

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

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING – BUDGET WORKSHOP
March 9, 2011 at 6:30 a.m.**

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

Members Present: Denise Menard, Mark Simmons, John L. Burnham, Richard P. Pippin, Jr., and Gilbert Hayes
Members Absent: None
Others: Kathleen Pippin, Catherine Cabral, Dale Nelson, Chief Edward DeMarco, and Thomas Stremper
Press: None

I. Call to Order

First Selectwoman Denise Menard called the Special Meeting to Order at 6:35 p.m., in the East Windsor Town Hall.

II. Attendance

Denise Menard, First Selectwoman
Mark Simmons, Deputy Selectman
John L. Burnham, Selectman
Gilbert Hayes, Selectman
Richard P. Pippin, Jr., Selectman

III. Budget Discussions

Ms. Catherine Cabral gave to all Board Members updated report entitled, “Budget Report Builder Town of East Windsor 2010-2011 as of March 9, 2011 Preliminary” to use as the group discusses the budget. She indicated this report has been updated with the changes which were made at the last budget meeting on March 5, 2011. She also gave out two reports entitled “Town of East Windsor FY 2011-2012 Projected Revenue Preliminary March 9, 2011” and “Town of East Windsor FY 2011-2012 Projected Revenue Preliminary March 9, 2011 Board of Finance – 2%” for the Board Members to review. The three other handouts given were from the Assessor’s Office and Assessment Appeals Board revising their budget figures and a Memorandum from the Assessor’s Office dated February 17, 2011 giving statistical data. Ms. Cabral brought to the Board Member’s attention the total budget increase is now approximately \$136,922.15, but this figure does not represent Capital Improvements budget or the Board of Education budget. Ms. Menard and Ms. Cabral explained the revision of the Assessor and Assessment Appeal Board.

The first line discussed was the Elderly Commission (1129), which has requested \$650.00 for recording secretary and postage. The Commission meets approximately six times per year. Mr. Hayes explained the increase of \$150.00 is for the recording secretary and postage to remind the members of the meetings. After a brief discussion regarding the postage request and it was suggested instead of sending reminders, maybe the members could be reminded by a phone call or email. It was agreed to cut the \$50.00 in postage but to recommend the \$600 for the recording secretary.

The next line discussed was the Senior Center (1130). Ms. Cabral indicated it was up approximately 8% or \$19,860. Mr. Pippin inquired where the increase was and if it was for gas and oil expenditures. Ms. Cabral indicated the majority of the increase was salaries. Ms. Menard indicated the clerical union had an increase in salaries. Ms. Cabral listed the salary increases individually. Mr. Burnham remarked that if fifty people used the senior center, it would cost approximately \$5000 per slot or \$25.00 per day per person. It was mentioned the usage of the center has increased in the past few months. Ms. Menard commented that there is a half of a driver less and it has been talked about using a car instead of a van to save on gas usage. By using the ride service, seniors are being exposed to local businesses which in turns help small businesses in town, for example, having lunch at the Polish Deli and using the local libraries. More programs are being introduced to the senior center by way of Parks and Recreation. Many senior citizens depend on the rides to go to doctor appointments and other errands they may have. Mr. Burnham suggested keeping the budget at last year's figures. But Ms. Menard indicated the majority of the increases are salary not gas and oil. Mr. Pippin suggested cutting \$5000 from the bottom line and savings could come from purchasing fuel from the town.

The Board of Finance (1135) was the next department discussed. The request from the Board of Finance appears to be increased; however, it is actually decreased. The printing of the annual report has previously been paid from this account, but the cost of the printing has been re-classed to the Board of Selectmen's budget. With that being done, there is no change in their requested budget.

The Ethics Commission (1144) was the next department discussed. Ms. Menard indicated the budget request is only \$100.

The Miscellaneous Town Government (1145) was discussed. Mr. Hayes questioned the expense of flags at the cemeteries and where does the money come from. Ms. Menard commented the Veteran's Commission is responsible. Mr. Hayes indicated the flags he was talking about are not the little flags by the graves, but the big flags at the cemeteries. He indicated Ms. Simmons is familiar with the cost of the flags, which is approximately \$1,000. It was decided either Mr. Simmons or Mr. Hayes would inquire with the Chairman of the Veteran's Commission regarding this subject. Continuing with the line 1145, it was noted the request was down approximately \$39.00.

The Inland/Wetland Commission (1150) was the next line discussed. A question regarding the Conservation Commission and Inland/Wetland Commission arose, if they were to different Commissions or were they merged into one. Ms. Cabral indicated Robin had spoken to her about this subject and she believed it was all one line, however, Ms. Menard thought there were two different commissions and she would find out and report back to the Board at the next meeting. However, looking at the requested budget, it was decided not to change the request.

