

# ~ PLYMOUTH BOARD OF SELECTMEN ~

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013

TOWN HALL, MAYFLOWER ROOM

The Selectmen held a meeting on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall in the Mayflower Room.

Present: Mathew J. Muratore, Chairman [arrived at 7:48 p.m.]  
Belinda A. Brewster, Vice Chairman  
John T. Mahoney, Jr.  
Kenneth A. Tavares  
Anthony F. Provenzano

Melissa Arrighi, Town Manager  
Michael Galla, Assistant Town Manager

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman Brewster called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Town Manager Melissa Arrighi noted that she would provide her report with the FY2015 Budget presentation.

## **COMMITTEE LIAISON / DESIGNEE UPDATES**

There were no committee liaison/designee updates offered during this meeting.

## **LICENSES**

### **ONE DAY WINE AND MALT LIQUOR LICENSE\***

On a motion by Selectman Mahoney, seconded by Selectman Tavares, the Board voted to grant a One Day Wine & Malt License to the following applicant, as detailed, below. Voted 4-0-0, approved.

- ❖ **Kelly Serivan / Pathways to Healing** (15 Hopkins Drive, Bridgewater) requested a One Day Wine & Malt License for an event with medium Maureen Hancock to be held from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at Memorial Hall on December 20, 2013.

On a motion by Selectman Tavares, seconded by Selectman Mahoney, the Board voted to grant a One Day Wine & Malt License to the following applicant, as detailed, below. Voted 4-0-0, approved.

- ❖ **Norm Lovinlette / Improv Asylum – Hard Rock Productions** (216 Hanover Street, Boston) requested a One Day Wine & Malt License for an improvisational comedy show to be held from 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. at Memorial Hall on December 31, 2013.

Liquor liability will be in place before the licenses are released.

\*One day liquor licenses shall automatically cover the day before and the day after the event for the purpose of proper delivery, storage and disposal of alcoholic beverages purchased.

### **NEW YEARS EVE EXTENSION OF HOURS**

On a motion by Selectman Mahoney, seconded by Selectman Tavares, the Board voted to extend the hours of serving alcoholic beverages on New Years Eve, December 31, 2013 until 2:00 a.m. on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Voted 4-0-0, approved.

### **CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP: COMMON VICTUALLER AND ENTERTAINMENT**

On a motion by Selectman Tavares, seconded by Selectman Mahoney, the Board voted to approve a Change of Ownership for a Common Victualler License and a Comprehensive Entertainment Permit, as detailed, below. Voted 4-0-0, approved.

- ❖ **Big Al's Deli**, 26 Manomet Point Road, Danielle Stowell, New Owner

Applying for a Common Victualler License (New Owner)

Applying for a Comprehensive Entertainment Permit, Group 1 (jukebox, radio, TV)

### **VEHICLE FOR HIRE OPERATOR (RENEWAL)**

On a motion by Selectman Tavares, seconded by Selectman Mahoney, the Board voted to grant a vehicle for Hire Operator License to the following applicant, as detailed, below. Voted 4-0-0, approved.

- ❖ **For Patriot Transportation:**

- Jeff Furtado (123 Liberty Street, Hanson)

Issuance is subject to review of CORI background check and driving record.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES**

**Meeting Minutes** – The Board approved the meeting minutes of the October 15, 2013 Selectmen's meeting

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Vice Chairman Brewster opened the meeting to public comment. No citizens came forth.

## **FY2015 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Town Manager Melissa Arrighi and Finance Director Lynne Barrett provided the Board with a presentation on their recommendations for the FY2015 Budget. Prior to commencing the presentation, Ms Arrighi recognized Chairman Muratore, Robert Nassau (chairman of the Advisory and Finance Committee), and Dennis Begley (chairman of the School Committee) for their assistance with defining the initial budgetary guidelines. In addition, Ms. Arrighi acknowledged the Town's Department Heads—many of whom were in the audience—for their willingness to work within the parameters of a challenging budget.

Ms. Arrighi reported that, though the projected operating budgets for both the Town and School Department remain within the 2½% growth expectation, Plymouth's fixed costs are growing at a rate that is unsustainable. As evident during last year's budget development process, she explained, the Town's fixed costs are continuing to place the community in a position whereby annual municipal budget increases are expanding beyond the 2½% growth limit. The requests submitted for the FY2015 budget, Ms. Arrighi reported, amount to an overall increase of 6.12% over FY2014. Even if the community did not object to such increases, she noted, it would mathematically impossible to sustain the pace of growth. The Town's Department Heads, she said, are keenly aware of the need to maintain the services that residents have come to expect, while balancing those needs with what Plymouth's constituents can afford. Staff is looking closely at how the Town's overall costs are growing and identifying a number of significant—and potentially difficult—changes that may be necessary to maintain the budget at a sustainable level.

