

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 9, 2010

I. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

Ms. Menard called the meeting to order on Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 6, 2010 at the East Windsor Town Hall

II. ATTENDANCE

Denise Menard, First Selectman
Mark Simmons, Deputy First Selectman
John Burnham, Selectman
Richard Pippin, Jr., Selectman

Unable to attend: Gilbert Hayes, Selectman (scheduled)

Also in attendance: Cathy Cabral, Treasurer

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200 (6) Personnel Matters s

MOTION: To move the Executive Session out of order to the last item on the agenda.

Made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Mr. Pippin

ALL MEMBERS IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

LEGAL OPINION LETTER

The town attorney was asked to provide legal opinion on question on ballot vs. the one noticed in paper vs. filed with town clerk and with secretary of state. The attorney opinion letter is attached hereto. This was sent to the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education.

The town attorney consulted with the Charter Revision attorney, the Secretary of State's office and reviewed the Charter Revision Commission minutes. It was determined this is a scrivener's error (a typographical error.) The Town Attorney is determining the process to correct and republish the section which needs correction. The town attorney will determine what the section is and not republish the whole charter. Then the Town Attorney will re-file the corrected document with town clerk and the Secretary of State. This process is per the Secretary of State's office and it does not require a town meeting as it is correcting a scrivener's error. Ms. Menard suggested the town attorney do the process as he is the one who is getting the direction from the Secretary of State. It was suggested in this case it should be published in both papers especially in light that it may be a short notice.

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It was asked if there was any indication that residents are crying foul. Ms. Menard indicated no and this was questioned by a Board of Ed member about the erroneous “up to” language. It was thought to have this corrected as soon as possible in light of the budget season.

DISCUSSION OF MISCELLANEOUS BUDGET ITEMS

6315 PARKS AND RECREATION

Melissa Green, Parks and Recreation Director, came before the board to field their questions on her budget requests.

There are two part time assistants who work 15 hours each (she noted they were reduced from 20 hours) she also explained the salary line for the head guard/swim instructor. The water line figure is a variable from year to year based on need for irrigation. Ms. Green explained the sewer use tax was put in their budget in recent years, at that amount, but they only pay the annual sewer user fee. Ms. Green noted an agreement reached with WPCA for one charge for the use and not charged for each location. Ms. Green will call to find out what the sewer user charge is for this coming budget year.

Ms. Green noted they advertise by press release and on job boards at local colleges. Ms. Green did not know if she was at the town rate for electricity. She will investigate that. Conferences and training was discussed and she relayed for the board what she attends. The current budget was the first year for travel line so it was unknown the usage. Her additional travel due to office location at town hall was noted. She noted that each year they spend \$30 to buy an advertisement in high school year book – this is budgeted for \$300 and Ms. Green noted the commission keeps the funds in there if and when they need to advertise for a full time position. It was noted that the Miscellaneous budgeted less than she spent last year and Ms. Green noted that is an emergency line and was comfortable with the amount budgeted. The Board adjusted the advertising, the sewer user tax and travel.

TOTAL: \$205,609

The Board discussed the presentation to Board of Finance on March 17. It will be similar to last year’s presentation with the Proposed Budget, debt service, projected revenue which can never be firm until the State passes the budget – so anything as revenue

Mr. Simmons recapped discussions with constituents and got dire warnings as it was felt the process going now is heading toward being way over the anticipated tax increase of zero. Mr. Simmons noted the raises should be revisited if the bottom line is a large increase.

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The Board reviewed Furlough day information for salaries, longevity, FICA and Medicare and Insurance with corresponding information for furlough day offsets.

CIRMA insurance was successful in getting a 0% increase on liability, property insurance rates for this year – it was a lot of hard work and it can be banked on. The 10.8% increase in health insurance is still not a firm number. Ms. Menard noted that the norm for health insurance increases in surrounding communities is much higher than 10% - so East Windsor is doing well. She also discussed the smoothing of the pension.

The Board discussed percentages increases for the Education and the Town side and that the figures do not compare the total budget to the revenues. The board discussed actions last year by the Board of Finance taking \$1.2 million out of general fund to help balance budget so not as high a mill increase and it was noted the Town cannot do that this year.

The Board discussed the Grand list noting it is a little higher. Mr. Simmons wanted to clarify the definition of “cuts” and “reductions” through the budget process. He also enforced that the Board needs to not have even appearance of impropriety and be fair to everyone and that’s why he wants the option open to revisit raises.

Ms. Menard suggested they revisit what the equity adjustment proposed for the first selectman position and remain on course as far as giving unaffiliated an amount when union members are getting an amount. The Board called Mr. Hayes’ cell phone as he was unable to attend this meeting and spoke to him directly before making the following motion.

