

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION

March 9, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

The work session of the Jamestown Town Council for review of the Capital Budget was called to order by President Trocki at 6:03 p.m. in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers of the Jamestown Town Hall at 93 Narragansett Avenue, Jamestown.

II. ROLL CALL

The following members were present:

Kristine S. Trocki, President
Mary E. Meagher, Vice-President
Blake E. Dickinson
Michael G. White
Thomas P. Tighe

Also present:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator
Christina Collins, Finance Director
James Bryer, Fire Chief
Lisa Bryer, Town Planner
Donna Fogarty, Library Director
Michael Glier, IT Consultant
Jill Goldstein, Recreation Program Director
Cathy Kaiser, School Committee Chair
Kenneth Gray, Tax Assessor
Michael Gray, Public Works Director
Justin Jobin, GIS Coordinator
Edward Mello, Police Chief
William Piva, Parks & Recreation Director
Howard Tighe, Deputy Fire Chief
Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

III. TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION

A) Town Capital Budget Work Session and Hearing for FY 2016 (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016)

1) Review and Discussion

Town Administrator Nota explained the documents for this evening's work session. Review of the Capital Improvement Budget for FY 2015-2016 proceeded line by line using a PowerPoint presentation. The Town Department Head requests totaled \$1,263,000. Each department has a six-year capital plan. The items brought forward by the Administration are the annual amounts set aside for capital improvements and proposed for approval. The Town Administrator's proposed capital budget is \$1,244,000,

a reduction of \$163,000 from last year. Capital improvements are a needs assessment and development of a schedule to address the community's needs over time, prioritizing them, and evaluating how to finance the improvements.

Debt Service requirements were reviewed, including the Fire Station project (7 years for the pumper truck and 25 years for building enhancement) at \$2,000,000 and \$1,500,000 for the PAC referenda. Total debt service with the addition of the PAC and Fire Station is \$16,500,000. The Golf Course and Library enhancements would be added once the projects are set and added to the schedule. Review by department ensued.

Town Clerk: There are recurring capital projects. The proposed capital items are Clerk Records Management at \$2,500 and Codification at \$5,000 for a total of \$7,500. Each program has an explanation

Tax Assessor: The capital budget proposed is \$10,000. The budget includes the \$105,000 set aside for Revaluation and Statistical Revaluation. The last revaluation was completed in 2012 and cost \$140,000. 2015 is a Statistical revaluation year, with a bid awarded to Vision Government Solutions for \$52,400. The set aside account contains \$105,500. The next Statistical Revaluation is in 2018 with a full Revaluation in 2021. Legislation is proposed to amend the schedule to every five years for cost savings. Total costs for the three revaluations are \$252,400, with reimbursement of \$67,440 from the State, for a balance of over \$100,000 or \$13,200 per year. Set aside amounts will change if new legislation is enacted. Discussion ensued.

Planning: Two place holders are Planning Services and Development Documents for \$15,000 and Affordable Housing Program for \$75,000, for a total of \$90,000. Discussion ensued of the Comprehensive Plan. Councilor Dickinson would like to see information on the town website so that surveys can be done in-house rather than hiring outside firms to do the work, saving money.

Technology: Information Technology annual set aside is \$27,000 and Phase 2 of the Fiber Optic Network is \$22,000 for a total of \$49,000. Councilor Dickinson would like the website utilized and it should be the priority. Access to local government is the most important item we can spend our money on. We need to take servicing the people more seriously and give attention where needed in order to provide services. The website is the first thing people see. Discussion ensued of accurate website information and increased use of the site. President Trocki inquired what is needed to make the website accessible and reliable. Michael Glier stated it is at first a culture issue as each department has the responsibility to maintain their information, unless we assign someone full time to the task who is not be distracted by day-to-day activities. Also, web content tends to get delayed because of the decision process; sometimes it takes a while as permissions are sought for the data to be put on the web. We need to take the time to do it, understand the process and policies, and it needs to be prioritized. Councilor Dickinson stated if financing is needed, we should commit to it. Mr. Glier commented we average 20 recurring visitors per day to the website. Discussion ensued. Council members support promoting the website using social media and whatever it takes. Discussion ensued of how much should be invested in the website. Discussion ensued of filing of forms, what

can be done in an interactive way, and what must be completed and mailed in or delivered. The allocation can be revised at a future meeting.

Jerry Scott of Walcott Avenue commented on the number of hits for Town Council meetings and the poor audio for the recordings (Jamestown Record). Town Administrator Nota stated as long as people use the microphone the audio will be better.

Website maintenance discussion ensued. Councilor Dickinson does not think the \$27,000 allocation is enough. The website maintenance contract is \$2,900. We need to find money to improve the process. Town Administrator Nota stated we will do this.

Police Protection: Police Protection EMS: A total of \$83,000 is proposed for Police Protection, an increase of \$8,000 over the current year, and includes \$34,000 for a police cruiser and \$49,000 for a new 6,000 fuel tank for gasoline. This will provide ample fuel to keep us operating for the winter, especially during storms. The present 4,000 gallon tank will be relocated to increase the town's diesel capacity from 2,000 to 6,000 gallon capacity; the school department's 1,000 gallon tank gives us 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel to give the town the capacity to operate for one week during difficult conditions. Chief Mello is working on a RIEMA Emergency Performance grant for 50% reimbursement of the tank purchase price. The second grant being applied for is for the portable generator for use at Town Hall (to be discussed under the Highway budget).