The next category discussed was the 27th Payroll (1194). Ms. Cabral commented that the Board of Finance decides if this line should be funded or not, it is not funded automatically. Ms. Menard suggested putting \$10.00 in this line to keep the line open if it is needed. Ms. Cabral indicated the figure in this line changes every year due to the way the calendar falls. It can be as little as one day or as high as ten days of payroll. A brief discussion was held regarding the 27th payroll and how it is computed. It was decided that Ms. Cabral will compute what that amount will be for the upcoming year and report back to the Board with that figure.

The next line discussed was Town Government/Employee Benefits (1195). Mr. Pippin indicated the numbers are untouchable. Ms. Menard indicated she will be trying to get the insurance figures lower, but she was not sure if it could be done.

Public Safety Hearing Officer (2100) line has not changed and is requesting only \$60.00. Ms. Menard has looked in the past years to see what has been used. She indicated in three years, only one parking ticket has been processed. She suggested funding the lines at \$10.00 each to keep the lines open, therefore cutting approximately \$30.00.

The next department which was discussed was the Police Commission (2144). The Board looked at their budget and indicated no changes were made. The recording secretary is funded at \$1,500 which includes twelve meetings and two budget meetings. However, the office supply line is being funded at \$200. A brief discussion was held and it was agreed to cut the office supply line by \$200 and suggests the Commission can get their supplies from the Police Department when needed.

The Police Department (2145) was the next discussed. It was questioned if the recent transfers were included in the figures and it was confirmed they were. Ms. Cabral indicated the increases in this department's budget is approximately 3.25% and the reason for the increase is due to salaries; over-time fixed, over-time variable, and clerical. Ms. Menard reminded the Board that the police contract is only valid until December and will be re-negotiated. The Board Members had a few questions which needed to be addressed by the Chief and it so happened the Police Commission was meeting in the next room. Ms. Menard knocked on their door and requested that after their meeting if they could join the Board of Selectmen to address questions they had about their proposed budget. It was agreed and this discussion regarding the Police Department was tabled until the Chief was able to discuss it further.

The Communication System (2147) was discussed. The request is the same as the previous year. Ms. Menard indicated it costs \$30,000 for Tolland County dispatch and approximately \$15,000 to maintain the system, which is a very conservative figure. No changes were made.

Fire Departments (2150) were the next lines discussed. Mr. Pippin indicated that last year the request was approximately \$642,198.00. Ms. Cabral indicated there is an increase of approximately 17% or \$111,254. Ms. Menard reminded the Board there is a missing piece to this budget, the annuities have to be level funded and a decision won't be made until the Volunteer Incentive Committee meets to discuss the funding. Both departments, Warehouse Point and Board Brook have been underfunded; however, Warehouse Point will have a bigger piece due to the fact they have more members to provide for. Ms. Menard indicated it will be a level playing field for both departments per person. It was mentioned that the \$30,000 for the annuities are not in the requested budget at this time.

Chief Edward DeMarco and others from the Police Commission entered the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Chief DeMarco fielded questions from the Board Members regarding his requested budget and the increases. The Chief indicated that he did not increase the salaries because the contract has been extended until December. He explained the variable over-time account which relates to shift minimums for certain officers. Recently there have been two retirements and another officer has an arm and back injury. Fixed over-time is fairly predictable due to holidays. The other line which showed an increased was conferences and training. The Chief indicated there was no increase in that line. Presently only \$9,000 has been spent on that line due to the fact most of the training happens during the warmer weather. Chief explained the importance of proper training for the officers, such as, accident reconstruction and CPR. Some of the training is mandatory. The Chief commented that some of the training is required by the officers to be certified in certain areas. He began to explain that the police officers are the first responders to any medical call and those officers need to be properly trained and certified. The Chief indicated he understands the tough economic times that the town is facing and he will do the best he can with whatever the town funds for the police department. But the Board has to understand if that if the cuts require the police department to layoff officers, it will probably increase the cost the over-time. Mr. Stempfer interjected and indicated that the furlough days that were used last year did not accomplished what they hoped they would.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding contract negotiations, concession for copayments on health insurance, proper training for officers, possible retirements and pension payouts.

After the discussion, Ms. Menard inquired with the Board as to what they would like to do about the requested budget of the police department. Mr. Burnham thought it should be cut in some way and Mr. Pippin suggested leaving the requests alone. A vote was

taken to see if the budget should be kept as requested. Ms. Menard, Mr. Pippin, and Mr. Simmons voted in favor of keeping the budget as requested and Mr. Hayes and Mr. Burnham voted to cut the police department budget by \$32,000. The budget will be kept as requested.

