

## **Town of Plymouth**

80 Main Street  
Terryville, CT 06786

<http://www.plymouthct.us>

## **Board of Finance**

Tel: (860) 585-4001  
Fax: (860) 585-4015

1. Call Meeting to Order – The Regular Meeting of the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance was called to order on Thursday, March 31, 2011 in the Assembly Room, Plymouth Town Hall by Chairman Ralph Zovich at 7:01 p.m. Members in attendance: Pat Budnick, Vicky Carey, Peter Cook, Mike Drozdick, Dan Murray, Ralph Zovich. Also: Mayor Vincent Festa; Dave Bertnagel, Director of Finance; Robin Gudczauskas, Recording Secretary; Tom Zagurski, Councilman; Tony Lorenzetti, Director of Public Works; Jim Schultz, Highway Superintendent; Barbara Rockwell, Town Clerk.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Review and Discussion of Proposed General Fund Budget for FY 2011-2012 – Barbara Rockwell, Town Clerk, (a) here to comment on her budget and was told the BOF was eliminating the second position in her office. Chairman Zovich stated the Board has made a first pass through all departmental budgets; overview given noting looked to cut overtime, seasonal help and those positions vacant and have not been filled. (b) is that going to be saved so if things get better and now hard pressed to get work done with one clerk and herself and if things pick up, inundated with work, behind, and if housing market picks up not able to do anything with one clerk. Ralph asked for details. Barbara, time limits for land records to be indexed, within days of receiving them, and almost 200 recordings in 15 days this month and clerk out sick and she could not do it because of other work and she does not do indexing on regular basis and to sit it would have taken too long and too many errors and left them, which are mortgages, quit claims, vital statistics, handle index births, deaths and put away in books by end of year and reports off to state ; sporting licenses; dog licenses issue; Ralph noted that from loss of revenue and reviewed budget status due to loss of state grants, permit and fee income and loss of interest income; reviewed recording fee cut, and all fees noting fishing and hunting was way down because they are accessible on line; with loss of revenue it is a tough year. Peter Cook, question to the Mayor, flex worker in town hall can they cover. Barbara Rockwell stated a lot of jobs have to be done by the assistant clerk and someone she sworn in, they could do licenses; attorney, realtors and general public title searchers asking for copies of land records and someone else can do that but beyond need someone who is sworn in. Discussion held on closing office daily for ½ hour lunch. Peter asked the Mayor if it is possible to train flex worker; Mayor Festa stated the flex worker will be trained in each office in order to relieve some of the work and can do work that does not need signature. Peter, what is required to sign something; Barbara, training and work experience in office and asked that the the second position a part time position as she hates to see it zeroed out and lost. Barbara, regarding her

salary, if the Board takes a look at all department heads she and the tax collector getting cut and cannot put into words how insulting it is; as elected official, afraid to apply for job in town if you say you can have that position as 'x' amount and then it is cut because it is entry level. They are making \$20,000 less than other department heads and does not seem fair and unless raising it back up quickly she doesn't think that is fair to anyone. Understand they have to be trained but for two of them at \$47,000 and most department heads are \$20,000 more is not fair. Chairman Zovich responded in terms of amount of time and experience Linda had and bring person with zero experience it makes no sense and poor business practice to bring in person to be trained and bring in at top salary. Pat Budnick stated last year they did do a comparison of clerk and tax collector and we were in ballpark. Barbara Rockwell distributed information on Litchfield County 2008 town clerks in most towns listed by population and salary, years in office and how many clerks they have and she is 4<sup>th</sup> largest town in Litchfield County and other towns that have comparable. Ralph stated after contract settled with unions we have money in line item for wage and salary adjustments and will come back to department head salaries. Barbara stated he told her that last year and that is going nowhere now and you never got back to her. Ralph stated last year we did not have money in wage and salary adjustment line item and hope they are settled in 3-6 months. Peter Cook, do not like the way we tie unions to professional in the office and do not believe because the union got 3% or wait two years to give raises and not sure why we are doing it and supposedly it helps in contract negotiations. Barbara, this is the middle of the term and you agreed the term would be paid \$47,000 and in middle of a term you are cutting that. Pat, we should have salary ranges for each position and based on experience so that someone walking in should not make what person leaving is making. Discussion held. Ralph stated the Board is cutting overtime, personnel, materials and trying to avoid laying off full time town employees. We have accumulated \$2.1 million delinquency which the new tax collector will be going after and once nail foreclosures we will go after residential property owners.

Capital budgets:

Vicky, more requested that was originally on list.

Police dept., 2 vehicles which will be put off until decide which style;  
cruiser tactical vests;

town fleet, 80,000, take old vehicles in back, sell all and not get any more crown vics. There are a few grants that David is looking at for hybrids and will have 4 to share between public works, Khara and building inspector. Feel we will get \$25,000 from sale of current vehicles.

Fire dept pager replacement;

Scott air packs, 57 upgrades and need to be done for safety of volunteers and will be financed. Mark Sekorski, bottles on backs and required to wear, governed by OSHA, and went with upgrade vs. new and want to be able to have quick disconnect plug in in case partner needs help, reviewed. Out of 57 all are past expiration date and should all be done by March 2012. Need to go to manufacturer for this and his concern. Ralph noted as result of putting \$195,000 capital outlay the fire department has been willing to defer purchase of third

engine. Mark Sekorski stated it is a two way street and however done need to work it out. Have 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> payments on engine 3 and 5. Mark stated they have put in for 7 grants and turned down for reasons such as too many people in town, not enough people in town, not a combination paid/volunteer fire department and have applied for fire act and looking for money but have exhausted all avenues. Discussion held. Mark also noted on air packs, everyone is fitted to face as well as regulator per OSHA.

Public works equipment, not getting any big trucks and have leases; visited town garage, maintenance, highway and there are a few things, do not have lawnmower and trailer to do landfill which is adaptable for industrial park and other small areas and totals about \$22,000 and problem with equipment trailer and frame is cracked and cannot take backhoe on it and cannot be on road and also included in this there are 2 lifts and one did fix and one needs to be fixed and in separate area of garage and needs to be replaced. Vicky stated at garage some of the guys have to say thank you to as two on sweeper took it apart, washed, greased before put away and did not see her sitting there and they take good care of vehicles. Maintenance garage had said for every year of vehicle is left out in weather it ages by 3 years.

Town aid to roads and wish could give more but can't. Requested \$600,000 and recommend \$425,000 and \$130,000 will be town aid to roads and \$120,000 Locip and tax funded \$175,000. Last year's capitals reviewed. Ralph asked for plan; Tony Lorenzetti, driveway and curbing and did damage and people have expectation it will get done; Ralph need to prioritize on potholes and damage complaints from curbing and driveway give Ralphs number. Need plan clearly outlined as public works plan. Tony stated they need to look at both; patch potholes, fix catch basins; hope to get North Street done this year from dam to school, have drainage designed and have no estimate on cost of asphalt this year; Ralph need to do 500-1000 feet in one shot to do crack sealing, catch basins, only guardrails that get smashed. Tony stated town aid road is not just for paving but for chip sealing, oiling, paving and crack sealing. Reviewed current audit of infrastructure for roads; estimated repairs in consultant report are over \$20 million; annual depreciation \$1.87 million for roads and we put \$400,000 back into it; discussed. Road money will spend \$150,000 on routine maintenance to keep in good shape roads we have and looked at, reviewed. For \$425,000 roads suggested based on traffic counts: Elm Street for mill and overlay; Hoadley Crossing, mill and overlay; 2 segments of Seymour Road for base rehab one between Harwinton and Bernice and one just off Route 6 which will forgo because in other project; Smith Street, mill and overlay and needs drainage; Greystone Road 300' by Greystone Road Extension; Bemis Street, part in 2015. Garber's Corner, last payment and it will be done, our portion and not state or federal and start date is April 11<sup>th</sup>. Discussion held. In three year \$211,000 out of capital for demand deposit by the state.

Mowing tractor, EDC has lien item for mowing and can the town do lawn mowing; Jim, tractor is made for slopes and can do that application. EDC zero out \$7000 line item for landscaping.

Discussion held on availability of equipment that cannot be purchased until after budget approved and received in new fiscal year; Ralph stated once budget passes referendum they can put in order. Jim stated this piece of equipment is on state bid list and the town piggybacks that.

Parks and Rec, dump truck, dump body will be aluminum bed which extends life of truck.

Lake Winfield playground out of revolving revenue funds.

Lease payments, \$321

Sale of engine 5; Dave, \$24,300 came in.

Question on mowing tractor, \$51,000 lump payment due this year and paying off.

2011-2012 gray column, lease payments, air packs will be \$50,000 and in 2013, 75,000 and final 76,095. Discussion held.

Loose ends:

School board presentation, minimum budget requirement, Dave's interpretation from contact with state and whatever budgeted last year have to keep constant, reviewed. Discussion held. \$340,000 cut and can use \$340,000 of federal jobs money because went to BOE and not included in our budget; Ralph, what they did with budget had \$570,000 total amount in jobs and Mike Santogatta said out of \$570,000 they will use \$110,000 to offset salary of two teachers that are retiring and other \$465,000 is being used for one time contract labor, reading specialist, math coaches, tutors, etc and those people are gone at end of 2012 so even if 2 teachers don't retire down \$110,000 and we cut them and use jobs money to fill deficit we can have \$570,000 hole. Discussion: It is off budget and their problem to fill hole if spend money; hire people to fill positions as employees and in year when no program funded then contractor is unemployed; this 465 is to improve curriculum and work on test scores; decrease budget, facilitators should be that and educators be educators and town take management of properties and funding of those in public works department and would decrease BOE budget and how does the law apply; Pat, it does not go in detail and Dave responded if anticipating seriously do that we would have to get legislation people involved in that, discussed. Pat noted presentation used to include reimbursements from the state and they are not showing money lost on revenue side. Functional analysis have miniscule increase in health fund going up \$12,000 on \$2.2 million. Only other way without cutting is took responsibility away like last year of snow removal without reducing budget and make their responsibility again.

