

Approved: March 15, 2018

Posted: March 19, 2018



Town Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 29, 2018, at 6:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

Chairman Harrington called the meeting of the Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were Vice Chairman Rothhaus, Councilor Albert, Councilor Boyd, Councilor Flood, Councilor Koenig, Councilor Thornton, Town Manager Cabanel, and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements.

The last date to file petition bonds (meaning those over \$100,000) is Friday, February 9, 2018.

The last date to file petition warrant articles is Tuesday, February 13, 2018.

The Special Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

The Deliberative Session will be held on March 14, 2018.

Final Consideration/Deliberation of proposed FY 2019 Budget.

The procedure for the final consideration and deliberation of the budget was explained, both for the benefit of the new Town Councilors, as well as those watching the meeting at home.

It was noted that all department heads were in attendance in the event a Councilor had any questions which needed to be answered.

Town Manager Cabanel Budgetary Considerations.

Town Manager Cabanel presented items for budget consideration and explained the procedure in the event any changes to the line items are required. No questions as to the procedure were noted.

A proposed increase to the budget in the sum of \$111,186 for a 3% non-union wage increase, which includes department heads, media staff, Town Manager staff, as well as the tax office, and covers approximately 70 people not covered by a union contract.

A decrease to the budget in the sum of \$41,148 which represents removing hours from the part-time line in fire which historically have been underspent.

An increase in the sum of \$85,398 for the Police Department in order to hire a new police officer for the Special Investigation Unit (SIU). As the Sergeant position cost had already been provided for in Town Manager Cabanel's proposed budget, the only addition is the cost is for the police officer.

An increase in overtime for the Police Department necessary to fill the new positions created by the SIU until the new officer positions are through their training and on the road.

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A decrease in the Parks & Recreation's budget due to removing the dredging and docks from this budget.

A decrease in the Town Clerk/ Tax Collectors' budget to reduce the number of voting booths from 200 to 70, saving \$34,710.

The above proposed changes provide for an overall increase to the Town Manager's budget in the sum of \$114,677.

An increase to Interest income of \$225,000.

An increase of \$25,000 in revenue for ambulance billings.

Overall change to the earlier proposed budget set forth by Town Manager Cabanel is \$.04 decrease from her budget. The estimated town tax rate is \$5.23; last year's town tax rate was \$4.90.

Also suggested was the removal of an additional \$50,000 from the existing \$673,000 media fund balance to be used to offset General Fund in addition to the earlier suggested revenue to the general fund of \$200,000; total Offset to general Fund is \$250,000.

Discussion amongst the board regarding the sum of \$450,000 last year's use of fund balance versus the current budget (2018/19) amount of \$300,000 in order to reduce the tax rate.

A question was raised regarding the part-time call division of the fire department call division which questions were answered by Town Manager Cabanel and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali.

No other questions or discussion pertaining to Town Manager Cabanel's proposals.

MOTION made by Vice Chairman Rothhaus and seconded by Councilor Boyd that the budgetary suggestions made by Town Manager Cabanel be approved. The motion and second were subsequently withdrawn by Vice Chairman Rothhaus and Councilor Boyd and resubmitted as motion to approve page 1 of Town Manager Cabanel's budgetary presentation. Discussion pertaining to various figures contained in the appropriation and increases in revenue as outlined on page 1. Appropriations will be an increase of \$124,903 and revenues will increase by \$260,226. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0

Discussion continued to page 3 of Town Manager Cabanel's proposed adjustment to the budget, including an additional \$50,000 from the media fund and increasing the amount of fund balance to offset taxes to the sum of \$450,000 (up from \$300,000).

MOTION made by Councilor Koenig and seconded by Councilor Boyd to increase the transfer of funds from media fund balance by \$50,000 so that the total transfer to the general fund is \$250,000. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0

Vice Chairman Rothhaus inquired as to the unreserved fund balance which numbers are being finalized, but estimated by Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali to be approximately 8%.

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MOTION made by Vice Chairman Rothhaus and seconded by Councilor Boyd to add an additional sum of \$150,000 from the unreserved fund balance in order to offset taxes for a total of \$450,000. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0

Councilor Flood raised the issue of possibly bringing a fiber optic line to the new highway garage which she proposed would be of significant benefit to the town infrastructure and could include archiving the IT department's materials off site. As there was already a motion on the floor, it was agreed to address the proposal later in the budget discussions.

Budgetary considerations set forth by Town Manager Cabanel concluded.

Councilor Boyd confirmed that, as the budget presently stood, the tax rate was \$5.19 per \$1,000, a \$.27 increase as pointed out by Chairman Harrington.

Chairman Harrington moved the Town Council's discussion to the next item.

General Government – 01

Chairman Harrington gave Councilor Flood the floor to further address her earlier proposal. Council discussion ensued regarding the media fund versus general government fund and how a direct-link fiber optic network (as town hall has with the police department, fire department and the waste water department) estimated to cost \$100,000, would be funded and whether it would be appropriate to upgrade the system contemporaneously with the building of the new town garage. The Town Council discussed the benefits of having such a system installed, as well as certain reservations. Further, some members of the Town Council indicated they were not previously made aware of the proposal. Councilor Flood declined to make a motion on the issue.

No changes were made.

Assessing - Tab 02

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget.

Fire Department – Tab 03

Brief discussion amongst the Council. No changes were made.

Police Department – Tab 04

Discussion amongst the Council and proposal by Councilor Albert to remove the sum of \$25,000 from the budget for the acquisition of a 2010 ambulance with approximately 126,000 miles (which had previously been in service by the Fire Department). Fire Department Chief Currier and Police Chief Roy spoke to the issue and the specifics pertaining to the vehicle, as well as its appropriateness for use as proposed by the Chief Roy.

MOTION made by Councilor Albert and seconded by Councilor Boyd, for the purpose of discussion, to remove the sum of \$25,000 from the budget, specifically for the crime scene vehicle replacement.

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The Council discussed the motion and the potential cost effectiveness of procuring a used vehicle for the crime scene vehicle versus the costs of purchasing a new vehicle for that purpose. **MOTION FAILED** 1-5-0 (*Supported by Councilor Albert; Opposed by Chairman Harrington, Vice Chair Rothhaus, Councilor Boyd, Councilor Koenig, and Councilor Thornton; Councilor Flood was not in attendance for the vote*).

Communications – Tab 05

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget.

Code Enforcement – Tab 06

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Administration – Tab 07

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Highway Department – Tab 08

Councilor Albert raised concerns over the capital reserve fund purchase and the proposed expenditure of \$100,000 for paving of gravel roads. He indicated he believes certain areas which are appurtenant may be developed and road resurfacing could be done by the potential developers. Director of Public Works Department Fox spoke to Council inquiries pertaining to the upgrading of the roads and gravel travel ways and the unlikelihood of utilizing the paving company for gravel road maintenance due to cost ineffectiveness and company unavailability. The possibility of renting a grader for a period of time, as well as the possibility of leasing/purchasing of some of the heavy equipment was discussed.

MOTION made by Councilor Albert and seconded by Councilor Boyd to remove \$100,000 from capital reserve fund purchases – paving of gravel roads.

Discussion ensued regarding use of grader on gravel roads versus costs associated with paved roads, etc. Also addressed was Greens Pond Road and mention of engineering and planning which would be involved in the upgrading of the road. **Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali requested a friendly amendment to the motion to include associated revenue which adjustment is a tax rate neutral amendment.** The Council discussed putting some of the equipment and items of DPW under highway equipment capital reserve so as to not affect the tax rate.

Director Fox spoke to Councilor Flood's inquiry as to the specifics of plans for paving the gravel roads and drainage improvement program. **MOTION CARRIED** 6-1-0. (*Opposed by Vice Chairman Rothhaus*)

MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Councilor Boyd, for the purposes of discussion, to reduce infrastructure capital road fund from \$550,000 to \$500,000.

The road infrastructure capital reserve fund and federal/state bridge reimbursement program were discussed.

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Councilor Thornton withdrew his original motion and made a MOTION, seconded by Councilor Boyd, to reduce the road infrastructure capital reserve fund from \$550,000 to \$450,000.

