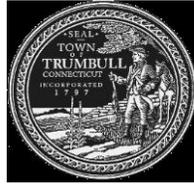


TOWN COUNCIL
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**FINANCE COMMITTEE
BUDGET HEARING MINUTES
MARCH 11, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman LeClair called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. at the Town Hall. All present joined in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Cindy Penkoff, Vice Chairman, Mark LeClair, Chairman, Tony Scinto, (arrived at 7:20 p.m.), Lori Rosasco Schwartz, Vicki Tesoro, Thomas Christiano, Alternate and Daniel Marconi, Alternate

ABSENT: Bethany Llodra Gilman

ALSO PRESENT: Town Council Chairman Carl A. Massaro, Jr. (arrived at 7:27 p.m.), Town Council members, Ken Martin, Sr. and Edna Colucci and Director of Finance Maria Pires,

PUBLIC WORKS

Director of Public Works John Marsilio was present, also present Tree Warden Warren Jacques, Parks Director Dmitri Paris, General Superintendent of Public Works Thomas Baldwin, Fleet Manager Joe Mitri, Town Engineer Frank Smeriglio, Fred Palmieri WPCA Commissioner, and Part-time Comptroller Lisa Lobo.

Mr. Marsilio stated this budget is basically last year's budget with the exception of a few instances and reviewed the following line items with the committee:

Public Works-Director 01030000

Includes the salary of the Public Works Director, the Administrative Assistant, supervisory training, expenses and telephone. The supervisory training was decreased.

Salaries-FT/Permanent -501101 - Mr. Christiano questioned the increase to Salaries-FT/Permanent - 501101. Mr. Marsilio stated that he had not requested the increase. Ms. Pires stated the increase represents an increase to the director's salary to bring him up to par with the other directors. Mr. Marsilio explained for Mr. Christiano that unaffiliated employees in other towns always have followed either a contract or a policy. In Trumbull that does not happen. Mr. Marsilio suggested that the unaffiliated employees be treated in a predictable fashion by implementing a policy to address this in a predictable fashion in order to attract good solid personnel.

Disposal Area **01030400**

SERVICES & FEES-CONTRACTUAL - 522204 - A reduction of \$81,000 was recommended by the First Selectman and BOF based on the fact that Trumbull and other towns in the area have severed their contract with CRRA. They have engaged with the waste energy plant in Bridgeport directly. This savings may be close to \$100,000. The exact number is not known at this time. It is a sliding scale based on the tonnage committed by the Towns. They will be meeting next week for further discussions. This number could go down further. Every dollar that the tipping fee is reduced by is a \$17,000 savings, there is the potential of saving another \$2, but that is not in the agreement yet.

Town Engineer **01030500**

522202 SERVICES & FEES-PROFESSIONAL- The dept request of \$40,300 was recommended by the First Selectman and reduced \$15,000 by the BOF. This represents \$10,000 for the Pequonnock River walking bridge and \$5,000 for the RT. 111 study within the Public Works Dept. Ms. Tesoro stated that the BOF felt the RT. 111 study was the State's responsibility, but the State requires a study to be done in order to address the matter. Mr. Smeriglio explained the State's long term plan for RT. 111 is to either do an over or an underpass, (at best 5 years away). The dept. is looking to do a study to address the issue in the interim. If the \$5,000 is not available Mr. Smeriglio would have to try to get the State to address this sooner. He recommends trying to address the issue in the interim with the \$5,000 to evaluate the lights. Mr. Smeriglio confirmed for Ms. Tesoro that the \$5,000 has been reduced from the budget to date. Mr. Smeriglio explained to the Chair this represents the trail crossing just north of the RT. 25 and RT. 111 intersection.

Inland Wetlands Commission **01014800**

Mr. Smeriglio stated the budget is the same as last year with the exception of legal notices. The amount of applications has increased over the last three years. The legal notice request is based on historical data.

Mr. Marsilio explained for Mr. Christiano that there are two budgets, the operational budget and the capital expenditure budget. The capital budget is a 5-year plan and in some cases a 10-year plan. Items that last for twenty years are included in the capital plan/budget. Items/vehicles based on the 5-year program are included in the operational budget spread over 5 years.

Parks Department **01080600**

SALARIES-SEASONAL/TEMP - 501103 &
SALARIES OVERTIME - 501105

The dept requested small increases to the 501103 and the 501105 line items. The Seasonal budget request was reduced to last year's budget and the overtime line item request was reduced by \$10,000 resulting in a net increase of \$3,000 for the overtime line item.

Capital Outlay - 581888 - Mr. Marsilio explained for Mr. Christiano that the Capital Outlay - 581888 account includes all of the past 5 year financing for the Parks Dept. and the total for this year. There is a request for \$22,000 for three pieces of equipment, one piece was recommended and there were 2 utility vehicles for trail maintenance one of which was disallowed. The adjustment was made in the request.

