

Town of Plymouth
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Plymouth Town Council
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Minutes

April 23, 2015

Call to Order: Mayor David Merchant called the scheduled April 23, 2015, Plymouth Town Council-Board of Education and Board of Finance, Special Joint meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room, Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Mayor David Merchant, Town Councilwoman Susan Murawski, Town Councilman John Pajeski, Town Councilman Gary Wyszynski, and Town Councilman Tom Zagurski. Present from the Board of Finance were Vice-Chairman Vicky Carey, Chairman Peter Cook, Pattie DeHuff, Michael Drozdick and Jim Zalot. Present from the Plymouth Board of Education were Plymouth Board of Education Chairman Ray Engle, Plymouth Board of Education Member Dan Gentile, Plymouth Board of Education Vice-Chairman Karen Kulesa, Plymouth Board of Education Member Michael Melchionna, Plymouth Board of Education Member Anthony Orsini, Plymouth Board of Education Business Manager Michael Santogatta, and Plymouth Board of Education Superintendent Dr. Martin Semmel. Also present were Interim Director of Finance Ann Marie Rheault, Plymouth Town Clerk Barbara Rockwell, and Interim Director of Public Works Charlie Wiegert.

Fire Exits Notification

Mayor Merchant noted the Fire Exits for the record.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Merchant led the Plymouth Town Council, the Board of Education, the Board of Finance and the Public in the Pledge of Allegiance

To allow the Board of Finance members to present the recommended Budget and by a majority vote of its members* make, if necessary, changes to the Budget to be recommended at the Town Referendum (*a quorum of the Board of Finance members must be present)

Board of Education Chairman Engle stated that this was the first year, in his 12 years serving on the Board of Education, that the Board was coming in with a significant increase and requested that \$200,000.00 be added into the Board of Education's budget.

Plymouth Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff stated she didn't understand why there wasn't Public Comment on the agenda stating she would like someone to make a motion to put Public Comment on it. There was no motion made to put Public Comment on the agenda.

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To allow the Board of Finance members to present the recommended Budget and by a majority vote of its members* make, if necessary, changes to the Budget to be recommended at the Town Referendum Cont'd.

Plymouth Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff stated she was unsure if the two additional positions in the Public Works budget were necessary; a brief discussion followed.

Charlie Wiegert detailed and explained the two positions in the proposed budget.

Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff made a motion to cut \$100,000.00 from the Public Works Department's budget. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Ann Marie Rheault stated she did not prepare last year's budget. She further stated that the proposed increase (year over year) was not an increase for the Parks and Recreation Director; he was being paid his contract amount.

When questioned by Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff, Board of Finance Chairman Peter Cook stated that the \$10,000.00 FOI budget item was in the budget to show more transparency as to where the Town's legal monies go. He further stated that FOI was not free and sometimes go above the one dollar per page fee. Board of Finance Chairman Peter Cook stated that at times, the Town Attorney and other people need to get involved with the FOI, as well.

When questioned by Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff, Board of Finance Chairman Peter Cook stated the \$20,000.00 for the Grievance Resolution was there because the Union has the right to grieve anything in their contract and grievances have cost to them and for transparency reasons we need to show where the monies go. Chairman Cook stated that we could look at adding \$200,000.00 to the Board of Education's budget as suggested by resident Ralph Zovich.

Ann Marie Rheault stated if this change were made and \$100,000.00 was added to the Appropriation of Fund Balance and \$200,000.00 was added to the Board of Education's budget, the mil rate would go to 36.53.

Vicky Carey made a motion, seconded by Board of Finance Member Michael Drozdick, to add \$100,000.00 to the Fund Balance and to increase the Board of Education's budget by \$200,000.00.

Vote: Board of Finance Member Vicky Carey/yes; Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff/no; Board of Finance Member Michael Drozdick/yes; Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot/yes. Motion passed.

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To allow the Board of Finance members to present the recommended Budget and by a majority vote of its members* make, if necessary, changes to the Budget to be recommended at the Town Referendum Cont'd.

When questioned by Board of Finance Chairman Peter Cook, Ann Marie Rheault stated the new total would be \$40,263,402 or an increase of 3.15 and would bring the Board of Education's new total to \$23,952,790.

Board of Finance Vice-Chairman Vicky Carey made a motion, seconded by Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot, to present to the Town Council a budget of \$40,263,402.

Discussion:

Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff stated she took notes on what the public said and their clapping levels and said she heard tepid applause noting there were also fairly strong clapping and balancing it out she felt the loudness of the claps fell on the side of cutting the budget and to present this budget to the Council and the people was a huge mistake and it would make changes at Referendum harder so it shouldn't be increased. Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff stated until an audit was completed we do not know where we stand financially.

Vicky Carey stated this was one of most difficult budgets given the improprieties of last year and the Board of Finance has had a tough time with it. She further stated that communications were kept open with the Board of Education and they had done an excellent job keeping their budget to a minimum. Vicky Carey stated that she also heard the comment made before and after the meeting and the BOE still has a lot of work ahead of them. Ann Marie Rheault was formidable and she has given us realistic figures to work with and unfortunately the budget shows we have to have a n increase in the mil rate in order to make this a more realistic budget.

Vote: Board of Finance Member Vicky Carey/yes; Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff/no; Board of Finance Member Michael Drozdick/yes; Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot/yes. Motion passed.

To move to schedule a date for the annual Budget Referendum for the purpose of adopting a Budget

Town Councilman Pajeski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to schedule April 30, 2015, as the date for the annual Budget Referendum from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., in the Community Room at the Plymouth Town Hall. A brief discussion followed.

Barbara Rockwell, Plymouth Town Clerk, stated that absentee ballots would be made available in person only, noting that there wasn't enough time to mail them.

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To allow the Board of Finance members to present the recommended Budget and by a majority vote of its members* make, if necessary, changes to the Budget to be recommended at the Town Referendum Cont'd.

Vote:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Plymouth Town Council and the Board of Finance, Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Hale
Recording Secretary