

TOWN COUNCIL
Town of Trumbull
CONNECTICUT
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TOWN HALL
Trumbull

TELEPHONE
(203) 452-5005



FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017
BUDGET VOTE
MINUTES
APRIL 19, 2016

CALL TO ORDER: The Chair called the special meeting of the Town Council to order at 8:00 p.m. All present joined in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chair asked all present to remember former Finance Department employee Rose Rotzal who recently passed away and John Siedlell, Councilman Donna Seidell's husband who is recovering from a heart condition, and Rosemary Seaman former BOE member who has had three surgeries over the past couple of months. Hopefully she will be returning home shortly, she is comfortable and recovering.

The clerk called the roll and recorded it as follows:

<u>Present:</u>	Edna Colucci	Joe Pifko	Mark LeClair
	Donna Seidell	Matt Caron	Ann Marie Evangelista
	Bill Mecca	Carl Massaro, Jr.	Mary Beth Thornton
	Dawn Cantafio	Jack Testani	Lori Rosasco-Schwartz
	Thomas Whitmoyer	Mark Block	Jason Marsh
	Enrico Costantini	Tony Scinto	Vincent DiMasi, Jr.
	Richard Kascak, Jr.	Lisa Valenti	

Absent: Michael London

Also Present: First Selectman Herbst, Director of Finance, Chief of Police Michael Lombardo, Deputy Chief Glenn Byrnes and EMS Chief Joseph Laucella.

The Chair noted there was a quorum for this meeting. The We the People debate team will go to the national competition next week and extended the council's wish for their success. This is a wonderful program that has turned out many bright and capable Trumbull High School graduates and wished the team much success next week.

The Chair stated there is only one item of business on this agenda. The Trumbull Town Council will adopt a spending budget for fiscal year 2016-2017 commencing July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

This year the Board of Finance recommended a spending budget of \$174,693,669, which includes funding of all the Town boards and commissions, service departments, the Town Council and the two enterprise funds, the Water Pollution Control Authority and the Tashua Knolls Golf Course.

Pursuant to Chapter IV, Section 3, of the Trumbull Town Charter, the Town Council may reduce any line item of the recommended budget by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at this meeting;

Or it may increase any line item or restore any line item eliminated by the Board of Finance from the First Selectman's proposed budget by a 2/3 vote of the entire membership or 14 affirmative votes. In no instance may the Town Council adopt a budget which includes any spending item not originally proposed by the first selectman or recommended by the Board of Finance or an amount in excess of the line item proposed by either the first selectman or the Board of Finance, whichever is higher.

Adoption of the budget will be by a majority vote by members of the Town Council present and voting. The Town Council will proceed through the recommended budget in the order of departments appearing therein beginning with General Government. Motions to amend line items and department totals will be made by motion to increase or decrease an identified line item by the proposed amount. The Town Council was assisted by the Town Finance Director, Maria Pires.

*The Chair reserves his right not to vote unless otherwise noted.

1. RESOLUTION TC26-51: Moved by Colucci, seconded by Block
BE IT RESOLVED, That the annual budget for the Town of Trumbull for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2017, as recommended by the Board of Finance and amended by the Town Council, and would appropriate the sums stated therein as amended for their respective purposes as set forth therein.

01 GENERAL GOVERNMENT
TOWN ATTORNEYS 01012800

Moved by Cantafio, seconded by Thornton to reduce 522202 SERVICES & FEES-PROFESSIONAL by \$35,000.

First Selectman Herbst explained when this was presented to the BOF there was a discussion of centralizing all legal fees, by taking the amount out of the Tax Assessor and moving it over, there was also discussion at that time where they were advised there is a current Responsible Contractor Ordinance, which requires the Town of Trumbull to conduct a hearing with a hearing officer where certain contractors may be disqualified from doing work in Trumbull. If this is conducted the additional money would need be in place. The letter of the law has to be followed so they are not appealed and is the reason for the extra funds in this line item.

VOTE: Motion FAILED 6-13 (IN FAVOR: Thornton, Whitmoyer, Mecca, Cantafio, Marsh and Valenti)

Moved by Cantafio, seconded by Thornton to reduce 522203 SERVICES & FEES-ANCILLARY by \$15,000.

Ms. Cantafio stated this was not in the past budget and is not needed and if it is they can always come to the Town Council for it. The Chair clarified they would need to go the BOF first.

First Selectman Herbst explained when he presented the budget he not only talked about the Responsible Contractor Ordinance and the need to follow the letter of the law but also talked about the fact that funds need to be allocated for the Trumbull Ethics Commission if in the event they need to retain legal counsel. There has been criticism for requests for supplemental appropriations, it can't have it both ways, reduction cannot be made when trying to budget for items and then criticize the supplemental appropriations. There were no motions made at the committee level, yet they are being made at the full council.

