

**Board of Finance
Town of East Windsor
11 Rye Street
East Windsor, CT**

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING,
BUDGET WORKSHOP
April 8, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.**

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Members Present: Jack Mannette, Danelle E. Godeck, Robert Little, Marie DeSousa, Jason Bowsza, and Kathleen Pippin
Members Absent: None
Alternates Present: None
Alternate Absent: Jamie Daniel and Thomas Baker
Others: Catherine Cabral, Richard Pippin, Carol Madore, and Becky MacDonald
Press: None

I. Call to Order

Chairman Jack Mannette called the Special Meeting – Budget Workshop to Order at 7:03 p.m., at the Scout Hall, East Windsor, Connecticut.

II. Appointment of Alternates

Chairman Jack Mannette indicated that all Regular Members are in attendance, except for Ms. Godeck who has indicated she will be late; however, Alternate Member, Jamie Daniel and Alternate Member Thomas Baker were unable to attend this meeting.

III. Budget Presentations

Mr. Mannette indicated the Board will continue going through the budget requests. He asked if anyone had any questions as to what has been discussed thus far. The first department to be discussed was the Senior Center (1130). The discussion began about the increase in salaries for the drivers. It was indicated the drivers had a contractual increase for salaries. There were questions regarding the increase of the salary line for the Director position in the amount of \$6,000 due to the fact the contract does not call for an increase this year. Ms. Cabral indicated she would double check that salary line. Mr. Mannette indicated there is a possible error and the total salaries should be \$93,643 rather than \$99,644.

A brief discussion held regarding the differences in the salary line and it was determined that at the next meeting, Ms. Cabral will confirm this information and report back to the Board.

The discussion continued regarding the Senior Center printing expenses. Only \$89.31 has been expensed thus far this year and last year \$619 was spent. This year \$900 is being requested. Printing is used for flyers and newsletters. It was the general consensus to reduce the printing request to \$650.00.

The next department discussed was the Board of Finance (1135). It was suggested taking out \$200 for postage, since the Board Members receive their packets via email rather than in the mail. Ms. Cabral reminded the Board the postage line is combined with the advertising line. The advertising is used to post meeting announcements in the newspaper. The printing of the annual report was also added to the Board of Finance budget at \$3,400. A discussion was held regarding the cost of the printing of the annual report and maybe that could be reduced to do having the annual report available on the website. It was determined to leave this requests as is.

The Ethics Commission (1144) was next discussed. It was determined this commission meets on a quarterly basis and the Charter Revision Commission line is requesting \$100 and the Board was unclear why. It was agreed to take the \$100 request out. Miscellaneous Town Government (1145) was mentioned and no changes were made.

The Inland/Wetland (1150) was discussed. The conference and training request is only \$250. Mr. Bowsza had some concerns that money would only cover one person for the proper training with DEP. Mr. Pippin instructed the Board that two people are attending training within a few weeks. Mr. Bowsza indicated one of those people is paying that expense out of their own pocket. He feels it is important to have the proper training due to all of the State laws and certifications which are needed due to the land use laws. He encourages more people to be certified.

The 27th Payroll (1194) was mentioned and Mr. Little suggested dropping the 27th payroll. Ms. Cabral indicated it was suggested by the Board of Selectmen. No other questions or comments were made. Town Government/Employee Benefits (1195) was the next section mentioned and no comments were made. Public Safety Hearing Officer (2100) was discussed. It was indicated that there is not activity. This department handles any parking ticket disputes. It was unclear how many hearings happen but concerns were mentioned about loss of revenue and the possibility of this department producing more revenue if the blight ordinance gets passed. Mr. Mannette indicated, as he did before, if the departments need the money, they will come to the Board and request same.

The Police Commission (2144) budget request was discussed. Ms. Pippin indicated she had an issue regarding the cost for the recording secretary given that most of their public meetings are very short and due to the amount of executive sessions. Mr. Mannette indicated when hiring a secretary you pay if the meeting is five minutes or two hours, it is the going rate. Ms. Pippin suggested cutting that line to \$500. Ms. DeSousa disagreed. Mr. Mannette, Ms. Godeck, and Mr. Little abstained from the conversation. Ms. DeSousa continued to say it is difficult to take notes and be productive at a meeting.

The Police Department (2145) was the next topic. Mr. Mannette started the conversation indicating he had done some analysis of the budget, in particular, the salary lines. The increases which are being reported are amazing to him. He reminded the Board Members that recently, the Police had come to the Board requesting \$117,000 in added appropriations, of that \$90,000 was used for over-time pay. He suggested making their starting budget as adding 2% to their budget from last year and start at zero percent. It was asked why such increases are seen. Ms. Cabral indicated it is due to step increases and salary increases. Mr. Mannette commented that from a financial standpoint, the Town cannot afford all of the personnel. Ms. DeSousa asked if he was suggesting layoffs. Ms. Cabral reminded the Board if layoffs occur; there is a possibility of losing federal funding. Ms. DeSousa also indicated three officers have to be on duty in accordance with the contract. She also indicated it is not the role of the Board of Finance to disband the police department, but to fund the appropriate amount necessary for the police department budget. Mr. Mannette indicated he did not want to disband the police department, but other departments within the town have decreased their budgets and are under control. Mr. Little commented the furlough days which were to be used last year to save money, did nothing but increase the over-time. Ms. DeSousa reminded everyone the police department is a 24/7 operation and there are shift minimums pursuant to the contract. Ms. Mannette suggested decreasing the force, for example, if someone leaves not filling that position. Ms. Bowsza remarked that he is not sure if not filling vacant positions would save money, but would rather increase over-time again due to the terms of the contract.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the upcoming contract negotiations and possible bargaining unit concessions. It was suggested that Mr. Bowsza be on the committee for the next contract negotiations with the police union. Mr. Bowsza indicated he would be happy to. It was suggested by Mr. Mannette to cut \$50,000 of the police department budget. Ms. Godeck indicated the department is on a barebones staff and she would compromise by suggesting cutting \$35,000. Ms. DeSousa agreed with Ms. Godeck's suggestion. Mr. Little and Ms. Pippin agreed with Mr. Mannette. Ms. DeSousa wanted to mention that she was a little concerned with cutting the \$35,000 given that variable over-time constantly goes up and really cannot be foreseen due to injuries, disabilities, and/or retirements.

Ms. Godeck also commented that crime is on the rise and East Windsor does have the highway going through it which does bring crime to the town. The discussion continued briefly. Mr. Mannette indicated he would make this change. No other comments were made.

The Communication System Maintenance (2147) was mentioned and no changes were made. The Fire Departments (2150) was the next topic of discussion. Ms. Pippin inquired about the \$10,000 increase in physicals. Ms. Cabral indicated the contract has changed and the physicals are scheduled for the spring. Ms. DeSousa inquired if the audits were received from the fire departments yet. Ms. Cabral was not sure and Mr. Mannette did not believe so. The Warehouse Point Fire Department originally requested \$125,000 for repair of the driveway, but it was taken out by the Board of Selectmen when they did their review. All other lines are flat funded. Fire Protection (2160) has increased \$4,848 for water. Fire Marshall (2165) is being funded the same as last year. A discussion was held regarding the two fire marshals, fire districts, and combining the fire departments.

Emergency Management (2170) was the next topic, no changes or comments were made. The next department discussed was Dog Warden (2180). Ms. Cabral indicated the line in this category has been transferred to the police department and is funded through that department. Dog Damage (2180) is only used if a dog got to farm animals, a claim could be brought against the town.

The Firefighters Benefits (2185) was mentioned and no changes were made. Public Safety Employee Benefits (2195) was mentioned and Mr. Bowsza indicated there was no increase. Ms. Cabral reminded him based upon the number of employees with benefits, and some employees are on waivers due to the fact they have insurance through another family member.

The Public Works Department (3180) was the next discussed. It was mentioned the new signs are close to being completed. The chip sealing and pothole repairs are in the process of being completed. There is money available in the Fund 8 for some of the projects. No other comments or concerns were mentioned. Road Improvements (3183) was discussed. It was mentioned that if the budget does not pass on the first referendum, this subject may have to be reassessed. Street Lights (3185) has a flat increase. There was some discussion regarding the rates and CL&P reducing the lights, however, the concerns of liability the town. Ms. Cabral commented that if some lights are shut off, there is a fee to do so.

The last topic discussed was Engineering (3190). Mr. Mannette had a question regarding the salary line. He indicated there was an increase in that line from \$82,894 to \$84,869 and he wanted an explanation of same. Ms. Cabral explained that the salary line is actually flat for this year, but due to the budget process last year, the figures are a little confusing. She indicated the budget for the salaries are

fixed for years and was approved by the Board of Selectmen back in July of 2010 and July of 2009 in the amount of \$84,689.

VI. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Bowsza) and **SECONDED** (Little) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance adjourns the April 8, 2011 Special Meeting – Budget Workshop at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary