

1. The **Special Plymouth Town Council Joint Meeting with the Board of Finance and Board of Education** was called to order on **Tuesday, April 23, 2013** in the Community Room, Plymouth Town Hall by Mayor Vincent Festa at **9:17 p.m.** Town Council Members in attendance: Remie Ferreira, Richard Foote, Susan Murawski, DiAnna Schenkel, Thomas Zagurski.

2. Fire Exit Notification per CT General Statutes, Public Act 03-231, Sec. 29-381 - so noted

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. 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 for the Town Referendum

Mayor Festa turned the meeting over to Chairman Zovich.

Chairman Zovich stated all members of the Board of Finance are present. This is open for discussion to members of Town Council and Board of Education for anything heard or said, questions or clarifications. Dave Bernagel noted action in General Assembly by Appropriations has reduced the revenue to the Town of Plymouth by \$250,000 for next year and impact as on presented budget; process at state level starts with the governor, then committees and full house and senate and not adopted until June 5th; currently budget by Appropriation on costs, revenues and nets out to \$200-250,000. Options reviewed to address now or can let it stand and address after the fact. Chairman Zovich asked for opinion of members stating we can put forth budget or risky and can try to second guess General Assembly or wait until see if General Assembly sets budget before taxes go out. Pat Budnick, misunderstood losing income and her suggestion, do not want to go up on mill rate and support add; transfer in that has been 250,000 and suggest increase to 400,000 and decrease miscellaneous income from state and shift \$150,000. In the event the state comes through we will not have to transfer. Budget will be 400,000 from other reserves in event needed. We always have option for delinquent taxes might come in next year which will be additional income and other income items may be higher than anticipated. The Board of Ed has given us money back and there are other offsets but nothing is definite, feel comfortable showing line item income from state as 200 and transfer from reserve 200. Peter Cook stated if we lose that much more from the state we have to cut things to deal and not shuffle money or take from undesignated fund. Dan Murray, taking money away from reserve will deteriorate weak foundation and although not excited about prospect of another 250,000 not coming our way from the state, think we deal with that same way we deal with public works with snow removal, budget it what it is and if make adjustment at end we deal with exception which are known as opposed to preview of coming attractions.

MOTION: To present budget to Town Council as is by Peter Cook; second Vicky Carey. Discussion: Pat Budnick stated her understanding 150,000 was told to her we can make transfer funding course of Board of Finance meeting as we do any other line item and existing line item within budget. Chairman Zovich stated will need clarification from town attorney. He noted third alternative, should state cut revenue there is administrative alternative and the Mayor can order that budgets only be spent up to a certain amount and since no p.o. issued with Mayor and Finance Director's authorization it would freeze department budgets. If state cuts revenue we make up from fund balance or ask the Mayor to reduce spending administratively but at some point need to present budget to referendum without knowing what the state will do. Remie Ferreira, if understand, to pass budget as presented tonight, and down road after town referendum and passed and state does not come through with funds that are to come to us, those funds we would deal at that point and we can cut from budget; Chairman Zovich stated yes

