

PORTSMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 JUNE 13, 2018 (Wednesday)
 PUBLIC HEARING BUDGET MINUTES

- TOWN COUNCIL: Keith E. Hamilton, Kevin M. Aguiar, David M. Gleason, Paul F. Kesson, Liz A. Pedro J. Mark Ryan and Linda L. Ujifusa
- SCHOOL COMMITTEE: Terri Cortvriend, Emily Copeland, Frederick Faerber III, Andrew Kelly, Thomas Vadney and Allen Shers
- ABSENT MEMBERS: John Wojichowski (SCHOOL COMMITTEE)

7:00 PM – Portsmouth Middle School, 125 Jepson Lane

Time: 7:03 PM

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a Moment of Silence for our men and women serving around the world in harm’s way.

SITTING AS THE PORTSMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

BUDGET HEARING – The Full Budget is Available for Review on the Town’s Website at portsmouthri.com

**Town of Portsmouth, Rhode Island
 Budget Hearing
 Report to Taxpayers on the Current and Proposed Budget**

	Amounts Actually Budgeted for Current Year Operating/Capital FY2017-2018	Proposed Budget Year Operating/Capital FY2018-2019
General Fund		
<i>General Fund Expenses</i>		
Education	\$ 36,530,953	\$ 37,036,296
School Debt Service (funded by Town)	692,777	658,449
Town Council	18,066	11,866
Town Administrator	279,974	278,900
Administrative Services	4,184,650	4,780,500
Town Debt Service	1,777,338	2,245,896
Planning & Development	720,924	727,719
Public Safety	12,300,551	12,364,687
Public Works Department	2,776,716	2,951,120
Parks, Recreation & Community Services	1,047,115	1,073,088
Transfers out to other funds	1,536,543	1,124,662
<i>General Fund Expenses Total</i>	\$ 61,865,607	\$ 63,253,183

<i>General Fund Revenues</i>			
Local Property Tax	\$	52,731,485	\$ 54,156,680
Local Non-Property Tax		3,152,804	3,195,148
Federal		-	-
State		5,981,318	5,901,355
<i>General Fund Revenues Total</i>	\$	<u>61,865,607</u>	\$ <u>63,253,183</u>

Transfer Station Fund

<i>Transfer Station Expenses</i>			
Operations	\$	666,215	\$ 853,926
Debt Service		25,780	22,674
<i>Transfer Station Expenses Total</i>	\$	<u>691,995</u>	\$ <u>876,600</u>

<i>Transfer Station Income</i>			
Income		691,995	876,600
<i>Transfer Station Income Total</i>	\$	<u>691,995</u>	\$ <u>876,600</u>

The Education expenditure in 2018-2019 budget year is \$37,036,296. It's an increase of \$505,343 or 1.38% compared to 2017-2018 budget year at \$36,530,953. The change is due to the increase in appropriation of \$797,470, or 2.49%, and the decrease in state aid of \$(292,127), or (6.52) %.

Motion to adjust the Legal Reserve for Claims Line from \$85,030 to \$75,200 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion to adjust the bottom line Legal Expenditures to \$290,200 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion to change the DPW Grass Mowing Budget from \$62,500 to \$72,330 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion to change the bottom line DPW Expenditures to \$2,649,721 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion to change the Expenditures Contingency line from \$30,000 to \$29,251 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

Motion to change the Expenditures subtotal from \$3,334,639 to \$3,333,579 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

Motion to change the Fund Balance total to zero made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

Motion to change the subtotal from \$94,368 to \$75,000 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

Motion to add \$18,000 to the blank AIPC line under Planning made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

Motion to change the Planning Budget bottom line to \$351,669 made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

Motion to take the \$18,000 from the Fund Balance and add it to the blank AIPC Line item under the Planning Budget made by Dr. Ryan, seconded by Ms. Ujifusa. Motion passed 5-2. Mr. Kesson and Pedro in dissent.

