

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting
Thursday, February 7, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Town Hall Meeting Room
11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT. 06016

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS - WORKSHOP

Meeting Minutes

**** These Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting ****

Board of Selectmen:

Robert Maynard, First Selectman
Steve Dearborn., Deputy First Selectman
Jason Bowsza, Selectman
Andy Hoffman, Selectman
Charles J. Szymanski, Selectman

ATTENDANCE: **Board of Selectmen:** Robert Maynard, First Selectman; Steve Dearborn, Deputy First Selectman; Charles J. Szymanski, Jason Bowsza, Selectman, and Andy Hoffman, Selectman (arrived at 6:10 p.m.).

ABSENT: None of the Selectmen were absent.

PRESENTERS: **Town Staff:** **Town Clerk:** Joanne Slater; **Tax Collector:** Patti Kratochvil.; **Town Planner:** Ruben Flores-Marzan; **Treasurer:** Amy O'Toole.

GUESTS: None.

Press: No one from the Press was present.

TIME AND PLACE OF BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING:

First Seletman Maynard called the Meeting to Order at 6:05 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT.

ATTENDANCE: See Above.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Special Meeting
Budget Workshop Meeting – February 7, 2019
WORKSHOP MINUTES -**

PRESENTATIONS/a. 6:00 P.M. – Town Clerk - 410300:

The total Budget request for the Town Clerk for FY 2019 – 2020 was \$135,159, which results in a -0.15 % *decrease*.

Joanne Slater, Town Clerk, joined the Board.

Ms. Slater reported that the ***Professional Services line*** has been reduced by \$500. The Land Record Auditor who previously served the department has retired; Ms. Slater now has an arrangement with New Visions for a lesser fee. Ms. Slater noted she has not been billed for auditing services in the last 6 months; therefore, the budget line appears to be high with a current balance of approximately \$2,900. Ms. Slater anticipates a bill for Vital Records and other services, estimated to be about \$2,500, which will come out of that \$2,900 balance.

Regarding ***Supplies and Equipment*** Ms. Slater indicated she has \$820 left but needs to purchase new Land Record books and a special book and paper for the First Selectmen's Office, archival pens for the Vital Records, and counter pens. Selectman Szymanski referenced shipping and handling charges; he noted the charge was small for this department but questioned the cost on an aggregate basis? Ms. Slater explained that charge was actually associated with a vendor who normally delivers supplies; when they're not able to make a delivery then the office would incur a shipping and handling charge. Selectman Szymanski questioned if the Town has an agreement with Fed Ex for shipping costs, as they usually give a municipal discount. Treasurer O'Toole cited she's not aware of mailing services for a town account but doubted that any of the offices would incur shipping costs.

Ms. Slater reported she's budgeting \$300 under the ***Travel line*** for 2 conferences and associated expenses. She still has \$380 left in the ***Education and Dues line*** but needs to pay for 2 conferences in the next couple of months. She noted she gave up one night of the conference, which is a social event, to lower the conference cost.

Selectman Bowsza and Selectman Hoffman arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Selectman Bowsza questioned the ***Revenue*** taken in for the Town Clerk's Office. Ms. Slater referenced lists for 2017 and 2018 she prepared in response to Selectman Szymanski's question last year. Treasurer O'Toole noted she prepared a Revenue analysis and increased the Conveyance (sales of properties tax) to \$135,000, so overall Ms. Slater's revenues will be \$220,100. Previously it was \$190,000. Selectman Bowsza questioned if Ms. Slater still had the Dog Fund; explain what that is. Ms. Slater replied affirmatively, noting this is a State fund; they break out the money and give it back. Selectman Bowsza questioned where the fund "lives"; he's of the understanding that the Town Clerk's Office gets to keep a portion of that fund. Treasurer O'Toole explained there is a Dog Fund under Special Revenue; if you looked at an audit it would be in the "non-major" section. The fund is for the cost of animal control, which is

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Special Meeting
Budget Workshop Meeting – February 7, 2019
WORKSHOP MINUTES -**

budgeted under the Police Department. We transfer to the fund and the State gives money back. Treasurer O'Toole cited they recently went back for an added appropriation because we had been short-funded. We only budgeted for the cost of the officer, not for the cost of the dog pound related expenses or veterinarian fees. Selectman Bowsza suggested it's money used to offset the municipal cost. Treasurer O'Toole noted the cost is budgeted through the Police budget; Ms. Slater collects the fees. Discussion followed regarding the comparison of the fees collected vs reimbursement from the State. Selectman Hoffman questioned who sets the percentage sent to the State? Treasurer O'Toole replied it's set by the State. Ms. Slater noted that some State fees have gone up from previous years. Treasurer O'Toole and Ms. Slater noted that revenue listed for the Veteran's and the 250th Anniversary is revenue generated by the sale of merchandise for the respective organizations; all revenue from merchandise sales goes to those organizations.