VOTE: Motion FAILED 6-13 (IN FAVOR: Thornton, Whitmoyer, Mecca, Cantafio, Marsh and Valenti)

TOWN HALL 01013800

Moved by Testani, seconded by Block to reduce 501102 SALARIES-PT/PERMANENT by \$15,210.

Mr. Testani stated it his understanding that there is sufficient coverage in the Finance Department to eliminate the position.

Ms. Evangelista stated there is the senior volunteer tax relief program in place, those senior hours could be used in place of this position, if this does not work out Ms. Pires would be welcome to come back during next year's budget with the request.

Ms. Pires clarified the position is for the entire Town Hall not just the Finance Department. The Chair stated this represents the floater position.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED 18-1 (AGAINST: Scinto)

CLEAN ENERGY 01015600 – The Chair explained this is something Mr. London has always commented on, this account was used to purchase green energy. The contract expired this fiscal year which is why there is no proposed amount.

02 PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE 01022000

Moved by Testani, seconded by Thornton to increase 501101 SALARIES-FT/PERMANENT by \$161,262.

Mr. Testani stated the department is at an all-time high with regard to staffing. Under this administration there has been an increase in the police department's staffing and an improvement in communication within the department and is happy to increase the funding of this line item to make certain the two lieutenant positions and the SRO positions are in place.

The Chair stated they are pleased the police union has elected to move their health insurance to the State plan subject to ratification by the union and are grateful for an opportunity to save some money in an area where they will be well provided for health-wise. This increase represents the maximum the council could put back in this line item.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED unanimously

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES 01022600

Moved by Testani, seconded by Block to decrease 522202 SERVICES & FEES-PROFESSIONAL by \$20,000.

Mr. Testani stated per his conversation with Chief Laucella and how he is planning to change the staffing Chief Laucella is in favor of the reduction of \$20,000.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED 18-0-1 (ABSTENTION: Cantafio)

FIRE MARSHAL 01012800

01022824 FIRE MARSHAL FIRE HYDRANTS: The Chair explained this is what the Town pays Aquarian to service the Town's fire hydrants. In all of Mr. London's years he has never see on one serviced and has always wondered what the Aquarion spends \$1.4 million on.

PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL

VOTE: PUBLIC SAFETY NEW TOTAL \$12,387,665 - AN INCREASE OF \$141,262 APPROVED unanimously.

03 PUBLIC WORKS

VOTE: PUBLIC WORKS TOTAL \$8,857,103 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

04 PUBLIC HEALTH

VOTE: PUBLIC HEALTH TOTAL \$379,778 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

05 SOCIAL SERVICES

VOTE: SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL \$86,400 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

05 MARY SHERLACH COUNSELING CENTER

VOTE: MARY SHERLACH COUNSELING CENTER TOTAL \$312,750 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

05 SENIOR CITIZEN SERVICES

Ms. Cantafio spoke against cutting programs and the \$10,000 reduction, (522205), she understands the Town Council cannot restore this item. The Chair stated that everyone is working towards improvement for senior and anticipates big changes there.

VOTE: SENIOR CITIZEN SERVICES TOTAL \$286,250 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

05 SOCIAL SERVICES/HUMAN SERVICES TOTAL \$685,400 – NO CHANGE APPROVED
unanimously.

06 EDUCATION

EDUCATION 01060000

Ms. Thornton asked what the status of this item was with regard to the health insurance funding. The Chair explained the item being considered is the BOF number, \$107,426,063, the entire budget. The BOF had moved funds from the Town side of the budget for health insurance premiums to the BOE fringe benefits account.. Mr. Marsh stated it was his understanding on February 2nd the BOF moved \$12.6 million from the BOE side to the Town side, subsequently they moved \$11.6 million back to the BOE leaving \$1 million unaccounted for and questioned where the \$1 million is now.

The Chair stated on page 19 of the Budget spreadsheet line item 522205 is where the BOF moved the \$11,695,501 back to the BOE budget, less \$1 million, which represents the difference of the cost between the current Anthem plan and the projected lower cost of the State Partnership plan. The Chair stated all of the unions on the BOE side have been in discussions and negotiations. In February, the BOE made two actions, they moved the insurance account to the Town side and the BOF moved most of that back. Secondly the BOE has designated their union membership to go the State Partnership plan. They will go to the State plan though there are negotiations going on because the unions have filed grievances about that action. If the unions vote to pull back their grievances and go to the State plan the differential of what the BOE moved to the Town side v. what the BOF returned to the programing expense line item will go away because the savings will be realized. Mr. Marsh stated the savings will not be known until July 1 when the cost of the State Plan will be known. The Chair stated there is a lot of information that we are not privy to because this is on-going labor negotiations. The Chair stated they are earnestly negotiating and are going in the direction of resolving going to the plan.