Lynne Barrett, Finance Director, reviewed an overview chart of departmental requests for FY2015, noting that, collectively, the requests on the Town-side represented a 4.67% increase over the approved FY2014 Budget. This increase, she indicated, includes the contractual raises and cost-of-living adjustments associated with the union contracts that were approved at the 2013 Fall Town Meeting. Ms. Barrett pointed out that the total budget request for FY2015—encompassing fixed costs, debt service, the Town's departmental requests, and the School Department's requests—amounts to an overall increase of 6.12% over the FY2014 Budget.

Ms. Barrett provided a more in-depth review of each of the departmental requests, highlighting the major expense items (other than contractual wage increases) for Administrative Services, the Department of Finance, the Department of Community Resources, the Department of Inspectional Services, the Department of Planning & Development, the Department of Public Safety (Police and Fire), the Department of Marine & Environmental Affairs, the Department of Public Works, and the School Department.

Ms. Barrett reviewed a graph illustrating the changes in the Town and School operating budgets—separating expenses from salaries—over the fiscal years 2011-2015. In addition, she provided a table comparing the difference in the Town’s fixed costs (i.e. liability insurance, employee health insurance, utility expenses, pension appropriations, disposal costs, snow and ice removal, etc.) from FY2014 to FY2015. From the table of fixed costs, Ms. Barrett provided a more detailed review of the way by which—and the reasons why—each particular fixed cost has increased (or, in one case, decreased) from the previous year.

Ms. Barrett focused upon the Town’s healthcare expenses, providing a comparative graph of claims and administrative fees from the Town’s Health Insurance Trust Fund for the years 2008-2015 (years 2014 and 2015 were estimated). Ms. Barrett showed a graph detailing the balance of the Health Insurance Trust Fund, and she discussed the ways by which the Town tried to keep employee health insurance rates stable, despite the rising cost of insurance and health-related services. Lastly, Ms. Barrett reviewed a graph containing a FY2011- FY2015 comparison of the Town’s employee-benefit-related fixed costs versus all other fixed costs.

*[Note: Chairman Muratore arrived at this point during the meeting and joined the Board at 7:48 p.m.]*

Ms. Arrighi resumed the presentation with a list of her budget recommendations, by department, noting the dollar amount that was requested; the dollar amount that she eliminated; and the increase (by percentage) over the previous year. Ms. Arrighi provided a review of the reductions she made to each departmental request:

Administrative Services

- Title Research on the 1,000 Acres Site \$200,000
- Chapter 61 Property Appraisals \$50,000
- Legal Costs and Town Celebrations \$10,000
- Human Resources – Part-Time Position \$13,500
- Town Clerk – Postage \$31,000

Department of Finance

- Various Divisions \$33,100

Department of Community Resources

- Library – Electronic Books \$30,000

Department of Inspectional Services

- Building Department – Inspectional Services \$12,998

Department of Planning & Development

- Energy Initiatives \$30,000
- Economic Development \$89,309
- 2020 Celebration \$80,000

Department of Public Safety (Police and Fire)

- Police – New Positions & Other Expenses \$125,451
- Fire – Overtime \$25,000

Department of Marine & Environmental Affairs

- Animal Control \$17,485

Department of Public Works

- Highway – Crushing Services \$25,000
- Fleet Maintenance \$10,000
- Cemetery Outsourcing \$295,032

School Department

- Reduce Overall Budget By \$1,080,000

Fixed Costs

- Reduce Overall Fixed Costs By \$2,755,964

Ms. Arrighi displayed a graph representing the trends in budget increases dating back to 2008. While there have been variations in the budget trends during this period—e.g. a high of 5.97% in 2009 and low of 0.89% in 2011—the sustainable range of budget growth, she reported, should be held within the 3% range. Ms. Arrighi then discussed the impact of the recommended FY2015 Budget on the average homeowner, noting that the tax increase on an average single family home (valued at \$300,000) would be \$158.00.

Ms. Arrighi and Ms. Barrett responded to questions from the Board regarding the budget and the budget review process. With regard to the review process, Ms. Arrighi explained that the Board had requested the opportunity to review—and reach a unified agreement upon—the Town Manager’s recommended budget, prior to the issuance of the budget books to the Advisory & Finance Committee.