but administratively and through Council. The other alternative is to do nothing and allow budget to go into deficit and when reconcile in one year will have to accept 100,000 deficit and then all boards/commission can spend to full legal limit. Need agreement as we go into the fiscal year in dealing with shortfall if happens at state level. Remie Ferreira, then borrow from funds or fund money not there. He agrees with Dan if not from state then deal with what we have on plate. Peter Cook, we have done that several years ago and Dave wrote up several contingencies that if the state would not come through and those do include furloughs and sooner or later the Town Council will have to think about what hours the town is open. We have asked many times for the town to change the hours of the transfer station and there are savings to be had if we are willing to change hours of operation. Chairman Zovich stated it is a cooperative effort between Board of Finance and Town Council as Council has sole authority to set hours of operation. Pat Budnick, if we don't get 325,000 from the state we will transfer up to 250,000 from reserve and if shortfall in income, it is a matter of going to a public hearing. Chairman Zovich, if request from Council to draw more money from fund balance but if do nothing it will automatically come from fund balance. Dan Murray, it could be a blend from fund balance and some freeze on spending. Chairman Zovich stated budget presented 39,138,265 or 217,700 increase over current year. Sue Murawski, heard the Board of Education had some issues with raising and came in with zero and then raised and quite a bit of discussion and asked what issues were. Obviously concerns. Pat Perugino stated we took look at scores and so on and know there is a problem in the middle school and had new superintendent but had problems and know have to move teachers around. Numbers came up and we have given money back every year and cannot go zero and need to put money into system. Sue Murawski, a lot of energy savings and is that something you can increase each year. Pat Perugino, on energy we do not know what will happen and will never go to zero. Ray Engle, saw rise and now leveled and plateaued and now will be consistent and not see the big savings and much smaller. We did absorb 300,000 in healthcare benefits. Peter Cook, all energy savings has set new base line and about 400-500 less than before. Biggest change was healthcare and other than that eliminated teachers, absorbed salary increases and a wash. Not much else they could have done and same on town side. Sue Murawski, the Board of Ed was at zero; Pat Perugino, that was internal at zero and increase to .5. Chairman Zovich stated this year your discussions were far more spirited than last year. Sue Murawski, had been before Council, 20,000 for interrogation room for capitals and they brought it to you. Vicky Carey stated Rodney Houle (Chairman of Capital Improvements) will be in charge and baseline figure and had gone through looking at different avenues of building, adding on, and in coming up with that the seniors got upset, and the police chief and someone else thought of working into vault for storage and turning storage into interrogation room and she went through whole thing; small interrogation room but will meet state mandated qualifications for police department and will make things tight in there. Needs to be done by end of this year and way back when brought in front of everybody, said in this year's budget and will get done and meet mandates of state. Sue Murawski stated it is not a mandate; not according to the state. She noted mandate is recording equipment used in interrogation of certain type of felonies and nothing to do with the room and not needed and would like to see cut. Vicky Carey, stated the capitals are her area and the way works, if interrogation does not get built it does not go to anything else but put back into general fund. Her line items for capitals are specifically written down and cannot deviate from that. 2 cars, interrogation room, fire truck is all specific listed and if not done, you can talk to the chief or whoever, but if feels it is not right can come back to the board and can take out of the budget; this is to change and move stuff in room area they have now into the vault and it is putting up partition or fencing and can do for cameras and small interrogation room. When she saw some of this in one room and all forensic components, believes it does better in the vault. Sue Murawski, a new police department is on top of capital improvement list. Vicky Carey, we are deviating from budget here, Capital Improvements is working with what they have for the budget and looking to meet with other groups and go through and redo their 5 year capital plan.

Whether or not the police department will still be number one on list or town hall will be; they will go through and meet with people again as needs change. Now they have the bond package working on and certain phases of that and one is roads; they will go out to bid shortly. Chairman Zovich noted did not question 20,000 estimate and thought having interrogation room contiguous within department was a good idea. He asked if concern that 20,000 is excessive. Sue Murawski stated it is a total waste of money and especially in light of the fact that could change and right now they are first in line for capital improvement list. So why spend money for something you don't need anyway. Granted, they are tight and have been for years and actually another five years. Hate to have people say we invested money so why build a new facility. Chairman Zovich noted this is a not to exceed dollar figure and they can spend less and you can insist on seeing bids so that they come to you. If specific concern on 20,000 for room is excessive that is a technical issue and right as legislature to get involved with capital improvements to get best bids and bang for buck. We could delete item but cannot increase budget; if they spent 10,000 less and you want 10,000 more to roads we can do that. Peter Cook, is any of the 20,000 including recording equipment; Vicky Carey, just remodel, the recording equipment has been given as grant. Peter Cook, when they came to town council you decided it would not happen. Sue Murawski, think they were coming back to us.

Peter Cook, withdrew motion.
Vicky withdrew her second.

Peter Cook, we can reduce budget or put in capitals. Chairman Zovich, we can put in Board of Finance and they come back to us. Dave Bertnagel, with budget as presented, if Council wishes to sequester that line item they can to see if needed, and if not, can keep as is. Chairman Zovich, if passes, 20,000 allocated cannot be spent until certain conditions met and you set those conditions and Council would have to agree. Unless you impose on Capital Improvements they are standing committee of Town Council and your subcommittee and you give direction and money spent by Capital Improvements Committee. Would that satisfy concern on this work. Remie Ferreira, think concern is not excessive in 20,000 but is need there. Sue Murawski, it is not a mandate. Dan Murray, that is the more immediate question to address and answer and that will drive direction of what should or shouldn't happen. Peter Cook, if not a requirement take out and if is, they can come back to you and ask for 20,000. Vicky Carey stated it is a personal opinion as to what they feel is mandated and not, you have to go to lawyer at this point ; when she read information and stuff from the state, it was or seemed to be a state mandate that they had to have separate room, cameras. The councilwoman might have felt as read it was her personal opinion on interpretation. If you want to sequester that 20,000 you can, if want to take out you can but it will note a one time line item for police and if attorney feels needed, they should have gotten opinion from lawyer and nothing done and she has nothing else written down that lawyer says not a state mandate and until Capital Improvements or she gets a letter, it is a state mandate and needs to get done. Did not do budget for capital outlays for nothing. Chairman Zovich, understand part is mandated to do recordings but having a separate room within limited access is something the commission thought. Sue Murawski, from state attorney's office to all police chiefs is listing mandated equipment for recording and most serious felonies. In our town those are usually turned to the state anyway. All of requirements listed, 4 pages, all had to do with recording equipment and computers used to transmit the interrogation to the state to use in court and last page was suggestions to improve recordings which had to do with room, turn off cell phones, chairs not squeaky. The state attorney's office mailed her what went to police chiefs.

MOTION: To present to Town Council the budget as presented minus \$20,000 for interrogation room from Capitals, and change full budget bottom line to \$39,118,265 by Peter Cook, second Pat Budnick.

Discussion: none. Vote: Mike Drozdick, yes; Peter Cook, yes; Pat Budnick, yes; Dan Murray, yes; Vicky Carey, no. Chairman Zovich stated the Vote is 4-1 and the Motion passes to reduce by 20,000.

5. To move to schedule April 30, 2013 as the date for the Annual Budget Referendum for the purpose of adopting a budget

Tom Zagurski, not sure how to make date. Charter says 5 business days before referendum. If goes in Thursday. Mayor Festa stated ready to go and have worked out last week with legal notice and will make one change. Chairman Zovich noted one page budget summary release Wednesday in paper or Thursday, noted five days and got clarification last year from town attorney for clarification and ruled calendar days and not business days. Tom Zagurski read page 39 of Charter, "recommended budget" into record. Mayor Festa noted the registrar's have a convention which is scheduled for May 1, 2, 3 and would like to be held on the 30th if possible. Chairman Zovich, something has to be published Wednesday and asked if town web page is acceptable. Tom Zagurski stated newspaper with substantial circulation in town. Cheryl Giancesini, Registrar, stated they do not get reimbursed and town will pay for that and referendum.

MOTION: To hold the budget referendum on May 1st from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. for the purpose of adopting the budget as presented by the Board of Finance by DiAnna Schenkel; second Tom Zagurski. Discussion: Remie Ferreira, question, to clarify, if there is a state shortfall and this passes it will come before Mayor and Council to go forward on how to proceed. Chairman Zovich, yes. Remie Ferreira, whether sequester or out of funds will make the decision at that time. Vote: unanimous.

Patrick Perugino clarified the referendum will be held here and not in the school.

6. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn by Sue Murawski; seconded by Remie Ferreira and the vote unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas
Recording Secretary