

Salem City Council  
Committee on Administration and Finance  
Minutes of Meeting  
June 6, 2011

A meeting of the Salem City Council Committee on Administration and Finance, Co – Posted with the Committee of the Whole was held on Tuesday, June 6, 2011 at 6:30p.m. in the Salem City Council Chambers, Salem City Hall, 93 Washington Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

Councillors Present: Chairman Robert McCarthy, Councillor Paul Prevey, Councillor John Ronan, Councillor Steven Pinto, and Councillor Thomas Furey.

Also present were: Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Finance Director Rich Viscay, Assistant Finance Director, Nina Bridgeman, Mayors Chief of Staff, Jason Silva and Eileen Sacco, Budget Clerk.

**Library Budget**

Librarian Nancy Tracy is present at the meeting.

Mayor Driscoll introduced Nancy Tracy who is the new Director of the Salem Public Library replacing Lorraine Jackson who retired. Mayor Driscoll noted that Mrs. Tracy has a great deal of experience having been the Children's Librarian at the Salem Public Library for years.

Mayor Driscoll stated that the Salem Public Library continues to be the busiest Library in the NOBLE network.

Councillor Ronan addressed the Committee and stated that he is a huge fan of the Library and he takes full advantage of it. He also noted that he is committed to keeping salary increases in the budget to 2 ½ % and he will be recommending a reduction to the personnel budget for the Library to reflect that.

Mayor Driscoll explained that Mrs. Tracy got a promotion to Librarian, replacing Lorraine Jackson who retired, Ms. Allen moved up to the Children's Librarian position and Courtney Davis moved up to Assistant Children's Librarian. She also noted that Ms. Allen holds a Masters degree in Library Science which is a plus.

Councillor Ronan expressed his concern about the tax rate that this budget represents stating that it is at the limit at 3.98%. Mayor Driscoll stated that, that statement is patently incorrect noting that over the last two years Salem has taxed under the levy limit and they have been careful not to max out the tax rate. She explained that things could change between now and the fall when the tax rate is set.

Councillor Ronan stated that he is opposed to raises higher than 2 ½ %.

Councillor Pinto asked what the maximum city contribution is to qualify for state aid.

Mr. Viscay explained that there is a formula that they use and he would have to check on that. Councillor Pinto asked if the contribution includes salaries. Mrs. Tracy explained that they consider the overall municipal contribution when figuring eligibility.

Councillor McCarthy asked what the figure is that the city would have to meet to be eligible for state aid. Mayor Driscoll stated that she will get that information for the Committee.

Councillor McCarthy noted that three people have been singled out and they have all assumed different positions within the Library this year.

Mayor Driscoll cautioned that a reduction in the library funding the by city may lead to decertification of the library and that would result in the loss of borrowing privileges for Salem residents in other communities.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Library Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to reduce the personnel budget for the Library by \$27,009. Councillor Pinto seconded the motion. The motion carried (3-2 with McCarthy and Furey opposed).

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Library Budget in the amount of \$288,028.00, seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the total Budget for the Library in the amount of \$1,130,806.00, seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

### **Department of Public Services**

Director of Public Services Richard Rennard was present at the meeting.

Mr. Rennard reported that this budget is bare bones. He stated that it includes raises that are contractual obligations driven by collective bargaining.

Councillor Ronan addressed Mr. Rennard and explained that he has made it a policy during this budget process to limit salary increases to 2 ½ % and noted that there are a couple of employees that are getting higher than 2 ½ % increases.

Mr. Rennard explained that Mr. Malionek was promoted to Foreman and he received a mid year increase for taking on additional responsibilities. He also explained that Mr. O'Shea was promoted to Assistant Director and he also received a mid year increase in his salary.

Mayor Driscoll stated that the increase recommended are modest increases and are driven by a salary survey. She noted that they like to treat people in a professional manner. She also noted that these people respond to the needs of the city 24/7 noting snow storms, water break, trees down etc. and their salaries are well below those of similar positions in other communities.

Mr. Rennard noted that both men took on additional responsibilities mid year, noting the harsh winter that we had this year. He suggested that reducing the salary increases for them is punishing them for taking on more responsibility.

Mr. Rennard reviewed his non personnel budget and stated that they are holding the line on that budget.

Councillor Prevey stated that he agrees with Councillor Ronan on holding salary increases to 2 ½ %, however, he does not feel that they should be ineligible for raises because they received mid year increases for getting promoted and stated that would be unfair.

Councillor McCarthy agreed with Councillor Prevey noting that the City Council approved the job changes.

Councillor Pinto agreed that this does not seem fair.

Councillor Prevey questioned Mr. Rennard about the street sweeping program and the expense of \$35,000. Mr. Rennard stated that the vendor that was the low bidder is doing a terrible job and they will not be renewing the contract with them when it expires.

Councillor Ronan questioned why the street sweeping money is in the snow and ice budget. Mayor Driscoll explained that sweeping and cleaning up after the winter is considered a snow removal expense.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Public Services Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to reduce the personnel budget for the Public Services Department by \$3,500.00. There was no second on the motion. The motion FAILED for lack of a second.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Public Services Department Budget in the amount of \$1,515,566.00 seconded by Councillor Furey. The motion carried (4-1 with Councillor Ronan opposed).

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Public Services Department Budget in the amount of \$523,741.00, seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the total Budget for the Public Services Department in the amount of \$2,039,307.00, seconded by Councillor Furey. The motion carried (4-1 with Councillor Ronan opposed)

### **Snow and Ice Budget**

Mayor Driscoll explained that the Snow and Ice budget is level funded again this year even though we had a hard winter and over spent the budget. She explained that the state allows this budget to be overspent and if the city increases it they have to maintain that amount for three years.

Councillor McCarthy asked Mr. Rennard how much the city pays to subcontractors for snow removal. Mr. Rennard explained that the rates run from \$85.00 - \$145.00 per hour and the average rate is \$110.00. He noted that it depends on the size of the truck.

Councillor Pinto questioned what the contractors do with excess salt and sand after a storm. Mr. Rennard stated that they come back to the DPW and dump the trucks. He explained that a lot of contractors are repeat contractors and they try to keep the routes the same. He also noted that the city inspects the trucks each time the trucks go out for a storm.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Snow and Ice Budget:

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Snow and Ice Budget in the amount of \$50,000.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Snow and Ice Budget in the amount of \$344,560.00, seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the total Budget for the Snow and Ice Budget in the amount of \$394,560.00, seconded by Councillor Furey. The motion carried.

### **Sewer Enterprise – Public Services**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Sewer Enterprise – Public Services Budget:

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Sewer Enterprise-Public Services Budget in the amount of \$254,827.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Sewer Enterprise-Public Services Budget in the amount of \$175,219.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Total Budget for the Sewer Enterprise-Public Services Budget in the amount of \$430,064.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

### **Water Enterprise – Public Services**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Water Enterprise – Public Services Budget:

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Water Enterprise-Public Services Budget in the amount of \$270,941.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Water Enterprise-Public Services Budget in the amount of \$197,263.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Total Budget for the Water Enterprise-Public Services Budget in the amount of \$468,204.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

### **Planning Department**

City Planner Lynn Duncan was present at the meeting.

Ms. Duncan addressed the Committee and stated that the mission of the Planning Department is similar to previous years.

Ms. Duncan explained that the budget has a new position of Energy Manager which was previously a grant funded position and is being recommended for funding from the regular budget. She stated that she hopes that future grants will fund the position but right now there is not a grant source for the position.

Councillor Ronan questioned how long the Planning Department has had an Energy Manager. Ms. Duncan stated that the position has been in place for a year and a half. Councillor Ronan stated that he would be in favor of the position if it were grant funded.

Mayor Driscoll stated that she anticipates that grant opportunities will become available and noted that the Planning Department is aggressively seeking grant opportunities for a variety of projects. She noted that there are projects that need to be finished and stated that she would like to see how it goes for a year and take a look at it again next year.

Councillor Furey stated that he feels that the Planning Department needs this position noting that energy management is important. Councillor Pinto stated that he disagrees that the city should fund this position and the person could be rehired if grant money is received.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Planning Department Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to reduce the Planning Department Personnel Budget by \$50,000, and to approve the Personnel Budget for the Planning Department in the amount of \$206,290.00 Councillor Pinto seconded the motion. The motion carried (3-2 with Councillor McCarthy and Furey opposed.)

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Planning Department Budget in the amount of \$7,275.00, seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the total Budget for the Planning Department Budget in the amount of \$213,565.00, seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

### **Conservation Commission Budget**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Conservation Commission Budget:

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Conservation Commission Budget in the amount of \$25,056.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Conservation Commission Budget in the amount of \$425.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the total Budget for the Conservation Commission Budget in the amount of \$25,481.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

### **Planning Board Budget**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Planning Board Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Planning Board Budget in the amount of \$23,931.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Planning Board Budget in the amount of \$3,000.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the total Budget for the Planning Board Budget in the amount of \$26,931.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

### **Market and Tourism Budget**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Market and Tourism Budget:

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Market and Tourism Budget in the amount of \$196,375.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the total Budget for the Market and Tourism Budget in the amount of \$196,375.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

### **Historic Commission**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Historic Commission Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Historic Commission Budget in the amount of \$8,066.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Historic Commission Budget in the amount of \$1,030.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Historic Commission Budget in the amount of \$9,096.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

### **Solicitor- Licensing Budget**

City Solicitor Beth Rennard was present at the meeting.

Beth Rennard addressed the Committee and explained that the Licensing Board was added to the Solicitors budget in FY12. She reviewed the salaries and explained her budget to the Committee. She noted that the department managed claims against the city with minimal damages paid outside of insurance policies. She also noted that they defended law suits against the city in Land Court and Superior Court, as well as prepare amendments to city ordinances including the use of segways on public property, dissemination of public information – Sunshine Ordinance, Common use and graffiti.

Mrs. Rennard also reported that the Solicitors office advised various local boards and commissions regarding state and local law and case law, and prepare opinions for them.

Councillor Ronan noted that City Solicitor Beth Rennard received a midyear salary increase. Mrs. Rennard acknowledged that and noted that there is no additional salary increase in the budget for her for FY12.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Solicitor-Licensing Budget:

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the Solicitor - Licensing Budget in the amount of \$209,542.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Solicitor - Licensing Budget in the amount of \$58,400.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the total Budget for the Solicitor - Licensing Budget in the amount of \$267,942.00 seconded by Councillor Ronan. The motion carried.

### **City Council Budget**

City Clerk Cheryl LaPointe was present at the meeting.

Councillor Ronan noted that he sees no sense in paying \$21,000 for a budget analyst for the City Council unless you are going to save \$21,000 and recommended that the Council get rid of the position.

Councillor Furey noted that this is a new position and that this is the first year that we have had it.

Councillor Prevey stated that he agrees noting that there has not been enough time to see what the impact would be. He suggested that the Council give the position another year.

Councillor McCarthy noted that the City Council has a meeting scheduled for next Tuesday with the Budget Analyst.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the City Council Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to reduce the Personnel Budget for the City Council Budget in the amount of \$21,000.00. There was no second on the motion. The motion FAILED for lack of the second.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the City Council Budget in the amount of \$119,700.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the City Council Budget in the amount of \$52,627.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the total Budget for the City Council Budget in the amount of \$172,327.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion carried.

### **City Clerk Budget**

Councillor Ronan questioned why the City Clerks office pays \$500.00 for a Westlaw Subscription when the City Solicitor's office has a subscription as well. Mrs. LaPointe explained that her office maintains a set of Massachusetts General Laws. She explains that this goes back to the time when the City Solicitor's office was not in City Hall. Councillor Ronan noted that the Solicitors office pays \$4,000 for a subscription and suggested that they talk to Westlaw and see if they would include the updates for the City Clerk office in the Solicitors subscription.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the City Clerks Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the City Clerks Budget in the amount of \$251,256.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the City Clerks Budget in the amount of \$7,000.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the total Budget for the City Clerks Budget in the amount of \$258,256.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

### **Elections and Registrations**

There being no further questions or comments regarding the City Clerks Elections and Registrations Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the City Clerks Elections and Registration Budget in the amount of \$97,166.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the City Clerks Elections and Registration Budget in the amount of \$50,100.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

Councillor Ronan moved to approve the Personnel Budget for the City Clerks Elections and Registration Budget in the amount of \$147,266.00 seconded by Councillor Prevey. The motion carried.

### **Finance Department Budget**

Finance Director Rich Viscay is present at the meeting.

Mr. Viscay reported that there is an increase in contractual services in the budget for an actuarial study that is estimated to cost \$17,000.00.

Councillor Ronan noted that there is a 7 ½ % increase in salary for Mr. Viscay in the budget and he will be recommending that the raise be decreased to 2 ½ %.

Councillor Ronan expressed concern about the amount budgeted for audits. Mr. Viscay stated that a cut to that budget would make it difficult for the city and it would be doing a disservice because it allows the city to correct things for the city.

Councillor Ronan questioned In State Travel which is proposed to increase \$2,500. Mr. Viscay reported that he tries to remain educated as well as his staff and they attend conferences and workshops when money is available. He stated that training and education are important for professional development and it should be encouraged.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the Finance Department Budget:

Councillor Ronan moved to reduce the Personnel Budget for the Finance Department Budget by \$4,174.00, leaving the Personnel Budget amount at \$239,812 Councillor Prevey seconded the motion. The motion carried (3-2 with Councillor Furey and McCarthy opposed).

Councillor Ronan moved to reduce the Non Personnel Budget for the City Council Budget in the amount of \$12,500.00. There was no second on the motion. The motion FAILED for lack of the second.

Councillor Pinto moved to approve the Non Personnel Budget for the Finance Department Budget in the amount of \$40,700.00 seconded by Councillor Furey. The motion carried.

Councillor Prevey moved to approve the total Budget for the Finance Department Budget in the amount of \$280,512.00 seconded by Councillor Pinto. The motion FAILED (2-3 with Councillors Ronan, Pinto and Furey opposed).

There being no further business to come before the Committee on Administration and Finance this afternoon, Councillor Ronan moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councillor Furey.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Eileen M. Sacco  
Budget Clerk