

Town of Cromwell, CT
Board of Finance
Special Meeting
Monday, April 8, 2019 7:00 P.M.
Cromwell Town Hall, Room 224/225

Minutes and Record of Vote

Present: Chairman John Henehan, Vice-Chairman Julius Neto, Amanda Drew, Steve Wygonowski, and Ed Maley Jr.

Not Present: Alternates Allan Spotts, Dan Kelly and Jon Dzurka

Also Present: Town Manager Anthony Salvatore, Finance Director Marianne Sylvester, Director of Public Works Lou Spina, Interim Superintendent Dr. Thomas Y. McDowell, Business Manager Ann Burke and Board of Ed Staff

Call To Order - Chairman John Henehan called the Special Meeting dated April 8, 2019 to order at 7:01 p.m.

Seat Alternates – None

Discussion and decisions on the 2019-2020 Town Managers proposed budget:

Budget Line #47 Board of Education

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$30,850,762 for line item #47 Board of Education. After lengthy discussion a motion to revise the original amount to \$30,700,762 buy Mr. Neto and seconded by Mr. Maley. ***4 in Favor and 1 opposed (Ms. Drew) – Motion Passed***

Dr. McDowell provided documentation for questions asked after the presentation on 4/3/19. He answered most questions as by the Finance Board members. Lengthy conversation took place regarding numerous line items and how the numbers generated. The members of the Finance Board commented how hard it was to follow where the numbers came from (unable to connect the dots). Questioned the various positions being generated and eliminated. Also questioned Employee Benefits, pupil transportation, expenditure by school, funds from grants, etc. The Board of Education budget is very vague and not as detailed as in past years. Too many questions that don't appear to be answered and as a result the approved dollar amount budget for the Board of Education is being lowered by \$150,000 from the original amount of \$30,850,762. It was noted by more than one Finance Board member that they are struggling with the numbers presented.

Budget Line #27 Public Works Admin. (includes Budget Lines # 27 thru 34)

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$4,281,223 for line item #27 Public Work Admin.. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed***

Director of Public Work Lou Spina explained portions of the Public Works budget. Uniforms offered is one area that is budgeted on the basis that all employees that require to wear uniforms takes advantage of

the service. Some employees choose to buy their own pants, and some choose to launder their own uniforms which cuts down on what the department will need to spend.

Solid Waste was questioned. When budgeting this portion, they tried not cut it short so that they would need to come back and ask for more funds.

The Highway Division had increases in part-time wages. Mr. Spina explained that they are trying to cut back on overtime by bringing in part-time personnel to fill the gaps.

Vehicle Maintenance also requesting a part-time person to help with the maintenance instead of relying on contracted services.

Additional discussion regarding utilities, the LED lighting (replacements of LED fixtures, pole replacements, etc.). Maintenance costs for vehicle repairs and what is planned to cut costs

CAPITAL (CNR):

- A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$300,000 for Road Improvement. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***
 - Discussion regarding the dollar amount being allocated. Mr. Spina would like \$500,00 to maintain the pavement program and the commitment being put into the road work repairs.
- A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$35,000 for a new snow pusher. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***
 - Mr. Spina explained the need for the new snow pusher and how it can be a cost saver. Less time to plow which should result in less overtime hours.
- A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$56,000 for a pick-up truck replacement. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***
 - Mr. Spina wants to replace the Highway Foreman's truck. The one they have is beginning to rot, brakes are going, high mileage and corrosion issues. This is a take home vehicle because the foreman is always on call.

Budget Line #6 Development Compliance

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$13,201 for line item #6 Development Compliance. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed***

Town Manager Anthony Salvatore explained the increase (covers cell phone expenses, membership fees and marshal services.

CAPITAL (CNR):

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$28,000 to replace SUV. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Mr. Salvatore explained the vehicle being replaced was bought used and it is beginning to have mechanical issues.

Budget Line #23 Planning + Zoning Comm

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$3,525 for line item #23 Planning + Zoning Comm. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Budget Line #24 Zoning Bd of Appeals

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$1,250 for line item #24 Zoning Bd of Appeals. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Budget Line #25 Inland Wetlands

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$2,300 for line item #25 Inland Wetlands. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Budget Line #26 Conservation Comm.

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$1,210 for line item # 26 Conservation Comm. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Budget Line #1 Town Manager

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$383,915 and then a motion from Mr. Maley and seconded by Mr. Neto to reconsider and amended to \$381,915 for line item #1 Town Manager. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Mr. Salvatore noted that some of the increases were contractual and explained some of the other line items in this budget.