Mr. Paris indicated the AED training is for the Park Rangers. They are trained on annual basis, there are 2 Park Rangers. Mr. Marsilio explained for Mr. Scinto that the winter weather may have impacted the parks' irrigation systems. Mr. Paris confirmed this. Ms. Penkoff suggested that when a park or pool area needs to be closed due to a maintenance issue or a particular project that a notice be put in the newspaper and/or posted on the Town's website and Facebook page. Mr. Marsilio agreed.

Tree Warden **01080800**

PROGRAM EXPENSES - 522205 - Mr. Marsilio indicated the dept. requested an increase. The increase was reduced by the First Selectman and the BOF to \$80,000 representing an increase of \$12,000 over last year's budget. This represents the maintenance of the urban forest.

WPCA **Fund 20**

Mr. Smeriglio stated there is an increase to the WPCA budget, primarily based on two (2) line items:

1. Bpt.'s 35% sewer usage rate increase.
2. Capital Outlay - This year's request is \$314,000. The projects listed are separated into two categories.
 - a. Projects with a one-year life paid for out of the operating budget.
 - b. Projects part of the capital plan - projects for the existing infrastructure.

Other items are close to what had been in the 2013-2014 FY budget.

The Chair indicated the sewer usage fees going to Bpt. are out of the Town's control.

Mr. Smeriglio stated there were 1,900 WPCA sewer usage fee liens filed totaling \$933,000. This represents outstanding balances from last year. Since July 2013 \$251,000 of delinquent WPCA Sewer Usage Fees has been collected through the tax department. The invoices have been modified to read that any outstanding sewer usage fee over \$5.00 not paid by January 1 will result in a lien. This was always on the bill but has since been modified so that it is easier for the resident to see. Mr. Smeriglio indicated for Mr. Scinto there are 12 pump stations. Mr. Marsilio stated there is an analysis of the pump stations. It was required by the DEEP for the I&I Study. Mr. Smeriglio stated the 5-Yr Capital Plan outlines what they would like to do with the first two pump stations. \$69,000 is included in this budget request for a master plan study of all the pump stations. Mr. Marsilio explained all of the pump stations in Town were built at different times and eras. There has to be continuity amongst them, there is technology available today where all 12 pump stations can be monitored remotely through an iPad.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

EMS **01022600**

EMS Director Joe Laucella was present and indicated EMS was reorganized last year. Last year EMS responded to 4,000 medical emergencies, this represents a slow year for Trumbull. They expect next year to be at a higher volume. They have seen fewer refusals for transport to the hospital than last year. The calls are coming in at 3-4 at a time. 92% of the calls coming in are being covered. This represents an increase of 15% per month. They are not at the rate he would like yet. Transports have increased and are at 75%. The dept. has 2 full time employees, the administrative assistant and himself. There is a small part time line item for the person who orders the medical supplies and has done so for years. Vintac Staffing provides the EMT's (at \$20.96). Paramedics are provided by Danbury ambulance, one paramedic per 24/7 with the

medications and equipment (at \$358,000 per year). They are in the process of RFP's for paramedics. The budget represents no increase on their paramedic staffing service, that number is an unknown. They are hoping for the number to hold or decrease. Uniform Allowance has been increased because they have more volunteers, they are recruiting between 5-7 per month. The volunteers allow for the dept. to put a third ambulance on the road for certain events. Volunteers help on a daily basis. Vintac payroll has increased the 522202 line item. The dept. was not adequately staffed and there is need for more. There is a need for a third ambulance 6 hours per day; the middle of the day is the peak time. Many calls come from doctors' offices. The revenue has been doing very well. They are hoping to see \$1.265 million in revenue next year, this is only an estimate. The call volume is trending towards being higher this year. When he started last year there were three box ambulances, a sprinter ambulance has been purchased. He would like to expand his fleet to two box ambulances and two sprinters in the future.

FIRE MARSHAL 01022800

Ms. Megan McCarthy, Fire Marshal was present and stated the budget is being kept the same. The revenue has increased significantly and will continue to increase due to permit fees coming in for the 5520 Park Avenue medical building, the new restaurant and store at the mall. The revenue brought in as of 2/28/14 is over \$44,000. This is \$5,000 over the same time period of last year.

522204 - There is a new line item for licensing. This was added back in by the BOF because it had been accidentally deleted. This represents \$500 for software renewals, (a program used for all of their fire incident reports to the state), \$1,200 for Docuware licensing (scanning of docs), \$3,600 for Energov software & \$600 for support (Town permitting software).

CAPITAL OUTLAY - 581888 -

- Radio Upgrade - Last year the radio upgrade request (\$3,500) was in the MNTCE/REP-EQUIPMENT/BUILDING - 578802 account it has since been moved to CAPITAL OUTLAY - 581888. The upgrade was not done last year. That money will be returned. It is included in this year's budget request CAPITAL OUTLAY - 581888 (\$3,600).
- Document scanner - \$750
- Safety Respirators - \$200
- Halagon Bar -\$260 (Pry bar used at the fire debris)

Ms. McCarthy explained this will be a very busy and challenging year. Projects anticipated this year are as follows:

5520 Park Ave, The Bridges at Trumbull, 2 new stores at the mall, 35 Nutmeg Drive and possible the Field Bros. will be developing their parcel.