MOTION CARRIED 6-1-0 (*Opposed by Vice Chairman Rothhaus*) It was noted that the changes thus far put the new tax rate at \$5.14 (\$.24 increase)

Solid Waste – Tab 09

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Parks and Recreation – Tab 13

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

MOTION made by Councilor Albert and seconded by Councilor Thornton regarding the removal of trees near the town dock and the addition of funds in the sum of \$4,200 to cover the approximate cost of the tree removal to be added to maintenance/grounds. The possible impact of the tree removal on the shoreline, the additional, and possibly significant, costs as a result and state restrictions pertaining to the removal of trees around the shore were addressed by Deputy Director of Public Works Department/Town Engineer Dawn Tuomala. **The motion was withdrawn by Councilor Albert and was agreed to by Councilor Thornton.**

Councilor Boyd addressed maintenance, building and grounds and the proposed amount of \$2,240 contained therein to repair the skate park ramps. Discussion among the Council as to the cost to repair portions of the ramps when it is unknown if the park itself may be replaced, at which time the present elements of the skate park would likely be destroyed. It was determined that there remains enough in the present year's budget to allocate for repairs to the park and that to rededicate the proposed funds in the budget for the future siting of a skate park would be to establish a capital reserve fund which would require a warrant article.

Library - Tab 15

Discussion among the Council as to the reasons for additional funds being allocated and added to the capital reserve fund. It was specified that there are future library projects including, but not limited to, elevator, roof repairs, sprinklers, and HVAC system. It was noted that those future library projects are expected to begin in 2021/2022.

Equipment Maintenance Tab 16

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Buildings and Grounds. Tab 17

Council discussed HVAC possible replacement, repairs and/or upgrades to the system in the first floor of the town hall building, the non-working units of the existing system, and the estimated timeframes for such projects.

MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Councilor Boyd to remove \$150,000 for the HVAC upgrade and replace that figure with the sum of \$6,000 to replace the two non-working units.

The Council further discussed the faulty/non-working HVAC units and the hazards associated with same. Fire Chief Currier spoke about specific incidents wherein two units failed, causing unit-

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contained electrical fires. It was note that, in both instances, the fires were quickly contained. Mention was made that there are no smoke detectors in the town hall complex which provide early notification, but there exist sprinklers throughout which activate the fire alarms. It was agreed by the Council to revisit the issue once the Council has been made a presentation on the issue at the next Town Council meeting on February 8, 2018. **Councilor Thornton withdrew his motion which was agreed to Councilor Boyd.**

MOTION made by Councilor Koenig and seconded by Councilor Flood to add \$91,000 to the budget increase to the sum of \$241,000 in the event the Council agrees with presentation and decides to proceed with the installation and upgrade of the referred to HVAC system. MOTION CARRIED 4-3-0. (Opposed were Councilor Albert, Councilor Boyd, and Councilor Thornton). It was determined that the tax rate is \$5.17 (increase of \$.27).

Community Development. Tab 21

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Tax Collector – Tab 24

The Council sought information from Town Clerk Diane Trippett regarding the voting booth replacements and voting locations. **MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Councilor Boyd to reduce the number of replacement voting booths to be purchased from 70 booths to 52 booths (13 blocks of 4) which is a reduction of \$5,340.** Discussion amongst the Council as to possibly reducing the number of voting booths to be purchased. **MOTION FAILS** 1-6-0 (All opposed with the exception of Councilor Thornton)

Welfare – Tab 25

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Debt Service.

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali noted that the sum of \$6,616 needed to be included in the debt service for the cost of the highway garage bond for the first year due to interest.

MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Vice Chairman Rothhaus to include the sum of \$6,616 in the debt service for the cost of the highway garage bond for the first year due to interest. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

It was noted that the total debt service for the general fund thus far was now \$28,654,560.

Waste Water Tab 31

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Media – Tab 32

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Fire Protection – Tab 33

No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget

Day Camp Revolving Fund

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No changes to the Town Manager's proposed budget.

The Council briefly discussed police department outside details.

It was determined that, based upon the motions and changes made by the Council, the bottom line of total appropriations was \$34,567,890 with an estimated tax rate of \$5.17 (an increase of \$.27). Chairman Harrington requested a motion be made.

MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Albert to move the budget of \$34,456,890 to the public hearing on Thursday, February 15, 2018. Gratitude was expressed to Town Manager Cabanel, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Micali, and the department heads for their work in accomplishing the budget. **MOTION CARRIED** 7-0-0.

Adjourn

MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Thornton to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

The January 29, 2018, meeting of the Town Council was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by Kerry Tarleton.