The cruiser replacement would include the retiring of two vehicles, trading in one vehicle, and one requires significant work. The vehicles average 22,000 miles per year. In rotating the vehicles one is replaced annually, with the opportunity to skip a vehicle purchase every five years. Councilors inquired about the grant and what cruiser would be replaced. Chief Mello stated the total cost for the tank is expected to be \$49,000, and there is no guarantee the grant will be approved. The vehicle to be replaced is a patrol car with 145,000 miles; two vehicles will be traded in. (There will be 9 police vehicles). Discussion ensued of the traffic vehicle, which costs \$20 per hour plus the cost of the Officer. Discussion ensued of an agreement with Cumberland Farms for fuel for emergency purposes (first 3,000 gallons). Cumberland Farms did not include a generator in their renovation project.

Fire Department and EMS Division: The joint six-year plan totals \$37,000 including radio and pager replacements, SCBA bottles, personal protective equipment, and hose replacement. There are two projects for EMS for the automated CPR machine and patient stretchers for \$45,000, for a grand total of \$82,000. This is a significant reduction from last year. Based on future needs, one rescue vehicle is upcoming. The proposed standard size pumper truck will save about \$250,000.

Town Administrator Nota commented some of the items in the capital program are place holders, and the town will only spend dollars when necessary. Discussion ensued.

Public Works: The capital budget proposed totals \$770,000 for FY 2015-2016, including \$350,000 for the road improvement program, \$100,000 for North Road drainage improvements, \$15,000 for street repairs, \$20,000 for sidewalk repairs, \$5,000

for road striping, \$75,000 for Fort Getty projects, \$50,000 for replacement of the roof at Ft. Wetherill, \$25,000 for replacement of Mackerel Cove restrooms, \$40,000 for a portable generator, \$15,000 for GIS programming, \$50,000 Bike path design engineering, \$5,000 for stormwater management phase 2, \$5,000 for Taylor Point guardrails, and \$15,000 transfer station improvements in order to close the landfill. The pavement management plan was referenced. The town has 78 miles of road, 50 miles of town roads with 43 miles paved.

Councilor Dickinson commented on the bond to close the landfill. Public Works Director Gray commented the funding requested is needed due to the washout during the winter months and for roll-offs. The bond was for \$1,000,000. During the project 20% more trash was found that was absorbed into the project at no extra cost. The detention basin was sized appropriately for the amount of impervious cover at the Transfer Station. Additional impervious cover is required to handle stormwater runoff. Other initiatives will result in increased recycling capabilities for cardboard and heavy plastics. Lengthy discussion ensued. Residents have been provided with information on the closure. Though technically closed, the landfill will not be officially closed until these final tasks are completed.

North Road improvements were discussed, including Phase 1, 2015-2016, installation of drainage from West Reach to Godena Farm, 3,000 linear feet. Phase 2, 2016-2017, entails drainage in the south section (reservoir) with collection piping and swales. Phase 3, 2017-2018 will be paving from Godena Farm to the Reservoir. Phase 4 will be construction of a pedestrian or bike path. Town staff will perform duties wherever possible to reduce costs. To expedite the project would require outsourcing to contractors at significantly higher costs. Cost comparisons for in-house and outsourcing of project phases ensued. Lengthy discussion continued.

Public Works Director Gray referenced the pavement management summary, updated annually. It contains pavement conditions for all town roads color coded by section. Road conditions are: failed, poor, fair, good, and excellent. Roads that have the most traffic are given paving preference, and Public Works is making progress on paving roads in need. Discussion continued. Councilor Dickinson proposed the Bike Path Project be put back a year and do Summit Road, due to concern for by bikers for North Road, who would rather see a road paved they could use. Mr. Gray agreed Summit is in need. Mr. Nota commented some Summit Road residents may not want it paved. Vice President Meagher asked if there is any sense of what the State will do, as Beavertail Road is in poor condition. Mr. Gray commented their activities are tied to the State budget and it is unknown at this time when it will be addressed. Town road conditions will be continually evaluated for need and may be addressed at future budget sessions.

Library: Town Administrator Nota referenced the two capital projects: \$7,500 for a full mechanical engineering study and \$15,000 for furnishing upgrades for young adults/teen users, as this group needs their own space. The Library is facing challenges in serving the teen population, which includes tutoring. Discussion continued.

Parks and Recreation: Town Administrator Nota commented this is the beginning of a comprehensive evaluation of the elements of the Parks and Recreation Department programs. There are six projects proposed including: Eldred Avenue field improvements for \$10,000, Lawn Avenue field improvements for \$10,000, Playground reserve fund for \$50,000, basketball court for \$30,000, skateboard park for \$5,000, and Community Center improvements for \$25,000. The field complexes need significant upgrades including access to water. The prior capital project for a well at the Eldridge Avenue property was noted including the restrictions in place. The next round of RIDEM grants will be sought for matching funds. The Playground constructed by volunteers has deteriorated over time. It will take several years and sizable funding to complete a modern play area. The skateboard park is for advanced skaters and the proposal is to compile funding over two years for a beginners park. The deteriorating basketball court is proposed to be upgraded with six outdoor basketball hoops and overlay the existing court. The skaters have offered to assist with fundraising and provide ideas for improvements. Also proposed is a buffer between the school and the park. The \$25,000 is proposed for refurbishing of the foyer at the Recreation Center, including repair to the stairs and front door.

Council members expressed appreciation for the background information, which is most helpful. This information will be on the website tomorrow morning.

Jerry Scott of Walcott Avenue asked for a description of the process on how the town interacts with the State. How is something initiated, particularly with roads? Town Council members comment they do not contact the State but work through Representative Ruggiero. Town Administrator Nota commented some town departments work regularly with RIDOT and would be happy to facilitate meetings with our legislative delegation to assist residents in need.

President Trocki thanked everyone in attendance. The next budget hearing is Monday, March 23, 2015.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss the work session was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Attest:


Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
Town Administrator
Town Solicitor
Finance Director