Fire Hydrants 01022824

Ms. McCarthy explained the line item is a bill for maintenance of the Town's fire hydrants from Aquarion Water Co. The Town has no control over this item.

BUILDING OFFICIAL 01023200

Mr. Graham Bissett was present and explained the essential duties of the Building Dept.

Permits have increased by 25% over last year. Due to the implementation of the 2013 amendments to the 2005 CT State Building Code Supplement they expect another 25% increase in the number of inspections performed, (Effective February 2104). The dept. has collected \$406,762 in fees to date and expects an additional \$540,483 based on current and anticipated projects bringing the total to close to \$800,000. Permit fees collected last year were \$622,668.

Mr. Bissett explained he wanted to restore the PT position to FT. It was approved as a FT position in the 2011-2012 budget. When Dan Nelson was Chief of Staff Mr. Bissett agreed to get by with the PT position until the dept. needed the FT position. The BOF added \$25,000 to the 2014-2015 522204 line item. This was to be in lieu of bringing the PT position up to a FT position. The intention was that the \$25,000 would be a contractual position and used when needed. But this would be a union position and can not be done that way. Mr. Bissett stated he ran the revenue figures, the leanest of years the dept. brings in \$400,000 while the other years range from \$500,000 to \$800,000. There is a possibility that next year will be at \$900,000. The dept. has always brought in more than the budget. Mr. Massaro explained the council cannot bring the full time account to above what the First Selectman recommended level. Ms. Pires stated the PT funding and the 522204 could be transferred into the FT account in the next FY to fund the FT position.

Youth Commission 01050400

Meriel Cornell and Mary Joan Wright were present Ms. Cornell explained their programming has become very popular and want to expand. Long term they would like to grow a community theatre program, that will benefit the community overall and could have a positive economic impact. This would involve kids of all ages, adults, seniors and businesses. Ms. Tesoro stated there is opportunity for more discussion about this and the different ways of increasing this line without increasing salaries to full time. One way would be to make the positions contractual. Ms. Penkoff stated there is conversation happening about bringing the recreational venues together in Town.

(Mr. Massaro left the meeting at 8:57 p.m.)

Recreation 01080400

Ms. Mary Markham was present and confirmed the Parks Commission voted to charge the residents \$5.00 for the Parks' stickers. The money collected will go into a special agency account to cover the cost of the stickers and hopefully the person to distribute the stickers. Ms. Penkoff spoke against the sticker fee. Mr. Christiano agreed with Ms. Penkoff. The Chair agreed as well. Mr. Paris explained for a number of years the Parks Commission has been brought to bear that non residents are using the parks. The parks system has grown beyond its boundaries into open space, the Pequonnock River Valley and the Trail system. The intent is to preserve the original parks system for the Trumbull residents. The most cost effective manor is to put into place a visual that the Park Rangers can identify in order to be able to take non-residents out of the park system. The sticker will serve as a control mechanism. The program had to be self funded. Ms. Markham stated they are hoping the revenue generated will cover the salary of the part timer distributing the stickers. The number of stickers to be sold is unknown, last year 8,000 stickers were distributed at no cost. It is not known how many will be sold now that there a fee for them. Ms. Penkoff stated for the record that she fines it offensive to nickel and dime our residents for \$5 for a parks' sticker that they already pay taxes to maintain.

The Chair stated the only difference in the budget is the reduction of the part time account. Ms. Pires explained the original budget included a 1220 hrs. for the part timer it was brought down to 1014 hrs, which is the normal amount/19.5 hrs. per week.

LIBRARY **01070000**

Ms. Horton, Library Director was present. The first selectman eliminated a position although this was a misunderstanding and has been corrected at the BOF level. The position had not been filled for some time due to the fact there were some unresolved issues between the union and the first selectman. The position was taken out of this budget because it was thought it was not needed since it had not been filled to date. Ms. Horton explained that they desperately need it. The BOF restored the position.

CAPITAL OUTLAY - 581888 - The \$11,835 has been in the budget for 4 years - this is to upgrade the computers, this is the 4th rotation of the program. They started 4 years ago when the computers were 10 years old and now they have them on a good schedule. The other \$10,000 is for the strategic plan. The First Selectman has discussed the possibility of a community center and reorganization. If this plan were to move forward the Library would need to have a current strategic plan in place in order to get state money for the project. To hire someone to develop the strategic plan would cost \$20,000. \$18,000 was originally requested, it has been reduced to \$10,000. The library board will share the cost. The other requests within this line item represent basic increases in subscriptions & data bases. No other increases have been requested in this budget. The HVAC system has been working very well. The traffic is still strong. Circulation Statistics have gone down slightly which might have to do with the use of e-books. Programming is increasing. It is still a very busy facility.

There being no further business the Finance Committee of the Town council adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastroni
Town Council Clerk