First Selectman Herbst further explained that this is not speculative, there is a health care consultant for the BOE, another one for the Town and one retained by the police union which have all concluded there will be significant savings. The difference between the BOE number and the Town's number factors in an important consideration. The current fiscal year's BOE budget has a significant hole, there was significant claim experience this year which caused a hole in the existing fiscal year. The savings realized with moving to the State plan will be \$3 million to \$3.7 million. One of those figures includes the hole and the other does not. Moving to the State plan will cover the fiscal year's hole and realize savings in the future. The State plan is one of the richest in State of CT. Fairfield BOE agreed to the plan with no protracted debate over the switch. They are saving money and are providing equal to or better to their employees with lower prescription costs. The BOE understands the significance of the current year's shortfall and the significance of getting this done. Dr. Cialfi has conveyed to the First Selectman his confidence of the future conversion to the State plan by the BOE. Mr. Marsh does not feel Fairfield moving to the State plan is not relevant to what this body is voting on. The savings is being quantified in the budget as \$1 million and cautioned if the savings is not realized a hole will be left in the BOE budget. Everyone wants to save money and hopes it pans out, but this body has to plan for the worst and plan for the best.

First Selectman Herbst asked for a proposal to cover the shortfall in the BOE budget this fiscal year. Mr. LeClair explained for Mr. Testani that this was not discussed in committee because per the

Town Charter the Council cannot increase this line item. Mr. Testani stated this discussion is moot and called the question. The Chair explained the number is \$107,426,063 and the Council cannot go higher than that number. If in fact there is a problem, the BOF and this body will address it. He has every confidence and has been assured it will be resolved at the Long Hill Administration building and there will not be an issue to deal with.

Mr. Whitmoyer stated money was taken and not returned therefore questioned how this would be adding to the budget. There has been a spending freeze on the BOE side that is how the current year shortfall is being addressed. The million dollars would cover the shortfall if it were returned. The Chair explained that would be mixing two different fiscal years, which cannot be done. When this budget year is over the BOE will know the current cost and claim history, there has been a reserve fund that had been built up the last couple of years, that will address the current year's shortfall. What the Council has before them is the largest number from the BOF and is what the council can adopt tonight. This includes the BOE healthcare for all of the BOE employees. If they don't go to the State, it has been pointed out there is \$1 million in this budget that would need to be covered if they are successful in staying in their current plan. The BOE has made the decision to go to State plan and is a non-issue unless the grievance goes forward and someone makes a decision that overturns the BOE's action. The Council cannot do anything else about this at this meeting. Mr. Marsh stated he understands the Council cannot do anything about it at this meeting but hopes he is not alone with how he is uncomfortable about the process that has brought them to this point.

Mr. Testani questioned whether Mr. Marsh was proposing a reduction to the BOE's budget. Mr. Marsh indicated no and stated his concern is that the BOE has been given a choice to live with the State health plan or live with the consequences of a \$1 million shortfall. The Chair stated there been \$6 million funded for the BOE capital projects since the election and to have this opportunity to save as much as \$3 million on a fringe benefits, of which all our Town and BOE employees will share with equivalent to or better health care is rare. It is April 19th, the BOF had bent over backwards to give the BOE unions time to do the disruption studies. The studies were done over a month ago, and understands this all takes time but it is time to adopt the budget. The Chair has every confidence everyone in this Town will be taken care of and as Chairman of this Council he will make sure one way or the other everything will be taken care of.

Mr. Mecca stated health care costs are an issue everywhere, and noted the leeriness in which people have with entrusting the State with our health care during the state's budget crisis. The Chair explained you can distrust the State, but the next fiscal year we should shop the plan again. We should have zero based budgeting of this item every single fiscal year. If we have to start shopping in November we will do that. But if we stay where we are on the BOE side we have a big hole to fill and higher premiums to come with and there would be no savings for anyone, the taxpayers or the BOE employees. There will be at least a 14% increase based on claims' history. There really is only one choice. The Chair called for any reductions to the BOE budget. Hearing none.

VOTE: EDUCATION TOTAL \$107,426,063 - NO CHANGE APPROVED 14-5 (Against: Thornton, Whitmoyer, Cantafio, Marsh, and Mecca).

VOTE: EDUCATION TOTAL \$108,719,104 - NO CHANGE APPROVED 14-5 (Against: Thornton, Whitmoyer, Cantafio, Marsh, and Mecca).

