TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

Special Town Council Meeting
APRIL 15, 2015
6:30 P M

*Town Council Chambers*FY 2015 – 2016 BUDGET WORKSHOP

MINUTES

The Special Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was called to order at 6:32 P.M. It began with a Moment of Silence. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were: Chairman Vincent Cervoni and Councilors Craig Fishbein, John Letourneau, Christine Mansfield, Robert F. Parisi, and Larry Russo. Councilors Tom Laffin, John Sullivan and Vincent F. Testa, Jr. were absent from the meeting. Mayor Dickinson and Comptroller Bowes were at the meeting.

No one from the public attended.

3. BUDGET WORKSHOP

LAW DEPARTMENT

In attendance: Janis Small, Corporation Counsel

Gerald E. Farrell, Sr., Town Attorney

The Law Department was excused as there were no questions.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

In attendance: William Wright, Police Chief

Beth Dighello, Executive Secretary

Chief Wright stated that for the Fiscal Year 2015-2016, they have asked for a modest increase but will reduce the department's overtime by 13% allowing them to sustain their operation. He reported an increase in the Capital Expenditures for two projects. One will be offset by a grant they have won and will use this fiscal year for the Cruiser Video Storage for \$17,145.

Councilor Fishbein asked about the grant. Comptroller Bowes explained that this grant will be used this fiscal year (2014-2015), and therefore, not in the FY 2015-16. This item was on the April 14th, 2015 agenda to accept the grant for the Cruiser Video Storage for \$17,145 and also to appropriate the funds. The second Capital Item for Logging is being removed from the 2015-16 FY, and he said that surplus funds from the 2014 year are being recommended for this item.

Councilor Fishbein asked about staffing and drug control. Chief Wright reported that they are almost fully staffed. With regard to drugs, there is no slow down on the market. His department has had long investigations, and they have used a large amount of taxpayer money to follow the drug trail.

Wallingford Town Hall, 45 South Main Street

FIRE DEPARTMENT

In attendance: Richard Heidgerd Chief

Steven Alsup Deputy Fire Chief Carmen Rao Fire Marshal

Chief Heidgerd explained that the 1.33 % increase is related to contractual increases. They are in need of the Training Tower. Mr. Bowes stated that the Training Tower comes from this year's surplus, so Year 2 is not in the budget for FY 2015-2016.

Councilor Russo asked about the new fire station, and if there would be a ground breaking ceremony. Chief Heidgerd said no ceremony but within one to two weeks, they are ready to break ground. There will be a grand opening for the new station.

Councilor Fishbein asked about types of pay.

AMBULANCE/EMS TRANSPORT FUND

In attendance: Richard Heidgerd Chief Steven Alsup Deputy Fire Chief

Chief Heidgerd said that their Capital Item-Ambulance is in Year 1 of 2. He spoke about a cardiac monitor and a power stretcher. They spent a good deal of time discussing the different types of pay and on collectibles. Two Councilors strongly expressed the need to hire a collection agency or law firm to recoup some of the 20% in uncollectibles, which are linked to low Medicare payment rates and that 75% to 80% of those who do not pay have no medical insurance. They discussed the process to collect a bad debt. They have not had any court experience yet. Write-offs were part of the debate with Mr. Bowes who explained the different tiers, that people move and for some the debt may not be economically feasible.

Chairman Cervoni noted that this service was being provided before the fund was even established. The Ambulance Service Enterprise Fund and its operation is still new. They need to build on training and to gain experience in collecting and to learn how to collect. He said they are moving forward to make this enterprise fund self-sufficient.

Mayor Dickinson said that ambulance billables should be increased to match the private sector. We need to move forward with higher rates.

The Enterprise needs three years of experience to go to the State of Connecticut to ask for an increase in rates. This happens in an off-cycle for Wallingford who will need to wait almost eight months beyond their three-year anniversary before they can apply to the State of Connecticut to request a rate raise.

FIRE MARSHAL

Fire Marshal Rao stated that increase in the budget is due to contractual increases. Mr. Bowes reported that there are funds to cover wage increases in Contingency.

There was some discussion with regard to iPads/laptops in the field.

TOWN COUNCIL

Councilor Fishbein suggested a reduction in the Council's budget in the Office Supplies and Expenses and in the Maintenance of Equipment lines of the budget.

MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR LETOURNEAU AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR FISHBEIN.

VOTE: 8-AYE; 1-ABSENT (SULLIVAN) MOTION PASSED.

The Council adjourned the meeting at 7:50P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Weekes Secretary to the Town Council Meeting digitally recorded.

Chairman Vincent Cervoni	Date
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Town Clerk, Barbara Thompson	Date