MOTION: To reconsider the Boards’ Motion made by Mr. Hayes, seconded by Mr. Pippin on February 27, 2010 to incorporate into the 2010/2011 budget an equity adjustment in the amount of \$6100 to the First Selectman salary and instead fund the First Selectmen salary with the 2% increase as proposed for all other unaffiliated positions, with the condition that the Board can revisit this again along the budget process.

MADE BY Mr. Simmons, Seconded by Mr. Pippin

Discussion: It was noted that the Board did talk with Mr. Hayes directly to fill him in on this Motion and the rationale behind it. The Board acknowledged that Ms. Menard, as First Selectman, was not willing to take the increase and it would have a negative impact on the potential furlough days for the rest of the personnel something the entire Board did not think was fair. They reiterated that it was the consensus that the salary for the first selectman remains under funded.

**VOTE: IN FAVOR: SIMMONS/BURNHAM/PIPPIN
ABSTAINED: MENARD
MOTION CARRIED.**

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The Board reviewed documentation from the Treasurer and discussed past budget practices, including the use of fund balances for budgeting purposes. The Board discussed projected revenues at the local and state levels. Mr. Burnham feels the town should know how much it costs to run not what it cost this year with a few adjustments and furlough days, but actual costs to run. Ms. Menard noted furlough days to offset the cost of increases, is done industry wide and it is not a gimmick. Although it is a promise of a raise in the future – which you will have to fund in the future.

Mr. Burnham countered why not tell people of E.W. what cost to run for next year – without the furlough days – incorporated costs of that the Boards discussed in past weeks. Mr. Pippin reiterated that the Selectman do the town budget and have no control over the education budget.

The Board discussed at length the possibility of lay offs. It was asked if you can take a full time person and say job is part time – that is not allowed.

Ms. Menard noted the Board of Selectmen is charged with the town side of the budget. Ms. Cabral 1 mil is \$1,078,000. When BOF get the proposed budget they equate it to the revenues and their job is to balance the budget – that's where cuts in expenditure happen or taxes are increased.

MOTION: To present this budget, as discussed, which means 1/3 mil increase on town side, without the furlough days with same standards as presented .

Discussion: The Board discussed furlough days as a great way for all to pitch in; if you ask for a raise with no trade off in tough economic times it does not work.

**Made by Mr. Burnham, NO SECOND
MOTION FAILED**

Mr. Pippin noted you cannot change healthcare without negotiations and that is the big hit in the costs. The Board inquired what would one day a month do to the day to day operations of town hall. It was noted one day a month should be fine. Ms. Menard and Ms. Cabral will do some research to determine how to do the breakdown for the budget. The Board is doing the best they can by providing minimum raises with furlough days. The portion of the budget that is the Board of Education was discussed. The police already have furlough days. Ms. Cabral noted some employees hours are different so it will have be specific. The closing of Town Hall was discussed, and the furlough days will be for part-timers as well.

MOTION: To propose twelve (12) furlough days for all town employees except those who are employed by the Board of Education and Police Department allocation determined by the First Selectman. The Selectmen will discuss the break down of the days at the next meeting, including the closure of town hall on furlough days.

Made by Mr. Pippin, Seconded by Mr. Simmons

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Discussion: Mr. Burnham was uncomfortable with starting with this, as he thinks they should present budget on town side with no furlough days to show the townspeople what it costs to run the town truly. It seems like the Board is trying to fix it before its broken and it should be presenting what the employees have presented the cost that run the town and not what the townspeople might want to pay. Ms. Cabral noted it is broken as the town is short the \$1.25 million and in her opinion steps need to be taken to make up the difference for the problems this year. Mr. Simmons contributed that also there is the revenue short fall to consider. Mr. Burnham thought they should go with furlough days on second time around, if necessary. Let the townspeople kick it back and then the board can fix. Ms. Menard added that it is the Board's job to present the best possible proposed budget now.

VOTE:

In favor: PIPPIN/SIMMONS/MENARD

Opposed: BURNHAM

MOTION CARRIED

Ms. Menard will talk to bargaining units tomorrow. CONSENSUS OF THE BOARD this 12 furlough days is across the board, not just for unaffiliated employees, but something that will be instituted for ALL employees. If any one entity does not agree to the furlough days then board will revisit its directive of furlough days and consider lay offs.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200 (6) Contract Matters

**MOTION: To go to Executive Session pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200 (6)
Contract matters at 7:00 p.m.**

Made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Mr. Pippin

ALL MEMBERS IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION: To come out of Executive Session at 7:50 p.m.

Made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Mr. Pippin

No action

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn at 7:51 p.m.
Made by Mr. Burnham, seconded by Mr. Pippin
ALL MEMBERS IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted

Cynthia D. Croxford
Recording Secretary