

**Trumbull Town Council Finance Committee  
2011-2012 Budget Hearing  
March 23, 2011**

The Budget Hearing was called to order at 7:05 p.m. All present joined in a moment of silence and the pledge of allegiance.

Members present: Chairwoman Debra Lamberti, Vice Chairman Tony Scinto, Jane Deyoe, Ann Marie Evangelista and John Rotondo (arrived at 8:10 p.m.)

**EMS – 01022600**

Ms. Barbara Crandall Chief of the Trumbull EMS was present.

During the preparation of the EMS budget items had been eliminated and reduced where necessary before submittal to the First Selectman for review.

**581888- Capital Outlay-**

Request - Radio repair and upgrade in the amount of \$69,809 due to narrow band compliance for the year of 2012, covering two bay stations at Daniels Farm Road and the police station, including antennae and cables. Also included is the replacement of the bay station at EMS headquarters (with antennae and cables) and a radio in the oldest ambulance which can not be reprogrammed to the narrow band compliance. All of the radios recently purchased are reprogrammable; there is a cost associated with the reprogramming which is also included in the \$69,809 as well as the license which needs to be redone. With the exception of the \$69,809 request the remainder of the EMS budget has a 0% increase.

**Elections – 01010800**

Mr. William Holden, Registrar of Voters was present.

**581888- Capital Outlay**

Request - \$900 could be eliminated it is no longer necessary; the \$900 was the suggested retail price for the printer, the item has since been purchased in the current year budget at a cost of \$450.

**578801 – Service Contracts**

Request - \$4,802 - The state had previously serviced the ballot scanners at no cost to the town but will no longer be providing the service which represents \$4,202. The service contract ran out in December 31, 2010. An inspection charge is imposed when there is an interruption in service; the inspection charge is less than what they would have charged for 6 months of continued service, therefore the request that the line item be increased by \$600 vs. \$2,100. The overall increase request for line item 578801 is \$4,802.

**First Selectman's Office - 01010400**

First Selectman Timothy M. Herbst was present.

**501101- Salaries-FT/Permanent** - Request - To bring the half time secretary back to full time. Due to the workload, duties and responsibilities.

The previous administration's 2009-2010 budget was \$374,243; the first selectman's 2010-2011 budget was \$266,654 representing a reduction of 29% and 2011-2012 request is \$292,756 representing a reduction of 22% from the 2009-2010 fiscal year's budget. The first selectman's salary is below the 2007 level. All employees now contribute to the health care, the town pension will be declined by the First Selectman when he would become eligible and will instead contribute to the defined contribution plan along with all new hires.

The membership fee to CCM in the amount of \$21,000 has been canceled, after the determination that an official previously employed by the town and CCM had negotiated 5 year contract locking the town in at a rate for energy at 9.76 per kilowatt hour. The membership fee has been distributed to various departments (Public Works, Finance and First Selectman) under the professional development accounts.

#### **Probate - 01010600**

Judge Chiota was present.

The Probate budget is \$110 over last year's budget due to legal notice posting and mailings. The overall budget is statutory.

#### **Charter Revision Commission - 01010300**

Judge Chiota, Chairman of the Charter Revision Commission was present.

The Charter revision commission budget is comprised of the clerical fees and public notices. The legal notice fees are an estimate, what is not spent will be returned to the town

#### **Tax Collector - 01012000**

Ms. Mary Moran, Tax Collector was present.

#### **522203 – Services & Fees-Ancillary**

Request \$11,200 - The state of CT sends a bill for delinquent motor vehicle taxes, last year the bill was \$6,353 this year the amount is \$8,115. Lexis Nexus is a service used to locate people who have moved out of town; the charge is \$50 per month and .35 per call made. Previous to this service an individual was paid \$2.00 per envelope returned to the Town. Lexis Nexus represents a savings to the town.

ARNG – Collection Agency service at a cost of \$20,000 per year to recoup approximately \$60,000 in back taxes. This service pays for itself.

**501102 – Salaries-PT/Permanent** - The part time permanent salaries increased due to a vacancy of the fulltime cashier clerk; the part time position had been filling in the position is filled.

#### **581888- Capital Outlay**

Request - \$7,000 Workstations/chairs.

Request - \$10,000 Adjust the counters in height to meet ADA standards and security cameras installed. (Cameras are estimated at \$5-\$7,500)

#### **Tax Assessor- 01011600**

Mark Devestern, Tax Assessor was present.

**581888 – Capital Outlay** – Previously requested \$199,000 can be reduced by (\$44,500) to \$154,500 reduction to lowest bid.

**501105 – Salaries-Overtime** – A one year request of \$5,000 due to the revaluation. This is an estimate the cost could be less, it will not be spent if not needed.

**501102 – Salaries-PT/Permanent** – Last year a full time position was vacant the part time permanent was increased due to filling in for the full time position.

**556601 – Prof Dev/Seminars** – Additional funding for GIS training. If it's not needed it will not be spent.

**Board of Assessment Appeals – 01011600**

Mark Devestern, Tax Assessor was present.

**522201- Services & Fees Clerical** – Increased due to clerical expenses – anticipating increased activity due to the revaluation.

**Technology – 01012600**

Matthew Altieri, Data Base Security Administrator and Matthew Heffren Technology Administrator were present.

The department has reduced their network backbone costs and increased speed between all the town building from \$88,817 to \$60,780 approximately 31% savings, give or take an on-going savings of \$28,000 per year.

**581888- Capital Outlay –**

- Request
- Disaster recovery site at the Senior Center – this is one time cost
  - Domain Controller – should have more than the one the town has currently based on the size of the network.
  - Upgrade e-mail server
  - Storage infrastructure

**522202 – Services & Fees- Professional**

Request \$5,700 for website redesign – important for economic development the current design has been in place for the past 5 years.

\* 581888- Capital Outlay – The BoF recommended denial of the portable encoder at \$1,000 and the encoder server at \$2,500 and the wireless network at \$10,000 although they left \$5,000 for the server, basically they removed the hardware but allowed \$5,000 to run the service. The BoF also recommended replacement of computers to be cut in half to \$15,000.

Technology requested to keep the pc replacement budget intact. The 5 year replacement plan began last year. They are trying to eliminate daily surprises from 10 year old pc's.

(Mr. Rotondo arrived at 8:10 p.m.)

**52204- Services & Fees Contractual** - Video streaming service - \$5,000 service fee this is a cloud server. A public facing service for video streaming of town meetings, which would be linked to agendas and minutes. The first selectman's office recommended this item; the technology dept. would oversee the service.

**Human Resources – 01013000**

Mary Ann Meier Personnel Manager was present.

**501101 – Salaries-FT/Permanent**

Increased due to added responsibilities to the personnel manager position current functions are as listed: oversee personnel records administrator for medical benefits, life insurance, Cobra, Medicare supplemental plan for retirees, the hiring for the police, town hall, BoE custodians. New functions/responsibilities are as listed: new policies and procedures to be implemented by the town, wellness programs, fitness challenges, Relay for Life, grievances and contract negotiations.

**545501- Communications – Legal Notices**

A typical legal notice/ad was \$200 and has gone up in cost to approximately \$700. The ads have been reduced in the number of lines in order to offset the cost increase, by referencing the website and adding job postings to channel 17 and posting in all of the town buildings.

**Town Clerk – 01013600**

Ms. Suzanne Burr-Monaco, Town Clerk was present.

**501101 – Salaries-FT Permanent**

Request – Increase \$34,598. Eliminate the part time position and add a full time. There were 4 ½ positions in the department, there are 3 ½ position in the current year a full time person retired the position was not replaced. Request to bring back the full time position due to work load of the office; all work done in the office has legal ramifications They are an office which still has two typewriters in use, many of the documents are still hand typed the full time position is necessary in order to keep up with the workload.

**501102 – Salaries – PT Permanent**

Reduction (\$13,626)

Request to eliminate part time position if the full time position is funded.

**Vital Statistics – 01040200**

Ms. Suzanne Burr-Monaco, Town Clerk was present.

The items are state mandated.

**Planning and Zoning -01014200**

Deborah Cox, Economic Developer was present.

**501102- Salaries- PT/ Permanent**

Request - Part time administrative position had been reduced to 15 hours last year; it has always been a 19.5 hour position. The 19.5 hours position is necessary for efficiency.

The Zoning Enforcement Officer is a part time 19.5 hours position as well.

**545501 – Communication Legal Notices**

Request \$15,000. In the 2010-2011 fiscal year it had been reduced to \$8,000 anticipating that the economy would affect the number of applications received, the opposite was true, permits increased 40% in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

**522201 – Services and Fees Clerical** - The transcription process is laborious additional funding was included in the budget due to anticipation of appeals.

**522202 – Services and Fees – Professional**

Request - \$15,000 - The department has a Zoning Enforcement Officer, but there is no ordinance or tracking process identify and manage the enforcement violations funds were included in the budget for legal assistance implement the ordinance and tracking process.

Planning & Zoning has piggy backed with the permit process tracking system/software that the Building Department utilizes.

**522202- Services & Fees Professional**

The BoF recommended removing \$15,000 and moving it to the Town Attorneys account.

**Economic Development - 01014600**

Deborah Cox, Economic Developer was present.

The BoF had asked if there was any one line item that would like to increase; Ms. Cox would increase communication/marketing items.

**545503- Communications – Public Relations**

Ms. Cox confirmed that increasing this line item by \$2-\$3,000 would help with printing new brochures and creating a video, this would at least get these items started.

**Clean Energy Fund 01015600**

Mr. Tim Dolan Chairman of the Clean Energy Task Force of Trumbull.

Request – \$1,600 - To continue funding the clean renewable energy fund at \$1,600. For every 100 sign ups the state will install one solar panel. The town has qualified for 4 panels to date and would expect them to be installed after 4 sites are chosen in the spring or summer of this year. The town has invested \$1,600 and has promised to reduce their energy consumption by 10%. The Town has qualified for approximately \$16,000 in products (solar panels).

The Chair called a recess at 8:49 p.m.

The Chair called the meeting back to order at 8:55 p.m.

**Board of Education/Education – 01060000**

Mr. Ralph Iassogna superintendent of Schools, Mr. Ted Lovely, BoE Chairman, Mr. Serico, Dr. Chialfi were present

## **Board of Education/Education – 01060000 Continued**

Mr. Lovely reported:

- 93% of the 2010 THS graduating class attended higher education institutions
- The SAT test was administered to 88% of the 2010 class
- CAPT scores have improved and have been their highest in the past five years
- Middle school CMT test scores were in the 80-90% range.
- K-5 CMT scores were strong with the grade 5 scores being the highest in their DRG.

The superintendent had requested a 5.77% increase (\$5 million over this year's allocation). The 5.77% includes a 1.96% funding cliff which equals \$1,633,148, there is also an increase in insurance cost of more than \$1,100,000, transportation costs have increased 0.25% those 3 increases amount to 3.5% of the 5.7% requested increase.

The BoE has decreased that request to 5.38% equaling an increase of \$4,570,539.

The First Selectman reduced the budget to an increase 2.375% reducing the \$4,570,539 by \$2.55 million.

Professional Development had been reduced 49% and books were reduced 100%. Basic teaching materials were purchased from funds no longer available; there will not be the \$826,000 returned to the town as it had been in the past, \$220,000 was returned to the town this year.

THS is preparing for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation in 2013, this accreditation is important for the students to be accepted into quality schools. THS is expected to increase its enrollment next year by 50 students. Personnel positions have been kept to a minimum. If the increase to the 2011-2012 budget drops below 4.5% teacher positions will be impacted. Professional and realistic negotiations with eight (8) bargaining units have taken place and are working cooperatively and efficiently with town departments to save monies and to continue services, (i.e. Hillcrest pool).

Trumbull ranks 11<sup>th</sup> out of 22 with regard to per pupil spending within their DRG. The "Pay to Play" fees have been raised. The ISS (In School Suspension system) is an unfunded mandated system, right now it is ½ day, if it goes to all day that will be an additional cost.

Mr. Lovely respectfully requested that the Town Council do whatever they can to keep education system at the level it currently is at.

Mr. Iassogna stated that a reduction of \$2.6 million will bring Trumbull a different school system. The BoE has been transparent, accountable and thorough in monitoring the financial and educational aspects of their statutory responsibilities. 5.5 teachers have been reduced, and are using the "177 job funds" for teachers, that is the only funding cliff money included in the 2011-2012 budget and have increased "pay to participate fees" significantly particularly bands and string at the elementary level. There has been a hard freeze with the teachers and have had a hard freeze with two other bargaining units which will be announced in the next month and hope to have hard freezes with the 3 units they are currently bargaining with. The staffing models have

been changed at the elementary school level. On site training is on-going. It is the hope that funds will be restored.

If class sizes are increased there could be a savings of teachers depending on how many are added and to which classes, for example if classes are increased to 25 students in grade 1 they would not save on one teacher, if increased to 25 students in grade 2 they would save on 4 additional teachers. The Board of Education makes the decisions on class size. The CMT scores are as good as they are at the elementary level due to class size. Teacher contracts limit the class size to 28 students. Trumbull ranks in the middle with regard to class size in their DRG. The make-up of the class and other variables along with class size impact the optimum environment for a student.

Each large bus costs approximately \$50,000 to run, a shuttle bus for 10-15 students is not paid for by the education system and is covered under the transportation contract at no or very little cost, they have implemented the use of shuttle busses.

If the first selectman's proposed budget is approved approximately 15 teaching positions would be cut in addition to the 5.5 already reduced due to declining enrollment.

If class sizes were to be increased it would be the recommendation of the superintendent to increase class sizes in the higher grades, not in kindergarten, first or second grade. At the middle school and high school levels, the class size they strive for is 25 students. The BoE could provide data from the CMT and CAPT scores.

The teacher's contract has a 0% increase and a 0% step increase and has been factored into the 2011-2012 budget as well as two other 0% increases bargaining units. Without the hard freezes there would have been a 3-3 ¼% increase. There has been a \$220,000 savings in insurance.

Driver's Education and Continuing Education in essence are self funding; they are not included in the BoE Operating Budget, they are included in the BOE support line item to offset any shortfalls they may have as well as three other programs. Driver's Education should be self funding next year due to increased fees. Sports, theatre and band are not self supporting. Driver's Education is not required, fees have been raised, and bus transportation is no longer offered. Continuing Education is not mandated, although adult education is.

In December when the budget was being planned, the insurance was factored in at 11.1%, Anthem came in at 14.9% but has since been negotiated down to 8.9%. According to Anthem combining insurance with the Town and the BoE does not realize any savings for the Town, initial indications with Anthem show that it may cost the town more. If it were to result in a savings or would be equal to or better the BoE would be in favor.

Trumbull does not pay for the students to attend the K-8 Magnet School or their transportation.

ERA money was used to supplant, otherwise they would have lost some very key positions.

By statute the superintendent does have authority over all hires. The hiring process had been previously scrutinized and has been the approval of the BoE to hire the best person. The board acts on retirees and resignations. 856.11 FTD's are funded in the budget. There are 8 positions projected to retire, currently there are 4 positions to retire and expect 4 more shortly; this has been factored into the budget.

60% of student computers are outdated, it had been planned to bond the computers, but have reconsidered that due to the current economic environment.

There have been 36 non-renewal notices; some teaching some secretarial. Legally notice has to be given by April 1<sup>st</sup>. There are 55 secretaries included in the budget; 30 of which are calendar year, 20 are school year; the Long Hill Administration building has 17 secretaries in total; 2 in the superintendents' office down from the previous 5 secretaries.

The BoE is currently going out to bid on the copiers and are working on a combined Town and Education savings. Paper has been negotiated down to \$23.00 per box and color copies down to \$.06 per copy.

Mr. Iassogna welcomed any questions to his office while the Finance Committee or the Town Council is considering their budget.

The March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011-2012 Budget Hearing adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Margaret D. Mastroni  
Town Council Clerk