Selectman Mahoney inquired if the FY2015 budget contained any new positions. Ms. Arrighi responded that the budget represents a level service proposal—i.e. positions were neither added nor subtracted. Ms. Arrighi noted, however, that there is one position in the Department of Planning & Development, the Economic Development Director, that will not be filled.

Ms. Barrett responded to questions from Selectman Mahoney regarding the allocation of funds to the Town’s Stabilization Fund, Pension Fund, and Other Post Employment Benefits (“OPEB”) Fund. Selectman Mahoney offered his recommendation that the Town Manager consider reinstating some funding within the budget to address at least one or two appraisals of Chapter 61 properties.

Selectman Tavares advocated for the reinstatement of the Economic Development Director position, as well as the funding for the title research needed for the future development of the 1,000 Acres site. Considering the current state of the economy, he said, the town cannot afford to leave the Economic Development Director position vacant.

Chairman Muratore agreed with Selectman Tavares that the Town must consider the value of funding the Economic Development Director position and the 1,000 Acres title research. In addition, he offered his opinion that the Town must take meaningful action upon its zoning bylaws and economic development initiatives, if it is to truly become business-friendly.

Chairman Muratore asked Ms. Arrighi to indicate if there were any initiatives/expenses removed from the budget that might actually help the Town gain revenue or savings. Ms. Arrighi acknowledged that the expenses for energy efficiency initiatives and economic development (e.g. the Economic Development Director Position) could be viewed as revenue-positive investments. Ms. Arrighi noted that staff has endeavored to work cooperatively with developers—e.g. the proposed retail development off Home Depot Drive—but, in some cases, residents have opposed such projects.

Vice Chairman Brewster expressed her frustration that the Town's ability to make proactive, revenue-generating investments is impeded by the excess of its annual fixed costs. In order to balance residential tax increases, she said, the community must consider whether it is willing to sacrifice its quaint character for more economic growth. Vice Chairman Brewster encouraged residents to attend the School Committee meeting of December 16, 2013 and the Selectmen's meeting of December 17, 2013 to share their ideas and/or concerns about the FY2015 budget.

Chairman Muratore opened the discussion on the budget to comment from the public or the Town's Department Heads. No one came forth to speak.

Chairman Muratore asked his colleagues on the Board to review their budget books and prepare any questions for the December 17, 2013 follow-up discussion on the FY2015 Budget. He asked his colleagues to identify priority items and consider which areas could be better served by consolidation or regionalization. If there are eliminated or reduced items that the Board wishes to reinstate, he said, there should be some consideration as to what other budget items can be removed, in exchange. Lastly, Chairman Muratore asked that the Board be ready to take a vote on the Town Manager's budget recommendations during the December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS / LETTERS / NEW BUSINESS**

**Christmas in Historic Plymouth** – Selectman Tavares expressed his appreciation to the members of the Kiwanis Club of Plymouth for producing yet another enjoyable Christmas in Historic Plymouth event on the evening of Friday, December 6, 2013.

**Bylaws Pertaining to Solar Fields** – Selectman Mahoney noted that Kingston’s Planning Board may be sponsoring a zoning bylaw that would prohibit the deforestation caused by solar fields. He asked if staff could obtain information from Kingston officials on this matter.

**Council on Aging 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala** – Chairman Muratore and Selectman Mahoney complimented and congratulated the staff of Plymouth’s Council on Aging (“COA”) for their successful efforts in hosting the December 6<sup>th</sup> gala in honor of the COA’s 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Chairman Muratore thanked the Friends of the Council on Aging for assistance with organizing the event.

**Conflict of Interest Training** – Chairman Muratore thanked Attorney Betsy Lane of Kopelman & Paige (Town Counsel) and Town Moderator Steven Triffletti for providing the December 5, 2013 training on the State’s Conflict of Interest Law for Plymouth’s elected and appointed officials. Though not many people attended the training, Chairman Muratore expressed his hope that attorneys Lane and Triffletti will return to provide the training for staff members.

## **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

On a motion by Selectman Tavares, seconded by Selectman Mahoney, the Board voted to adjourn its meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m. Voted 5-0-0, approved.

*Recorded by Tiffany Park, Clerk to the Board of Selectmen*

*A copy of the December 10, 2013 meeting packet is on file and available for public review in the Board of Selectmen’s Office.*