**MOTION:** To accept the school board budget as presented by Peter Cook; second Dan Murray. Discussion: Pat, \$60,000 we put in capital improvements for school roof; Dave that is in debt service piece and done. Vote: Mike Drozdick, yes; Pat Budnick, yes; Peter Cook, yes; Vicky Carey, yes; Dan Murray, yes. Motion passes unanimously.

Question underutilized recreation worker be part time under current contract – Mayor Festa, looking at two workers in recreation and bring to public works department and issue for negotiation and will be discussing as one issue when look at 12 month situation do not see 9 month/3 month and see less at that for

what providing in programs and under auspices he is ultimate supervisor report to for work and look to put in public works and matter for negotiation. Dan, if did that would positions that these individuals moving into be in lesser, same or higher pay grade; Mayor, the same and issue is contract in highway under labor grades and parks/rec work under salary and jobs different than highway crew. Discussion held. Part time vs. full time can be done but need to look at whole program. Peter, we have wanted to take salary item, part time, do we cut salary line item; Mayor Festa stated all of this is negotiated and we cannot arbitrarily do that; need to negotiate issue on full time to part time; looking at concept, can look and move forward in negotiations. Ralph, we reduced seasonal wages by \$14,000 because of funds and revolving account. Peter Cook, not on payroll December, January or February unless the Mayor can find something else for these months.

Full year balance sheet from ambulance corps – email went to Dave Barbieri and waiting response.

Fire department budget on medical examinations, \$1000 reduction, account 36, line 33, page 7, physicals, true costs – now at \$12,000; Dave lower to \$10,000 based upon review.

Revenues on Monday and one question is timing of Structus payment. Mayor Festa, we are in court stages for \$400,000 and there has been movement forward. Collapse of building we put lien against mortgage company; Ralph noted handwritten note from Ted Scheidel read into record. Discussion on deferring for delinquencies for next year's taxes. Ted noted prior year's taxes are hopeful and distributed summary. Total as of March 11, \$1,204,000 to make budget. Land auctions, are properties being posted on website; Mayor Festa stated the webmaster has been putting notice on website and they have been put in newspaper.

Sales and Use Tax – need idea if going through and need number; was \$80,000 potential; suggestion to not budget anything.

Income and expenses on revolving account for Parks/Rec – Dave will have for Monday. Dave has spreadsheet started, one each program.

Library, Plymouth – willing to give us their income statement – Dave has made phone call.

Ralph stated he will give Dave copy of markup and will look at it on Monday. Lower collection rate to 96.5 which will inflate mill rate; discussion held and will finalize on Monday.

#### 4. Public Comment

- a. Melanie Church 328 Main Street, Mayor's secretary/receptionist, salary increase you were looking and Dave was to put in numbers as increase too

high. Would like to mention the town clerk and tax collector and town clerk has taken one of the primary tests for being a town clerk and there are other tests she should have completed but doesn't have to because elected. They are elected the same as mayor and treasurer and they are elected at lower salaries and for you as BOF to raise them it should be closer to election and go to people and you can't compare with Khara with college education and Tony Lorenzetti with college education. I think it was a good step to start off lower because give them incentive to go through for tax collector, whether this one or next one in November and you are looking to expect more from these people. Unfortunately, if you are appointed somewhere maybe Barbara would like to go or new tax collector and go to these appointed towns which expect more. This is a town in crisis but hurting and we have businesses struggling and people are not eating out because money is tight. Do feel too another cost savings is pull vehicles people taking home here with cost of gas, plowing driveways and if injured driving to work that is workers compensation because in our vehicles; we need to cut back on these things and Bristol has cut back on all theirs; cost savings and more accountability of where vehicles are and being used for. Parks/Rec remember when it came September or October they would have 2 full time on Parks and Rec and when Martinez was here and would lay off from September to November but when need for plowing come in; and other ways of looking at doing this plus know she worked for union and if they decide to cut position down to only 6 months you can make seasonal. Union cannot tell you you have to hire a person. We are an at will state and union cannot dictate how many people you have to have and they can make you do more work for pay. She did show in pay scale the extreme on two people in public works for over time and need to be accountable.

5. Board Member Comments

- a. Ralph Zovich, public hearing for capital improvements and another the day after ours on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Engines running, Dan spoke with Chief and there are two pieces of equipment that are temperature sensitive, defibrillator and oxygen; Vicky stated a few years ago they would shut cars off and bring in.

6. Adjournment

**MOTION:** To adjourn by Peter Cook; second Dan Murray and the vote unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas  
Recording Secretary