Selectman Szymanski thanked Ms. Slater for breaking out the information.

PRESENTATIONS/a. 6:15 P.M. – Tax Collector - 410900:

The total Budget request for the Tax Collector for FY 2019 – 2020 was \$148,270, which results in an 18.03% increase.

Patricia Kratchoval, Tax Collector for the Town of East Windsor, joined the Board.

Selectman Bowsza noted a bump in the *part-time salary line*. Ms. Kratchoval reported she's realigning the position. The part-time employee has previously been shared between the Tax Collector's Office and the Treasurer's Office; in actuality the employee has worked a minimal amount of time for the Treasurer's Office but works approximately 98% of the time for the Tax Collector's Office. Selectman Hoffman suggested this a re-accounting of this position? Ms. Kratchoval concurred; she's moving this position fully to the Tax Collector's office; she suggested there should be a decrease of salary in the Treasurer's Office. Treasurer O'Toole clarified the part-time salary line for the Treasurer's Office is \$8,430; Ms. Kratchoval suggested she's also requesting a slight increase in the hours worked. Selectman Bowsza questioned if the increased hours crosses the threshold for benefits and pension? Ms. Kratchoval replied affirmatively. Selectman Bowsza questioned if those costs are reflected in this budget? Ms. Kratchoval suggested in her justification she is requesting the 21 ½ hours per week which works out to 1,110 hours per year, which is an increase in salary of \$2,200. Treasurer O'Toole noted that this salary increase doesn't reflect the impact to FICA, or pension. Selectman Bowsza questioned if the increase has a health insurance impact? Treasurer O'Toole replied it doesn't impact health insurance. Ms. Kratchoval suggested if it were an option the employee would waive the pension but that's not an option. Ms. Kratchoval felt the position is difficult to fill. Time being out of the office is restricted to specific time periods, it's a part-time position, the employee must be available to fill in when she's not scheduled, the employee must be certified with the State of Connecticut; she has someone who's interested in staying in the position at 21 ½ hours. First Selectman Maynard clarified that because the employee is going over the 1,000 annual threshold what benefits would she be eligible for? Treasurer O'Toole indicated vacation,

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting

Budget Workshop Meeting – February 7, 2019

WORKSHOP MINUTES -

sick time, personal time, holidays, and snow days. Treasurer O'Toole – basically if any of the days she's scheduled to work falls under any of those categories she would now be paid; pension would be impacted, and, this budget request would start the employee being eligible for DC as she would become a member of the Clerical Union. Selectman Bowsza questioned the Town's contribution rate and the effective date of that contribution? Treasurer O'Toole clarified the employee is not yet working the additional hours; July 1, 2019 is when she would be eligible for the Clerical Union. Selectman Hoffman questioned aside from the wage impact what's the impact of the benefits? Treasurer O'Toole suggested when she calls in sick, or takes vacation, there's not another person to fill the position. Treasurer O'Toole reported if this position was strictly part-time working under 19 hours there would be no benefits, other than the State required sick-time. Treasurer O'Toole cited there is a cost to the Town for this employee not being here on her work increased schedule; now there isn't.

Selectman Bowsza questioned the increase in the *Professional Services line*? Ms. Kratchoval reported this is another realignment of costs; this is for her QDS software, which was previously funded under IT. Under this budget we're going to split the bill and say these services specific to the Tax Collector will be under her budget and what is truly IT will be under IT. Referencing a document Ms. Kratchoval indicated about \$8,300 is coming out of IT and going into the Tax Collector's budget. Ms. Kratchoval reported this is for QDS software and their associated services. They verify addresses for reading by postal meters, provide postage and deliver tax bills to the post offices, collate motor vehicle and real estate tax bills to reduce postage costs, and can track delivery of the bills. The Professional Services line increased \$189 over last year. This cost will come out of the IT budget. Selectman Bowsza questioned so the only change in Professional Services is the movement of the QDS software to the Tax Collector's budget? Ms. Kratchoval concurred.

Selectman Szymanski suggested the .5 part-time employee reported on the budget request is really 1. Treasurer O'Toole referenced the ratio of the 21 hours relative to 35 hours; she suggested it's probably closer to .7 of an employee. She suggested the situation would be different if it were 3 part-time employees each working 10 hours vs. one part-time employee working 30 hours. Discussion followed regarding the need for consistency in reporting information.

Selectman Bowsza questioned the increase in the *Supplies and Equipment line*? Ms. Kratchoval cited a bill came in recently from QDS which will come from that line. She's also asking for replacement of 2 broken chairs and there are holes in the mats under the desks.

Regarding *Travel Expenses*, Selectman Bowsza noted the increase in the GSA mileage reimbursement rate. Ms. Kratchoval noted conferences used to be in Norwalk but are now scheduled in Berlin. Selectman Hoffman suggested if the travel expenses for everyone who must attend conferences is added up that's a significant cost; he questioned the chance of getting a Town vehicle. First Selectman Maynard and Treasurer O'Toole reported a new Town vehicle arrived at Town Hall this week.

