



**TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 17, 2019
UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Councilor Donald Jepsen, Councilor Joseph McAuliffe, Councilor Richard O'Reilly, Deputy Mayor Jody Terranova, Councilor Michael Tustin and Councilor Kenneth Wilkos.

Councilor Govoni and Councilor Black-Burke were absent.

2) DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Eric Barz, Town Planner; Bob Bolasevich, Fire Marshal; Jim Burke, Economic Development Director; and Bob Ruzzo, Building Official gave the following presentation:

The overall FY 20 budget reflects a \$26,730 or 2.0% increase as compared to the FY 19 budget primarily due to Personal Services.

In terms of FY 19 highlights, this past year has been a year of transition for the Planning Department, with the replacement of both the Assistant Town Planner and Planning Secretary. Economic Development received the Connecticut Main Street Center Keystone Award for setting the stage for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in Windsor Center; obtained Federal Opportunity Zone designation for the Wilson neighborhood following a competitive application process; began a partnership with the CT Small Business Development Center and others to increase assistance to Windsor small businesses; and helped complete the first phase of a strategic marketing plan for the four Bradley Development League communities.

Construction has started on Great Pond apartments while construction and sales of new homes and town homes continues in Poquonock Villages, Verizon, Home Goods, and Dattco Bus Lines. The Ford Motor Company constructed 285,000 square feet of new commercial floor area; Wayfair, Fabrica, Home Goods, and NTW moved into existing vacant floor area; the Flamingo Inn was demolished and Suburban Propane's abandoned site has been cleaned up.

In response to the Complete Community Risk Assessment project, the Fire Marshal's Office conducted a comprehensive review and revision of the town ordinances resulting in the repeal and replacement of Chapter 6 of the Windsor Town Ordinances, addressing how fire safety services are provided in town and the prevention/risk reduction measures the town has chosen to address at the local level.



The Fire Marshal's Office continues to seek out and work with partners in safety and risk reduction and the Commission on Aging and Persons with Disabilities has requested an event on fall prevention.

Three large industrial projects totaling 555,000 square feet were approved in FY19, but have yet to be constructed. Other noteworthy planning projects include the comprehensive rewrite of the Great Pond Form-Based Code, rezoning the rear of Great Pond to allow industrial development, and the development of the Millbrook Open Space report with the Millbrook Open Space Steering Committee on its potential use and preservation, which was approved by the Town Council in February, 2019. In FY 20:

- The Planning Department will be updating and annotating the Subdivision Regulations to make them more user friendly. We will be collaborating with Information Technology to incorporate the updated historic survey into the public Geographic Information System (GIS) interface, making it accessible to homeowners.
- The Building Department will be instituting online building permitting. Together with the Fire Marshal's Office, we will be training for the implementation of the new Connecticut State codes.
- Economic Development will be developing a Small Business Information and Education program.
- The Building Department will take advantage of free State training and continue to educate residents and contractors of the changes resulting from the State of Connecticut adopting the 2018 State Building Code.
- The Building Department and Fire Marshal's office will be collaborating with the Health, Social Services, and Police Departments to develop a Hoarding Response Team to standardize response procedures. They will also be working with manufacturing and warehouse facilities to update hazardous materials records.

Councilor Jepsen noted that the total construction permits issued for FY 20 seems lower and asked what may cause that. Mr. Ruzzo responded that they use projections based on a four year average and throw out the outliers, as it is impossible to tell what's going to happen in the future.

Councilor Jepsen asked about the Great Pond project. Mr. Ruzzo responded that they have paid all of their fees, so they are not anticipating any more significant funds from them.

3) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Jim Burke, Economic Development Director, gave the following presentation:

For FY 20, the proposed budget shows an overall increase of \$2,730 or 0.8%. The General Fund portion will remain at the same level as the FY 19 budget.



The current year estimate reflects the program being staffed by 0.70 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) and a contracted housing rehab specialist. The FY 20 budget proposes that the program will be staffed by 1.50 FTEs and to have a contracted housing rehab specialist.

The proposed budget utilizes loan repayment monies as the non-General Fund source of funds. The primary goal of Community Development is neighborhood preservation. The Office of Community Development supports neighborhoods through such activities as housing rehabilitation, community facilities and infrastructure improvements, and small business loans. These activities have been funded primarily with grants and program income.

Community Development Office highlights for FY 19 include:

- Rehabilitation of 10 residential units
- Assisted another 10 households with applications to the Community Renewal Team, Capital for Change, and Habitat for Humanity for a variety of energy and accessibility related needs.
- Provided support to the Human Relations Commission with an expanding number of initiatives including a trip to the United Nations, three events for One Book One Windsor, two events for Black History Month, the annual Bridge Builders Awards, and outreach at town events and collaboration with other community organizations.
- Administered the Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) tax credit program that assisted local non-profit organizations to leverage over \$5,000 in corporate contributions.

Goals for FY 20 include:

- Continue the successful Housing Rehabilitation program utilizing revolving loan funds generated by repayment of prior loans.
- Leverage funds through Energize CT, Capital for Change and Habitat for Humanity for energy conservation and accessibility improvements to complement the town's housing rehabilitation program.
- Assist at least one business with a small business loan from revolving loan funds generated by repayment of prior business loans.

Deputy Mayor Terranova asked how much the small business loan program is being utilized. Mr. Burke responded that it has not been used that much, but now it has a balance that it is being advertised more and they are expecting it will be used more during the next year.

4) ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Jim Bourke, Finance Director presented the following:

Administrative Services supports town operations by providing other departments with financial, personnel and information resources needed in order to deliver products and services to the community. Administrative Services also protects town assets and its personnel from risk of loss through risk management services.



The overall FY 20 budget is expected to increase by \$67,590 or 2.8% and is primarily due to Personal Services. The FY 20 General Fund budget reflects an increase of \$90,230 or 3.9%, also due to Personal Services.

Finance Department

The Financial Accounting and Reporting department ensures the proper accounting of the town's financial records and provides fiscal and related services to employees, town departments and vendors. This department also keeps the Town Manager, staff, Town Council and the public informed of the overall fiscal status and performance of the town. One of our highlights in FY 19 was the implementation of an enhanced cash handling program. This program consisted of conducting cash handling audits of the internal departments, updating the cash handling policy and procedures, and conducting staff training. In addition to a live training presentation, training was accomplished through an in-house developed training video. These trainings will continue for any new staff that have a cash handling role. A refresher training course will be given for current staff on a periodic basis. One of our FY 20 goals is to implement direct deposit for our accounts payable vendor payments through ACH versus paying them with printed checks.

Human Resources

Human Resources Director, Amelia Bliss, gave the following overview of the FY 20 budget:

Human Resources has 3 full-time positions serving approximately 300 full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees. The department handles recruitment, benefits administration for employees and retirees, labor negotiations, compensation, training, and legal compliance related to employment.

The FY 19 highlights include planning and coordinating a leadership training for supervisors and department directors designed to strengthen leadership competencies including emotional intelligence, listening skills, and delegation; and coordinating implicit bias and inclusivity training that was presented to full-time and part-time employees.

In FY 20 the department will coordinate and participate in contract negotiations with the public works and clerical bargaining unit.

The FY 20 budget is increasing by \$11,540 or 2.6% as compared to the FY 19 budget due to an increase in funding for employee training budgeted in Services.

Information Technology

Information Technology Director, Frank Angelillo, presented the following:



The Information Technology Department manages and maintains the technology that connects the town's 10 buildings, two data centers, 250 users, mobile units and remote terminals.

Beyond day-to-day operations, FY19's highlighted theme was security. We strengthened remote access security and launched an ongoing end-user security awareness training program with real-time testing.

FY20 will have a safety services theme with the transition to a new radio system, planning of the new police facility, and transitioning to a new fire management system. All three will be heavily integrated with technology. It will put an increased emphasis on network uptime and complexity.

Risk Management

Risk Manager, Marty Maynard, presented the following:

Risk Management is responsible for the acquisition of all insurance for the Town, the Board of Education, the fire companies and the Fire Districts. Aside from insurance buying, Risk Management is also responsible for safety, security, and loss control.

We are now just rolling out a new tool in our Worker Compensation toolbox, Telemedicine, which will give authorized employees the ability to seek medical attention without going to a medical facility. They will now have the ability to reach one of our doctors through a smart phone or another computer device such as an Ipad. This should reduce wait time for these employees in which the doctor can diagnose, plan treatment and prescribe medications electronically. As we go further along, we will be introducing Telerehab. We are also working with our Third Party Administrator, FutureComp to introduce direct deposit through them to employees with lost time.

Assessor's office

Town Assessor, Larry Labarbera, gave the following overview of the FY 20 Assessor's office budget:

Through the Assessor's Office, the property valuation program determines and maintains accurate and equitable valuations of all property. This includes real and personal property as well as motor vehicles. We also provide for appropriate tax relief by administering various

The FY 20 budget reflects an increase of \$30,140 or 11.5% as compared to the FY 19 budget due primarily to personal service increases for existing employees as well as a new hire that will receive the town's health benefits.



FY 2019 Highlights include:

- The October 1st, 2018 revaluation has been completed. The informal hearings were conducted in December and the Grand List was signed on January 31st. The Board of Assessment Appeals met in March with 63 taxpayers.
- There are no outstanding court appeals from prior years.
- Personal Property audits continued regarding prior assessment year accounts.
- In the last 5 years we have completed 6 audits per year resulting in an average of \$43,000 per year in new taxes.

FY 20 Goals and Objectives:

- Staffing will be one of the major goals in the upcoming fiscal year. The Assistant Assessor is retiring and a replacement will be recruited.
- Field work that is part of the 10-year revaluation requirement will be conducted along with our regular building permit visits and sales verification work.

Tax Collector

Tax Collector, Cathy Elliot, stated the following regarding the FY 20 budget:

The tax department is responsible for collecting property taxes which provide support for the educational system and town-wide municipal services. The tax office will collect over 84% of the town revenue this year. To accomplish this significant task, we will mail over 45,000 bills in a timely manner, keep accurate records of payments, and send delinquent notices several times per year – which can sometimes number as many as 8,000.

Over 50% of collections are through payments mailed directly to the tax office and by residents paying in-person. The other 50% is collected through bank and mortgage company payments and on-line credit card and ACH payments.

The next tax sale will be held on April 27, 2019. We have been highly successful using this avenue of collection in the past. In October, a preliminary listing of accounts fitting the tax sale criteria was created. Since that date, we have received over \$300,000 on these delinquent accounts. At this time, there remains 12 properties on the auction list owing approximately \$270,000 in taxes, interest, and fees.

In FY20 we will continue to monitor delinquent accounts in our efforts to work with taxpayers in bringing their accounts to a current status.

Councilor Wilkos spoke about the process of replacing employees and asked if the town tries to replace people and hire someone in a timely fashion or if there is often a gap. Mr. Labarbera responded that they will try to recruit a few months ahead of time if there is that option. Town



Manager Souza added that in general, if we know ahead of time about a retirement, we can plan a few months ahead of time but there may be a few weeks of a transition period.

Councilor Jepsen asked about the special revenue fund having \$20,800 in the tax collection department. Ms. Elliott responded that those are expenses expected to be incurred during the tax sale, but that money is usually recouped through the tax sale process. Tax sales occur every other year so it was not shown last year or projected for next year.

Councilor Jepsen asked what the balance of the insurance fund is and noted that we pay out \$30,000 every year. Mr. Bourke responded that in the risk management portion of the fund, the balance is about \$1.5 million and the amount has been trending up.

5) GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Linda Collins, Assistant Finance Director, presented the following:

The General Government budget makes up approximately 1% of the entire town budget and is comprised of 10 diverse town functions. They include activities for the town council and appointed boards and commissions as well as the operations of the Town Manager's Office. General Government also includes funding for, the Town Attorney, Treasurer, elections, the Greater Windsor Probate Court, Independent Audit, and Intergovernmental and Community Services.

The Fiscal 2020 General Government's General Fund proposed budget is approximately \$1,036,000 and reflects an increase of \$21,000 or 2.1% as compared to the Fiscal 2019 budget. Although some degree of increases or decreases are seen in every area, the majority of the increase is due to Personal Services in the Town Managers Office and for an anticipated presidential primary in Elections.

Deputy Mayor Terranova asked about increased costs for workers compensation. Town Manager Souza responded that in the past two years, there have been increases and there are anticipated increases for FY 20 as well.

Councilor Wilkos asked about cost increases in the Town Manager's office. Town Manager Souza responded that it is due to pension cost increases for himself and the executive secretary.

Councilor Jepsen asked about mental health cost increases. Town Manager Souza responded that it is an ever-increasing demand and that there would have to be a large increase in full-time staff members in order to make any meaningful contribution to mental health services, so what we currently offer is more on the referral and information side. The town does make contributions to Community Health Resources and the North Central Regional Mental Health Board.



6) GENERAL SERVICES

Jim Bourke, Finance Director; Amelia Bliss, Human Resources Director; and Marty Maynard, Risk Manager, presented the following overview:

The FY 20 budget is proposed to increase by \$533,020 or 3.7%. This includes increased funding for capital projects in the amount of \$30,000, an increase in the MDC ad valorem sewer payment of \$237,800 as well as a planned increase for other post-employment benefits (OPEB) of \$105,000. Additionally for FY 20, an increase to the Caring Connection transfer in the amount of \$66,770 is proposed for the purpose of providing a balanced program budget.

The FY20 budget reflects an increase of approximately \$533,000 over the FY19 adopted budget.

Some major drivers in this budget consist of annual debt service, which is proposed to increase 3% over the FY19 budgeted amount. This has been the town council's policy target for the past several years, and is consistent with the Town's long-term strategy of using a 3% increase reserve funds as needed to pay debt service.

The General Fund allocation for capital projects is proposed to increase by \$30,000 and will fund pavement management projects, sidewalk repairs, fleet replacement, as well as technology upgrades for the Board of Education. It is also proposed to use some of these funds towards the purchase of public safety apparatus rather than borrow the full amount for that equipment.

The MDC payment for sewer services will increase approximately 6% or \$240,000 for FY20, and is based on the MDC's calendar year 2019 budget. This increase is mainly due to increases in MDC's personnel costs as well as their debt service.

The worker's compensation and liability Insurance budget is expected to increase \$36,000 or 1.6% as compared to the FY 19 budget. The increase is due to anticipated claims in the current year as well as for prior year claims.

The FY20 funding for costs associated with the next revaluation is proposed at \$20,000. The next revaluation will be for grand list year 10/1/2023 and will be applicable to the FY25 budget.

The FY20 budget for the town's contribution to long-term retiree health costs reflects a planned increase of \$150,000 (\$105,000 in general services and \$45,000 in Town Support for Education). FY20 will be the sixth year the town has contributed towards funding the town's long-term other post-employment obligations. The balance in the OPEB trust fund is projected to be approximately \$2.4 million on June 30, 2019. This amount consists of our contributions plus accumulated investment earnings.

For FY20, a transfer of \$126,770 is proposed from the operating budget to the Caring Connection to provide a balanced budget for that program.



Deputy Mayor Terranova asked for details about using the debt service fund balance this year and asked what the balance is. Mr. Bourke responded that the account has a balance of \$1.3 million and they are proposing to use about \$395,000 of that. The fund reserves help soften cost increases. Town Manager Souza added that they are currently finalizing the borrowing structure. They may borrow more long-term and less short-term notes to take advantage of lower interest rates.

Councilor Jepsen asked about premiums on short versus long term bonds. Town Manager Souza noted that they are similar in the current market. Councilor Jepsen asked how using short versus long-term borrowing affects the town's AAA credit rating score. Town Manager Souza responded that there are a lot of factors including the value of tax base and the unassigned fund balance. Bringing on additional debt doesn't necessarily put pressure on the rating but other metrics such as tax base may. Mr. Bourke added that one of the rating criterias is fiscal management and the agency has known about this for a long time as they have planned this for years.

7) INSURANCE INTERNAL SERVICE FUND

Amelia Bliss, Human Resources Director, gave the following overview:

This page reflects an overview of the cost for health, life, and disability insurance for active employees and health insurance for retirees. The active employee costs are budgeted in each department budget and the retiree costs are budgeted in the General Services budget.

For FY 20, the General Fund costs reflect a decrease of \$122,220 or 3.8% under the FY 19 budget. It's worth noting that although the FY 20 overall employee and retiree benefit budget is decreasing, the health insurance costs are increasing by \$117,700 or 3.7% based on medical claims trends and inflation. This increase is mitigated by a decrease in prescription, dental, life and disability costs due to better than expected claims experience.

The town continually seeks ways to mitigate the increasing cost of employee benefits. Self-insuring several of the benefit plans has been successful, as has negotiating changes to insurance benefits for our bargaining units and implementing changes for the unaffiliated employee group. Changes have also been made to retiree health insurance benefits. Now all retirees are required to take other coverage after retirement if it is available to them elsewhere. In FY 20 we will continue to explore ways to continue providing both competitive and cost effective benefits for employees and retirees.

Marty Maynard, Risk Manager presented the following:

The forecast for this coming fiscal year is in the single digit increases and it appears that it will continue to be a soft market. Carriers are not significantly raising premiums while conditions remain the same. We are doing an informal one year bid among the two carriers that insure municipalities in the State of CT and are recommending a 3-4% increase this coming year.



The Workers Compensation Fund is forecasted to be flat in FY 20 with the FY 19 fund with a small increase in the excess worker comp insurance. Although this year we have closed a number of claims, there are still some open claims which will cost us more money since they are older claims.

Councilor O'Reilly asked why workers compensation costs would be flat. Mr. Maynard responded that we are self-insured, so the money that we take in goes out to settlement of claims. The town is just looking to hold steady where we are.

Councilor Jepsen asked if the insurance and debt service funds have the same investment restrictions as the General Fund or if they are able to make more money on them. Mr. Bourke responded that there are the same restrictions. They are not allowed to aggressively invest it.

8) TOWN SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION

Linda Collins, Assistant Finance Director and Marty Maynard, Risk Manager, presented the overview as follows:

The FY 20 budget reflects an increase of \$317,980 or 6.1% more than the FY 19 budget mostly due to Retirement Services, which includes the Governor's proposed budget requiring towns to contribute to the state teachers' retirement plan. These increases are partly offset by a decrease in debt service.

Expenditures in this section provide funds to meet the cost of services that the town provides for the schools. These services include debt service, aid to private education, liability & workers comp costs, a portion of the Risk Manager's position, retirement costs, public work activities, youth protection services and additionally for FY 20 the proposed State Teachers Retirement contribution.

FY 20 is proposed to increase approximately \$318,000 or 6.1% as compared to the FY 19 budget. The majority of the increase is for retirement services, including the proposed State TRB contribution and additional funding for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB).

Councilor O'Reilly asked about Madina Academy payout increases. Ms. Collins responded that last year they didn't have nursing services and this year they did so they got more.

Councilor O'Reilly asked about percentages for risk management and if they are calculated every year. Mr. Maynard responded that it is split evenly because injuries on the town side are more severe than the school system, so it is balanced by the total employees at the schools and severity of injuries for town employees.

Councilor Jepsen spoke of the variety of scenarios for budgeting the teacher's pension fund and whether it should be a part of the town or Board of Education budget. Town Manager Souza responded that if it was in either budget and those charges never materialized, those dollars



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would be year-end carryover. Councilor Jepsen asked if we have any more information regarding whether to keep it in the budget or not. Town Manager Souza said that they have been wondering the same thing. Based upon the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, their recommendation was that it would not involve municipalities, but given that the general assembly is in budget deliberations, it could also appear elsewhere. There is not a lot of new, additional information so it becomes a policy question about whether to include some or all of the \$190,000 in the budget.

9) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor McAuliffe to cancel the Monday, April 22nd special meeting.

Councilors discussed the agenda for next week and asked town staff to make it known that public comment will be available on Wednesday, April 24, 2019.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Black-Burke and Govoni absent)

Councilor Jepsen MOVED and Councilor Wilkos seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Black-Burke and Govoni absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin Rand
Clerk of the Council