The discussion continued in regards to the Fire Departments (2150). The first line discussed in the Fire Departments budget was physicals. The request is \$20,000 and last year the departments expended \$23,000 for physicals. It was questioned if the physicals are done yearly or if they are done when new volunteers join the department. It was noted that if a volunteer is over the age of 40, a physical must be done yearly.

Board Recessed at 8:36 p.m.

Board Reconvened at 8:47 p.m.

Mr. Burnham and Mr. Hayes suggested keeping both fire departments at a zero increase. Mr. Pippin indicated oil has been offered to Broad Brook Fire Department which shares the building with the Senior Center. Ms. Menard commented the oil and diesel has been offered to both departments at the town's rate. Even though the departments would be receiving their oil and diesel through the town's reserves, the departments may still come up short in their budgets. Ms. Menard wanted to talk about having the Treasurer pay all the invoices for the fire departments in order to help the fire departments manage their accounts better.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the Treasurer's Office helping the fire departments with their accounting procedures. It was determined that Ms. Menard would contact both of the fire departments and propose having the Treasurer's Office process their invoices.

Fire Protection (2160) was discussed briefly indicating an increase from the water company. Fire Marshall (2165) was the next department discussed. There is a \$800 difference because it was explained the Fire Marshall inadvertently used the incorrect figures and has indicated he had not requested funding of conference and purchased services. The request should be \$18,817.00.

Emergency Management (2170) the adjusted budget last year was \$7,375, and this year it is being requested an additional \$175.00 for a request of \$7,750. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to fund this line at last year's adjusted budget of \$7,375.

The Dog Warden (2175) was not changed from last year's adjusted budget. No changes made.

The next department was Public Safety/Employee Benefits. Ms. Cabral indicated this department is down approximately \$127,000. She reminded the Board Members to look at the adjusted budget column when comparing the requests. The lines which have decreased in this department are pension plan and Fica/Medicare.

The next department discussed was Public Works (3180). Ms. Cabral explained the majority of the increases are due to salaries. Other increases are for vehicle maintenance and storm water. It was agreed to leave the requests as is.

The next department discussed was Road Improvements (3183). This department stayed at the same request. Ms. Menard did mention of the possibility of funding projects from the State Bonding. She has spoken to Mr. Norton regarding the possibility of getting funding for such projects as road work, sidewalks in Broad Brook, and paving the town hall and annex driveways. Mr. Norton is working on preparing the figures for those projects to be submitted to the State.

Street Lighting (3185) was discussed. Mr. Burhnam indicated that in Vermont there are no street lights and everyone seems to be surviving up there and why can't the town do it here. Ms. Menard indicated she has looked into trying to save with the cost of street lights; however, it is not cost effective. She can talk to public safety regarding how not having street light could affect public safety, but it is a long process.

The next department discussed was Engineering (3190). Ms. Cabral indicated there was an increase due to salaries but a decrease in part-time salary. It was agreed no changes to be made. The next discussion was about Public Works/Employee Benefits, there are some decreases and increases in this line, but no changes were made to the requests. Collection and Disposal (4205) shows a decrease of \$35,235. No changes made.

WPCA Sinking Fund (4220) was discussed. It was discussed that every town funds approximately \$5,000 in this line. Ms. Cabral explained this fund is used as a savings account to pay for maintenance of the building and sewer repairs. Board Members inquired about cutting this request in half. Before any cuts would be made, Ms. Menard indicated she would find out what exactly this money is being used for and report back to the Board.

Vital Statistics (5210) was the next department discussed. It was indicated there was an increase of approximately \$2,000. That increase is due to the North Central Health increase which is configured by using the per capita cost. Water Purification (5222) was discussed and no changes made. East Windsor Visiting Nurses Association (5225) and it was agreed to keep the figures as they were last year's adjusted budget at \$6,628.

The next department discussed was Human Services (5235). There is an increase due to salaries other than that, all lines are the same as last year's budget. General Assistance (5236) had no changes in its requested budget at \$15,500. Ms. Menard indicated due to the bad economy, no changes were made. Ambulance Association (5240) requested \$37,500 which is contractual. Medical (5240) line is for payment of new employee physicals and public work physicals which are needed. It is being requested at \$3,000 which is the same as last year's adjusted budget. The last department reviewed was Conservator of Health/Employ (5295) which is being

requested at a decreased amount of \$25,658. Savings was found in workers' compensation and pension.

A brief discussion was held regarding the next budget workshop meeting. It was decided that Board will discuss the budget again at the next Regular Meeting on March 15, 2011.

The meeting ended at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary