

President Michael White called the Town Council Operating Budget Work Session No. 1 to order at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, March 25, 2019 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 No. 1 for FY 2019-2020 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020); review and discussion

Town Administrator Nota proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation on the Town Operating Budget No. 1 and noted the Town Operating Budget No. 2 is scheduled for Tuesday April 2, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. The proposed budget is available on the Town website.

Town Administrator Nota reviewed the breakdown of the proposed Town and School Budgets with a combined Town and School Budget of \$25,455,830, an increase of \$1,153,272 or 4.75%; the Town Budget is \$11,024,735 an increase of \$289,669 or 2.70%. The School Budget is \$14,431,095 an increase of \$863,603 or 6.4%. The estimated 2019-2020 property tax rate is \$8.00 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation, with a rate decrease of 85 cents from the current fiscal year rate of \$8.85. The rate for the Municipal Operations reflects a decrease from \$3.71 in FY 2019 to \$3.23 in FY 2020 or -12.70% (-\$.47); the School Department reflects a decrease from \$5.14 in FY 2019 to \$4.77 in FY 2020, a decrease of 37 cents or -7.28%. A breakdown of the FY 2020 Tax Levy proceeded

with the Municipal Program at \$8,322,332, 40.42 % of the budget; the School Program at \$12,267,264, 59.58% of the budget; with a Total Tax Levy \$20,589,596. The balance of revenues to support the budget is derived from local property and motor vehicle taxes. The proposed FY 2020 budget is under the 4% cap requirement with an increase of \$790,788, \$1,164 below the 4% tax cap. In recent review of historical tax rates by the Finance Director back to 1957, it was reflected that only one time up until the present day has the rate dropped below \$8.00. In 2007, after a revaluation, the rate dropped from \$9.49 to a low of \$7.81. Since 1957, the rates have fluctuated between, \$48.25 per thousand to the low in 2007 and in the past 30 years it has generally been in the range of \$9.00-\$14.00.

Town Administrator Nota reviewed the proposed Capital Program for the Town at \$761,920, a decrease of \$209,280; for the School proposed at \$333,155 for a \$166,330 increase; a total Capital Program of \$1,095,075, a reduction of \$42,950 from FY 2019. The Unreserved Fund Balance review proceeded with \$5,149,353 for the Town which is 21.60% of the total general fund expenditures in FY 2018.

Revenue Program. The Motor Vehicle Phase-Out revenue is reflected as an increase of \$42,500. Review of Proposed State Revenues proceeded which reflects a loss of \$45,528 for Town and School and review of the State Aid Reimbursement Program.

Expenditure Program. The summary of changes include: Personnel: Provides for increases in Health/Dental Benefits and Worker's Compensation costs and compensation for NAGE 68/69 and non-union employees; Finance: Includes a restructuring of cost areas with the establishment of a separate Information Technology division; Police/EMA/Animal Control: Includes negotiated collective bargaining (IBPO Local 305) increases in benefits, and routine operational costs; Fire/EMS Services: Includes standard operational increases, required shift from contractor to employee status for paid employees, and expansion of per diem, ALS part time employees; Library Services: Reflects a reduction in state grant-in aid funding; Senior Services: Provides for Department development, the appointment of Department Director and program expansion and diversification; Debt: Increase due to short-term debt involving Equipment acquisition and PV solar roof top installations; School Department: Includes increases in General Operations and School Construction Improvements.

Town Council. The salary line item at \$13,800 is level funded; the total budget reflects \$15,800, which is the same as last year's budget.

Town Administrator. The total proposed is \$205,833, no change from last budget.

Probate Court. The total proposed is \$7,098, no change from last budget.

Elections and Town Meetings. The total proposed is \$15,000, a decrease of \$1,100 or - 6.83%.

Legal Services. The total proposed budget is \$115,000, no change from last budget. The Town receives great services for their budget allocation.

Clerk and Records. The total proposed budget is \$201,294, an decrease of \$1,100 or -.54%

Planning. The total proposed budget is \$137,785, no change from last year.

Zoning. The total proposed budget is \$11,500, an increase of \$2000 or 21.05% to reflect an increase for supplies due to the cost for transcripts.

Personnel. The total proposed budget is \$1,745,752, an increase of 5.57% for funding set-aside for negotiations with NAGE68/69, non-union employees and/or other employee recruitments and other benefit adjustments.

Total General Government. The total proposed General Government is \$2,455,062 a 3.89% increase.

Finance Office. The total proposed budget is \$211,266, a decrease of 17.72% due to creation of a separate IT division within the Finance Department.

Tax Assessor. The total proposed budget is \$88,178, an increase of 4.59%.

Audit of Accounts. The total proposed budget is \$22,000, level funded.

Information Technology The total proposed budget is 75,000, and increase of 66.67% which includes Consultant support of \$55,000 and a reallocation of \$20,000 IT costs for yearly software that was previously reflected in the capital program.

Total Finance Department. The total proposed budget is \$396,444, an increase of 2.85%.

Protective Service/Building Inspection The proposed budget is \$294,187 an increase of 2.44%

Public Works Department.

Administration The proposed budget is \$56,839. which is level funded.

Engineering The proposed budget is \$53,404 reflecting an increase in the Intern item of \$1,000 or 1.91%.

Highway The total proposed budget is \$1,008,728, an increase of 1.85%.

Snow Removal. The total proposed budget of \$77,000 is level funded.

Waste Removal The total proposed budget is \$453,224, an increase of 2.03%, for Transfer Trucking and Recycling.

Street Lighting The total proposed budget is \$67,500, which is level funded.

Other Public Works: The total proposed budget is \$2,100, which is level funded.

Public Buildings The total proposed budget is \$247,000 which is level funded.

Tree Management Program The total proposed budget is \$36,050, and increase of 5.87% which includes \$2,000 in Tree Pruning.

Total Public Works The total budget is \$2,001,845.00 or and increase of 1.54%

Town Administrator Nota stated this concludes this evening's Operating Budget review #1. Tuesday April 2nd at 6:00 p.m. Operating Budget review #2 will cover Public Health Services and Outside Agencies, Public Safety including Fire/EMS, Police, Animal Control, Library Services, Parks and Recreation, Senior Services, Miscellaneous and Debt Service and Capital Budget Review if needed.

President White asked for questions from the audience. Mary Lou Sanborn, 21 Bay View Dr. asked about the unreserved fund balance of \$138,769 and why it is not put back into the budget to lower everyone's taxes. Discussion ensued. Andy Nota, Town Administrator, stated that a small reserve is healthy for a budget and it impacts our credit rating positively. Frank Meyer, 141 Southwest Ave. questioned the cost feasibility of the Solar Array, with the debt incurred. Discussion ensued. Mr. Nota stated that he has had many conversations with Mr. Meyer over this issue and the Town is being proactive to not only saving electric costs but trying to avert rising costs.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Operating Budget Work Session #1 was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Attest:

Karen Montoya, Deputy Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
 Town Administrator
 Town Solicitor
 Finance Director

