

**TOWN OF CROMWELL - TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
41 WEST STREET, CROMWELL, CT 06416
SPECIAL MEETING – BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES**

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 - 4:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor James Demetriades, Julia Aurigemma, Brian Bonneau, Stacy Dabrowski, Jack Henehan, Paula Luna, Al Waters

Also Present: Town Manager Salvatore, Chief Sifodaskalakis, Captain Penn Finance Director Sharon DeVoe, Assessor Shawna Baron, Tax Collector Brian Stermer, Human Services Director Amy Saada, Youth Services Administrator Sara Calos

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Demetriades called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

B. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Julie Fitts Ritter, 23 Timber Hill Road, Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) member, explained that Shawna attends BAA meetings often. She tries to reach a fair resolution for everyone. She makes an effort to meet with residents who have an appeal to work it out before it gets to the BAA. She knows the laws and statutes, understands them and puts them into action fairly and consistently. She does have to be tough in this position but she does it with integrity. She is an asset. If giving her a raise keeps her here, we need to do that.

Gayle Ivy, 2 Bayberry Court, was in attendance and informed the Council that she has worked in three Youth Services departments in Connecticut and the one here in Cromwell has impressed her. She said she is especially impressed with Amy and Sara. She continued, they do a great job with the families and children. She hopes that the Council supports their budget because of the amazing job they do for the community and for the future.

C. DISCUSS AND APPROVE AMENDED PURCHASING POLICY

The Town Manager and Mayor explained that after a meeting with the Board of Education it was determined that all Board of Education Capital projects will go through the Town and be added to the Town's Capital Improvement Plan which resulted in this proposed amendment to the Town's Purchasing Policy.

MOTION made by B. Bonneau and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to approve the proposed amended Purchasing Policy.

All in favor.

D. BUDGET WORKSHOP

1. Any unfinished business from March 4, 2024 Budget Workshop
 - 22. Committee to Support Disabled People

The Town Manager explained that there is pending legislation that would make this a responsibility of the Municipal Agent of the Elderly (Social Services Director Amy Saada). Therefore, he is suggesting that we approve \$0 for this Committee.

MOTION made by J. Henehan and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to approve \$0 for the Committee to Support Disabled People based on the information the Town Manager provided.

All in favor.

2. Discussion and Action on General Fund Budget Requests:

– 36. Police Department

Police Chief Sifodaskalakis and Captain Penn were in attendance to answer questions of the Town Council on the Public Works budget. Chief Sifodaskalakis presented an overview of his budget.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Chief's request of adding a Lieutenant to the Department. He explained that the Town Manager denied that request, but agreed to add an Administrative Sergeant as that position is already approved within the Police Union. Chief Sifodaskalakis said that while he would have preferred the Lieutenant position, he supports the Town Manager's budget with the added position of Administrative Sergeant.

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to approve the Town Manager's Budget Recommendation of \$4,357,671.

In favor: S. Dabrowski, J. Henehan, P. Luna, A. Waters

Opposed: J. Aurigemma, B. Bonneau

Motion carried.

CNR ITEM

Police Vehicles

MOTION made by J. Henehan and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to replace 2 police vehicles from the ARPA fund in the amount of \$140,000.

All in favor.

– 37. Animal Control

MOTION made by B. Bonneau and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to approve the Town Manager's Budget Recommendation in the amount of \$100,034.

All in favor.

– **44. Library**

Clarification was requested on what the Capital Items request budget line included. Library Director Canney replied digitally that it includes technology, VR, 3D printers, and computers.

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to approve the Town Manager's Budget Recommendation in the amount of \$752,406.

All in favor.

– **2. Town Clerk**

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to approve the Town Manager's Recommended Budget in the amount of \$234,174.

All in favor.

– **7. Building Inspection**

MOTION made by P. Luna and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to approve the Town Manager's Recommended Budget in the amount of \$232,478.

All in favor.

CNR ITEM

Digitization of Existing Residential and Commercial Building Plans and Paper Records

- The Town Manager explained that he does not support this only because we are expecting COG to come to us within 6 months offering this service for a nominal fee. Once we have the fee information we will bring it to the Town Council for approval.

– **9. Revenue Collections Department**

MOTION made by J. Henehan and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to approve the Town Manager's Recommended Budget in the amount of \$170,423.

All in favor.

– **10. Assessor's Office**

Assessor Shawna Baron was in attendance to present her budget to the Council and explain her request for a wage increase. She referenced the letter she presented to the Council with her budget. There was a brief discussion regarding this request including, pay scales, steps, longevity payments, etc. The Town Manager explained that he feels highly about Shawna and about her capabilities but does not support this request which is why this increase was not in his Assessor Budget recommendation to the Council. He explained that he asks all directors to get involved in their prospective fields. He said all of his directors do an outstanding job

and if this were to pass, he would have to look at all directors' salaries. After a brief discussion, it was decided to table this matter.

MOTION made by J. Henahan and **SECONDED** by B. Bonneau to table **10. Assessor's Office.**
All in favor.

– **39. Human Services Administration**

Social Services Director Amy Saada and Youth Services Administrator Sarah Calos were in attendance to answer any questions of the Council on their budgets.

MOTION made by P. Luna and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to approve the Town Manager's Recommended budget in the amount of \$149,189.
All in favor.

– **40. Senior Services**

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to approve the Town Manager's Recommended budget in the amount of \$145,274.
All in favor.

– **41. Transportation Services**

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by J. Henahan to approve the Town Manager's Recommended budget in the amount of \$165,660.
All in favor.

– **42. Youth Services**

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to approve the Town Managers budget recommendation of \$128,549.
All in favor.

– **1. Town Manager's Office**

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to approve the Town Manager's budget recommendation of \$438,745.
All in favor.

– **8. Finance Department/Treasurer**

MOTION made by J. Henahan and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to approve the Town Manager's budget recommendation of \$450,203.
All in favor.

– **16. General Expense**

MOTION made by J. Aurigemma and **SECONDED** by J. Henahan to table this item.
All in favor.

– **45. Employee Benefits**

MOTION made by J. Aurigemma and **SECONDED** by B. Bonneau to approve the
Town Manager's budget recommendation of \$4,545,075.
All in favor.

– **46. Debt Service**

MOTION made by P. Luna and **SECONDED** by J. Henahan to approve the Town
Manager's budget recommendation of \$3,238,994.
All in favor.

3. Any other budget matters
None.

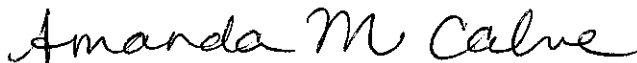
4. Approve Grand Total of General Fund Budget
MOTION made by J. Aurigemma and **SECONDED** by B. Bonneau to table this
item.
All in favor.

E. ADJOURN

MOTION made by J. Henahan and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amanda M. Calve
Secretary