Discussion followed regarding some of the departmental expenses and some questions regarding capital and what constitutes it.

Budget Line #7 Building Inspector

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$203,710 for line item #7 Building Inspector. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Discussion regarding why it takes 5 years to change the code. Mr. Maley explained the process from the State to the Town.

Budget Line #8 Finance Department

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$421,531 for line item # 8 Finance Department. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

Ms. Sylvester explained some of the increases in their budget. Some due to outside services needed for special projects and to train new staff. Looking for outside services to provide training.

Discussion followed regarding the increases in salaries and how raises are determined (based on labor grade steps).

Budget Line #10 Assessor's Office

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$241,994 for line item #10 Assessor's Office. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Mr. Salvatore explained the wants with upgrade to a position which was declined by him and declined the request for a wage increase (which not only was it declined by the Town Manager but from the Town Council as well).

Budget Line #12 Donations and Dues

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$50,522 for line item # 12 Donations and Dues. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Mr. Salvatore some of the expenditures and where they will be spent.

Discussion followed regarding what the process for obtaining a donation. Mr. Salvatore explained the process.

Budget Line #13 Legal Expense

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$228,764 for line item # 13 Legal Expense. *All in Favor – Motion Passed*

Mr. Salvatore explained some of the activity going on with contract renewals, Town attorney fees and labor issues constituting the budgeted dollars.

Discussion regarding contract renewal and labor issues. All were explained by Mr. Salvatore.

Budget Line # 14 Central Services

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve \$196,800. *2 in Favor and 3 Opposed (Ms. Drew, Mr. Wygonowski and Mr. Maley) – Motion Did Not Passed.*

A motion was then made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to reduce the original amount by \$10,000 making the amount to approve to \$186,800. *3 in Favor and 2 Opposed (Ms. Drew and Mr. Wygonowski) – Motion Passed.*

Mr. Salvatore and Ms. Sylvester explained the increases to this budgeted line. Increase is due to a computer upgrade. They noted that they want a person on-site dedicated to handle computer issues. This may also be joining forces with the Fire District and the Board of Ed. Questions regarding to how much has been spent and was is being planned to be spent. Asked about the hourly rate of this person, asked about the cost of installing Wi-Fi and the cost to train personnel if needed. Mr. Neto gave input as to how the fire district computer needs are handled and covered in case assistance is needed.

Budget Line # 15 Insurance Expense

A motion was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew to approve 584,000 for line item # 15 Insurance Expense. *All in Favor – Motion Passed.*

Discussion regarding Workman's Comp and other line items within this budget.

Budget Line # 16 General Expense

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$554,002. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Mr. Salvatore report on the of this budget line. A big saving was because of the atrium roof and finding out that it was not leaking but found the water issue was the result of condensation buildup. No major repairs will no longer be needed as originally planned for.

There was some discussion concerning the roof.

Budget Line # 17 Town Council

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$39,905 for line item # 17 Town Council. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Budget Line # 18 Board of Finance

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$1.350 for line item # 18 Board of Finance. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Budget Line # 20 Charter Revis. Comm.

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$100 for line item # 20 Charter Revis. Comm. ***4 Approved and 1 Opposed (Mr. Maley) – Motion Passed.***

Budget Line # 21 Bd. Of Assess. Appeals

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$1,200 for line item # 21 Bd. Of Assess. Appeals. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Budget Line # 22 Comm. Support Disabled

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$100 for line item # 22 Comm.Support Disabled. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Budget Line # 45 Employee Benefits

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$3,846,399 for line item # 45 Employee Benefits. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Discussion regarding the high cost of employee benefits and if there was anything that can be done to lower it. It was noted that some are contractual, and a certain level of benefits is required. It was also mentioned that the Town is doing a good just funding the pension. On-going negotiations may also factor into the higher costs.

Budget Line # 46 Debt Service

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve \$3,704,100 for line item # 46 Debt Service. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Discussion regarding the debt service and how it will affect the mill rate. 2.5% for Town, 3.29% for Board of Ed which a 2.83% increase. This will result in 1/3% mill rate increase.

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve the bottom line for Town Budget of \$16,946,517. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

A motion was made by Ms. Drew and seconded by Mr. Neto to approve the Board of Ed budget of \$30,700,762 and Debt Services of \$3,704.100 which will result in an increase of 2.83% (a .5 mill increase). ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

A motion to adjourn the Special Meeting dated April 8, 2019 at 10:26 P.M was made by Mr. Neto and seconded by Ms. Drew. ***All in Favor – Motion Passed.***

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Hardacker

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Recording Clerk