During the Public Hearing the following citizens spoke:

- 1) Larry Fitzmorris, 50 Kristen Court spoke on behalf of himself and the PCC. Mr. Fitzmorris had the following concerns:
 - a. The bill number on the Levy letter is incorrect it does not correspond with the changes in the Motor Vehicle Property Tax.
 - b. The tax levy is too high at 3.97%, only \$16,400 from the max levy cap of 4%.
 - c. There should have been copies of the budget for the Public Hearing.
 - d. The PCC does not think it is appropriate that core areas are being cut back and the Town continues to give money to AIPC, etc.
 - e. The Town is underfunding pensions. How much money are we putting into pensions? Mr. Rainer responded that the pensions are spread over 4 departments, Fire, Police, DPW, and HR and that the Town gives the annual amount required.
 - f. Does not believe that we should be leasing the furniture for the Police out of the Capital Improvements, that is should be coming from the Police Bond.
 - g. The Town did not get \$430,000 in State Funding and that “we shouldn’t be mugged by our assembly” and that something should be done. Mr. Hamilton agreed with Mr. Fitzmorris and believes that our Legislative members should be working towards correcting the way things are calculated.
 - h. At the School Committee meeting, they are showing a surplus of \$425,000 for the year, and Mr. Fitzmorris proposes a 1-time reduction of 1/3 of 1% of the School Department Budget, which equals approximately \$100,000, to be taken from somewhere in their budget. Mr. DiIuro stated that the School Department had level funded Capital Improvements for this year. Mr. Shers also stated that the School Department level funded Capital Improvements and that there is legislation that will require the Schools to have a separate line item for maintenance. Mr. Shers also stated that the Town has 450,000 square feet of buildings under the School Department. Mr. Fitzmorris stated that the School Department does have a long history of upkeeping the buildings.
- 2) John Davis, 362 West Main Road discussed his concerns:
 - a. Mr. Davis is unhappy with the tax rate increase to almost 4%. The tax rate for his property has increased 30% in 15 years. Mr. Shers stated that the present Tax Assessor is conservative, there is a lot of new construction, i.e. convenience stores, medical office, condos.
 - b. Mr. Davis asked who is responsible for the laptops we buy for the schools. What happens to them if they get lost or stolen? Mr. DiIuro explained that the School Department purchases insurance so that they are covered. Ms. Cortvriend, stated that the schools use Chromebooks at \$300 each and they last approximately 4 years so the students use them from the 6th-10th grade. Mr. Vadney also let it be known that the IT department has been designated a Dell Computer Service Center.

3) Thomas Grieb, 110 Thayer Drive discussed the following concern:

- a. Mr. Grieb stated that the numbers on the Levy letter are incorrect. The number for the Motor Vehicle does not appear to match. Mr. Rainer stated that the letter is sent to the State from the Finance Office and sent back to the Town.

The Town Council asked the following questions or statements during the Public Hearing:

- 1) Ms. Pedro wanted to know if we got an answer to whether the Levy is the 3.96 % that is stated in the letter or is it 3.6%? Mr. Helfand stated that it is 3.6%.
- 2) Mr. Kesson asked where do the two numbers in the 1st paragraph of the letter come from, \$52,325,700 and 50,324,893 do not match the numbers in the budget.
- 3) Mr. Hamilton asked if the levy numbers are based on the Residential Real Estate, Commercial Tangible and Personal Property numbers. Mr. Helfand said that they are, however, they will be off because at the time the letter was written not all the numbers were final yet.
- 4) Mr. Kesson asked if all pension costs should be on one page, like OPEB is. Mr. Rainer replied that he doesn't see why all pension information can't be in the HR section. The adjustment will be made next year.
- 5) Ms. Pedro asked if Brian has an actual number for road improvement as of now, not as of Dec. 2017. Mr. Woodhead stated that they will spend the entire budget before July 1, 2018. There are at least 4 projects that are currently being worked on.
- 6) Ms. Pedro wanted to correct an inaccuracy with regards to the School Department. Back in 2011 the Town Council, in conjunction with the School Committee, increased the School Department budget by \$1,000,000 in order to decrease Warrants that the Town was taking out on behalf of the Schools for \$700,000 a year for computers and other IT that was required for educating the children.
- 7) Mr. Kesson asked if the Town Administrator could give him the debt service number for next year. Mr. Hamilton stated that it was 2,603,233.
- 8) Dr. Ryan thanked Mr. Rainer and Ms. Riley, Mr. Helfand and all of the staff that helped with the budget. He thinks the budget is a good one.
- 9) Ms. Ujifusa echoed Dr. Ryan's sentiments and stated that we get quality services for our money. Go Matt!

FUTURE MEETINGS

June 25 7:00 PM - Town Council Meeting & Final Budget Adoption
July 9 7:00 PM - Town Council Meeting
July 23 7:00 PM - Town Council Meeting

ADJOURN – Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Kesson, seconded by Dr. Ryan. Motion passed 7-0.

Time: 8:38 PM

Jennifer M. West, Town Clerk