

Town of Cromwell, CT
Board of Finance
Special Meeting
Tuesday, March 31, 2015
Woodside Intermediate School

RECEIVED FOR FILING
4/7 2015 at 11:34 A.M.
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
CROMWELL, CONN.

Gloria Prendergast, Asst.
TOWN CLERK

Minutes and Record of Vote

Present: Chairman John Henehan, Amanda Drew, Joseph Corlis, Ed Weners, Bob Milardo, Alternate Dan Delisle and Alternate Dan Kelly

Also Present: Finance Director Marianne Sylvester, Acting Town Manager Chief Anthony Salvatore, and Town Staff.

- A. Chairman Henehan called the Special Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.
- B. No alternates were seated.
- C. Discussion and decisions on the 2015-2016 Town Managers proposed budget.

Budget Line #9 Tax Collector

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joe Corlis to approve \$167,992 for line item 9 Tax Collector. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Doug Sienna said they had a reduction of \$19,200 as a result of reducing staff by a half person. Amanda Drew asked about the program used by the tax department and Doug stated that he is still dealing with program glitches and trying to work through them. He also mentioned that the program is faster and easier to use but still not able to obtain the reports he generated with previous program used by the department.

Budget Line #39 Human Services

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approved \$106,289 for line item #39 Human Services. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Joy Hollister advised that the budget has a slight increase for web base program needed for the department. Joy budgeted for an extra \$600 for the web base and Mr. Sistare (previous Town Manager) recommended that she lower it from \$1200. The web base program will better facilitate the department and service the public faster and more accurately. It will allow Joy and her co-workers to access and pull information at the same time and at real time.

Budget Line #40 Senior Services

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$89,582 for line item #40 Senior Services. All in Favor – Motion Passed (Note: Bob Milardo removed himself from voting)

John Henehan questioned the cost differential Yoga and Tai Chi classes. Joy Hollister explained that the classes were getting too large. Participant's skill levels were varying and she decided to try and split the classes (beginners and intermediate). She used her Senior Donations Account to cover the cost of additional classes to see if the program would work. Additional costs are to cover additional classes.

Budget Line #41 Transportation

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$113,428 for line item #41 Transportation. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Joy Hollister mentioned that the fuel costs are slightly lower. A contract was obtained locking in fuel costs. Otherwise the budget is primarily the same.

Budge Line #44 Library

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$568,710 for line item #44 Library. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Eileen Branciforte said the budget includes updates to existing computer programs, integrating program with schools, on-line publication and databases used in library.

Dan Delisle asked how shifts are determined. Eileen explained the since the library is open six (6) days a week and some evenings that the staff is scheduled as needed. For example she has a person that puts books away, another to handle computer support and where coverage is needed. Some personnel may only work one day a week, others more depending on their availability.

Ed Widders asked if classes are still being offered through the library for learning the use of cell phone, laptops and other new technology. Eileen said that they do.

Budget Line #12 Donations and Dues

A motion was made by Amanda and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$39,820 for line item #12 Donations and Dues. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Donations and Dues stay the same from year to year. No questions were asked and vote was taken.

Budget Line #13 Legal Expense

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$175,081 for line item #13 Legal Expense. Majority approved but was opposed by Bob Milardo.

Ed Widders asked about increase in legal expense. Chief Anthony Salvatore explained that there are three (3) union contracts being reviewed (which is under Labor Relations). Also there are big-ticketed items being challenged by people and the town is also challenging public. Chief Salvatore stated that the Town Manager's office is monitoring the use of the Town Attorney.

Amanda Drew asked about contract services. Marianne Sylvester said that it is determined on a case-by-case basis. Some of circumstances for the higher legal fees could be for reviewing the charter, public notices, etc. Costs are then charged accordingly.

Discussion was held as to the use of the Town Attorney. Chief Salvatore responded that all questions that need to be asked of the Town Attorney are being presented to the Town Manager first. Amanda Drew questioned the increase in legal fees. Chief Salvatore assured her that all is being done to keep the legal expense down but there are situations that require legal advice. Amanda expressed appreciation to the efforts being made to keep legal expenses down.

Ed Wenners asked why the town is paying for Probate. Chief Salvatore explained that the town is part of a regional probate and this is the Town of Cromwell's portion to pay. It is cheaper for the town to do it this way. Cromwell's portion is 21% or \$14,000+.

Joe Corlis thought that probate gets paid a percentage. Chief Salvatore was not sure but was willing to look into it further and find out an answer for him.

Budget Line #14 Central Services

A motion was made by Amanda and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$142,300 for line item #14 Central Services. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Amanda Drew asked if there was some way to save on postage. Marianne responded that each department has different postage needs.

Capital Expenses – A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$40,000 for technical computer network. All in Favor – Motion Passed

\$40,000 needed to update operating servers, licenses, etc for required updates to the town's computer network. Labor costs for this is approximately \$12,000 (two techs to install and test new operating system). Two options were submitted and Option 2 was chosen.

Budget Line #15 Insurance Expense

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$556,347 for line item #15 Insurance Expense. All in Favor – Motion Passed

John Henahan asked how often the town goes out for competitive bids. Marianne Sylvester responded that the town is getting the best rates through CIRMA. Cost is determined by usage (comp cases, etc). She also said that it is capped at 5%.

Chief Salvatore also mentioned that safety classes/training is provided to town employees to prevent possible injuries.

Budget Line #16 General Expense

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to table line item #16 General Expense. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Budget Line #17 Town Council

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$32,925 for line item #17 Town Council. Majority in favor. Bob Milardo opposed. Motion Passed

John Henehan asked who is responsible for the picking of the auditor. Marianne Sylvester stated that this responsibility belongs to the Town Council with the change to the Charter.

Budget Line #18 Board of Finance

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to approve \$1650 for line item #18 Board of Finance. All in Favor – Motion Passed

D. Adjournment

A motion was made by Amanda Drew and seconded by Joseph Corlis to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance at 8:28 p.m. All in favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia Hardacker
Recording Clerk