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting

Budget Workshop Meeting – February 7, 2019

WORKSHOP MINUTES -

Ms. Kratchoval noted the Connecticut Tax Collector's Association and the Office of Policy and Management are seeking to create a program which will require Tax Collectors to do continuing education; they will also be required to go for training. The program will be required to maintain certification. She anticipates the program to be a requirement within the next year or year and a half. Selectman Szymanski requested back-up information regarding the Education and Dues classes.

Selectman Szymanski questioned if any consideration has been made regarding e-mailing tax bills? Ms. Kratchoval noted Point and Pay has a delinquency feature to mail notifications to taxpayers but you must get people to sign up for that feature and the response rate has been low. Ms. Kratchoval also noted that the Connecticut General Statutes haven't changed to accommodate e-mail.

The Board thanked Ms. Kratchoval for her presentation.

PRESENTATIONS/a. 6:30 P.M. – Town Planner - 4111100:

The total Budget request for the Town Planner for FY 2019 – 2020 was \$280,334, which results in a 15.89% increase.

Town Planner Ruben Flores-Marzan joined the Board.

Mr. Flores-Marzan indicated his presentation will be a synopsis of what we're trying to accomplish in the Planning Department. In terms of crafting his first budget for the Town he wanted to understand what the goals were for his department to help other towns. He came up with two goals: 1) to increase predictability, and 2) reduce uncertainties. And these are important because when you're trying to, in good faith, be the facilitators for developers who are the people who will bring capital to increase the economic opportunities and create jobs you need to have predictability in the sense that people will understand what the workflows are - you come into the office and this is how you go about it. And then, in terms of reducing uncertainties, it means regardless of who you are, if you follow the process and you follow the guidelines then this is the outcome you should be having. When you understand those two things it creates this atmosphere of trust and attracts people to the community because they see there's fairness to the process. That's very important in Planning and Development - so that's where he's started.

Referencing his presentation, Mr. Flores-Marzan noted it's a single page. Beginning with *Activities, Functions, and Responsibilities* Mr. Flores-Marzan suggested most of the items are pretty standard. You're taking care of people, processing applications – pretty much doing the traditional planning stuff. When you look at the last four bullets – update regulations, implement the Plan of Conservation and Development, promote economic development within the Town, and process zoning permits and land use applications – this is where the details are that may sink or swim our Planning operation. In reviewing office documents and history, Mr.

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting

Budget Workshop Meeting – February 7, 2019

WORKSHOP MINUTES -

Flores-Marzan decided to focus our energies on these service deliveries. Selectman Szymanski noted Mr. Flores-Marzan had said this is to improve the delivery of what you're doing; are there backlogs? Mr. Flores-Marzan indicated there are no backlogs but we can improve the way we do business; you always go under the assumption that you're never satisfied; you can always improve – either with technology or resources.

So, having said that, Mr. Flores-Marzan referenced the *Salary full-time line*, he noted we're requesting a new position for a Strategic Planner. Selectman Bowsza questioned if we have an Assistant Planner? Mr. Flores-Marzan reported Matt Tyksinski is the Assistant Town Planner. Mr. Flores-Marzan indicated that to develop the justification for the new position he did an analysis of the surrounding towns in the Capital Region Council of Governments and it turns out that most of the towns with our same geographic area – 26 square miles, etc. – they employed from 3 to 7 planners. The way they were able to accomplish this is they created different offices – a Planning and Zoning Office, a Conservation Office, and an Economic Development Office. But when you take a look at the individuals and the credentials, these are planners. Are we satisfied that we have a Planning and Development Office, or do we understand that we need that extra body, a planner, to help us go from where we are to where we want to be?

Selectman Hoffman noted one of the things he sees missing in Mr. Flores-Marzan's budget is improvement in the appearance of your office. Your office, from the standpoint of acquiring new companies, is probably the second most important office in the building after the First Selectman's office. It's not an attractive office area. Selectman Hoffman recalled the Board talked about it last year and it didn't get in the budget. His personal opinion is the Planning Office needs renovation badly; it's not the kind of place that tells a potential developer that this is a great place to start a business in East Windsor. Mr. Flores-Marzan agreed but suggested if you come to Town Hall every day this room is mostly empty; it's a great room, we have the large screen, the large conference table. Mr. Flores-Marzan reported when he was weighing the options, with the limited resources we have, he would rather have the person in the office moving the agenda forward.

First Selectman Maynard noted the time is approaching to open the Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting; he suggested continuing Town Planner Flores-Marzan's presentation during that meeting. First Selectman Maynard called for a motion to adjourn this Workshop.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Workshop/Special Meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Selectmen