07 LIBRARIES

VOTE: LIBRARIES TOTAL \$1,662,176 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

08 RECREATION

522205 Youth Program Expenses- Ms. Cantafio spoke against not funding this line item.

VOTE: RECREATION TOTAL \$528,815 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

08 PARKS

VOTE: PARKS TOTAL \$1,880,586 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

08 TREE WARDEN

VOTE: TREE WARDEN TOTAL \$152,410 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

08 RECREATION & PARKS

VOTE: RECREATION & PARKS TOTAL \$2,601,811 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS 01013400

Moved by Whitmoyer, seconded by Testani to reduce 511150 FRINGE BENEFITS-FICA by \$16,296 to correct the BOF error.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED unanimously.

Moved by Block, seconded by Pifko to increase 511150 FRINGE BENEFITS-FICA by \$11,173 due to change in Police fulltime salaries by \$161,262.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED unanimously.

VOTE: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS NEW TOTAL \$15,653,608 - DECREASE OF \$5,123 APPROVED unanimously.

TOWN HALL 01013800

Moved by Contafio, seconded by Costantini to reduce 501116 Contingency by \$143,000.

VOTE: Motion APPROVED unanimously.

VOTE: TOWN HALL NEW TOTAL \$2,115,284 - DECREASE OF \$158,210 APPROVED unanimously.

VOTE: GENERAL GOVERNMENT NEW TOTAL \$22,174,627 - DECREASE OF 163,333 APPROVED unanimously.

GENERAL FUND NEW TOTAL \$163,638,931 - DECREASE OF \$22,071 APPROVED unanimously.

10 ENTERPRISE FUNDS

SEWERS-ENTERPRISE 20100000

Moved by Cantafio, seconded by Thornton to decrease 522202 SERVICES & FEES- PROFESSIONAL BY \$150,000.

Ms. Cantafio explained this would leave \$25,000 for legal matters that may arise. The Chair stated that would leave a balance of \$275,000. Mr. Costantino questioned where the \$150,000 came from. Ms. Thornton stated \$100,000 was allocated for the Bridgeport legal fees and \$75,000 for consulting this can be found in the budget book on page 399 in the budget book. Mr. Costantini questioned whether this was raised and discussed at the budget hearing and has anyone asked the WPCA about this. The Chair stated when the WPCA sets the rates and know they do not have a significant expenditure they can factor that in and set a lower rate if they don't have to use the \$100,000-\$150,000. Ms. Thornton stated this is based on whether it is approved by the Bpt. City Council and the fact that we are at the end of the legal issues. There will be no need for these legal fees anymore. Mr. Block spoke against removing this until the City of Bpt. acts and knows it is resolved. Ms. Thornton stated there is a level of trust we have to have in Attorney Kokenos and what he has told the council. Mr. Block stated he has no issue with trust with the Town attorney but does have a concern if, and not by fault of anyone, it is not approved we would need a supplemental appropriation.

Ms. Thornton stated she cannot vote for the budget not knowing whether the unions will vote to go into the State Partnership plan. Mr. LeClair stated this is a very complex process and this should have been vetted out in committee. We cannot make decisions without the people here to ask questions to. This should have been brought up n committee during the hearings, otherwise we would be acting in the dark. Mr. Marsh spoke to the irony of how they were asked to vote on the agreement after several members were given the agreement at the meeting they were asked to vote on it. There is hesitancy to remove legal fees but are expected have faith that \$1 million will appear with the health insurance. Mr. Costantini stated the difference is the Council has the ability to keep the \$150,000 in the budget but has no authority to go above the BOF for the Education budget. The Council is limited by Charter.

VOTE: Motion FAILED 6-12-1 (IN FAVOR Thornton, Mecca, Whitmoyer, Cantafio, Valenti and Marsh) (ABSTENTION: Scinto)

VOTE: SEWERS- ENTERPRISE TOTAL \$9,050,203 - NO CHANGE APPROVED 12-3-4 (AGAINST: Thornton, Cantafio Whitmoyer) (ABSTENTION: Mecca, Valenti, Marsh and Scinto)

TASHUA KNOLLS-ENTERPRISE 21100000

TASHUA KNOLLS-ENTERPRISE TOTAL \$1,982,464 - NO CHANGE APPROVED unanimously.

ENTERPRISE FUNDS \$11,032,667 TOTAL - NO CHANGE APPROVED 17-1-1 (AGAINST: Whitmoyer) (ABSTENTION: Valenti)

GRAND TOTAL \$174,671,598 ADOPTED 13-1-5 (AGAINST: Whitmoyer) (ABSTENTION: Thornton, Cantafio, Mecca, Valenti and Marsh)

The Chair stated the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year Budget has been adopted and TC26-51 passes.

There being no further business to discuss and upon motion made by Testani, seconded by LeClair the Trumbull Town Council to adjourned at 9:11 p.m. by unanimous consent

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastroni, Town Council Clerk