

# Town of Plymouth

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# Board of Finance

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1. Call Meeting to Order – The Regular Meeting of the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance was called to order on Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Ralph Zovich in the Assembly Room, Plymouth Town Hall. Members in attendance: Pat Budnick, Vicky Carey, Peter Cook, Mike Drozdick, Dan Murray, Ralph Zovich. Also present: Mayor Vincent Festa; Dave Bertnagel, Director of Finance; and Robin Gudeczauskas, Recording Secretary.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Review and Discuss Proposed General Fund Budget for FY 2013-2014 – Rename Employees Benefit to Other Post Employee Benefits. Dave Bertnagel stated review will be held tonight on General Administration expenditures, reviewed.

## Mayor's Office

Meeting Secretary - Vicky Carey questioned two extra commissions started and are we going to go over budget for Commission Secretary; Dave noted currently at \$6100 and depends on Public Works Board and once established will have to add money as we also have Reservoir Committee; will revisit meeting secretary line item, discussion held to pencil in 10,000.

IT services - Dave stated working on and will not be done until fall.

Human Resources – Vicky Carey would like to read narrative. Peter Cook asked if there will not be a lot of labor negotiations, what are his goals. Mayor Festa stated housekeeping items such as job descriptions and goals/objectives; employee handbook will be going before Town Council next month for approval.

## Comptroller's Office

Contract Services up \$500 due to increase in cost for Springbook financial software maintenance

Service Contracts, up 1000 which is payroll time clocks fee

Office Supplies down \$250

## Central Office

Tech Support up \$5000 for 24/7 support for police department

Floater line item to be eliminated

Service contracts up \$700 for office equipment, copy machines, etc.

Office Supplies down \$1000

Postage down \$1000 due to email and e-technology vs. putting stamp on a mailing

Mileage, reimbursement down \$500 - from training classes for dispatchers, seminars for tax collector, discussion held asking if town cars can be used by employees attending classes

### Registrar of Voters

Deputy Registrars up \$200

Maintenance & Repairs increase of \$2600 - need to start replacing memory cards for machines and requirement by federal law that you need to have things replaced every two years

Election Workers - extra \$500 and will question

Printing - \$500 increase

Rentals up \$50

Telephone up \$50

Canvass - down \$100

### Board of Finance

Meeting secretary increase \$250

Fuel Adjustment line item, will review further when actual costs are in

### Assessor

Salary – 1.8% contractual increase

Longevity Pay up \$100

Education up \$200

Clerical union - unsettled so no increase to staff

Part Time assessors for tax appeal cases, needs to be justified why using outside consultants. Personal property audits are physical audits that need to be done

Board of Assessment Appeals – no change.

### Tax Collector

Salary up \$3000

Part time is extra time during collection season; discussion held and will be combined with Overtime line item

Service Contracts up \$1,000 for Quality Data systems

Conferences & Memberships up \$400, just started 3<sup>rd</sup> class and will be a 4<sup>th</sup> one in fall

Office Supplies up \$10

Tax Refunds zeroed due to net against collections.

### Legal Services

Delinquent Collections up \$500 but does have extra \$12,000 from Contingency

Town Attorney - unchanged

Labor Attorney spent \$48,713 with one more contract pending and can we cut down from requested \$65,000 with Mayor Festa noting pending cases that will not resolve in near future

### Insurance

Workers Compensation up \$6000

Property & Casualty up \$8,000

Umbrella up \$1,250

Pubic Official Liability up \$500

Insurance Claims - Deductibles up \$1,500 ... all are actual numbers

Employee Benefits

Bonding up \$500

Accident/Life Insurance up \$15,000

Pensions up \$25,000

Health Insurance up \$60,000

Actuarial/Professional up \$2,000

Wage/Benefit Adjustments down \$65,000

Retirees Health Insurance up \$20,000

Other Post Employment Benefits up \$60,000

Heart and Hypertension Claims: Salaries no change

Heart & Hypertension Benefits up \$15,000

Town Clerk

Town Clerk salary up \$1450 with no other changes

Probate Court

Service Contracts down \$360 due to Grand List going down last year and will probably see increase next year

Special Services

Beautification Committee up \$500

COST down \$110

Employee/ Commission Recog up \$250

Aging Services: no change

Grand total up \$168,000 with most in insurance/benefits section.

Registrar and Assessor will be asked to come in on Monday.

4. Public Comment

a. Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, last night brought up March 8, 2012 minutes under Police, read from minutes, stating what this says is next year bring up overtime and do not fill and why are we adding someone in April; Chairman Zovich stated she is taking this out of context noting when reviewed budget a year ago, and this is BOF input and never the intention to put overtime back in noting hire of certified officer who starts in February. He clarified what changed after referendum was in June when dog became available and a supplemental appropriation was approved and the town now has the canine officer. The Police Department still has \$20,000 approved at referendum for the 2012/2013 budget. Discussion held. The February hire was discussed and to move \$20,000. Dave Bertnagel noted the police officers we have hired we are not paying medical benefits.

b. Pattie DeHuff, 20 Lynn Avenue, you provided one copy to be shared by 3 people at tonight's meeting and you are aware that Melanie has been here since 2002 and she has been attending most meetings for the last year and a half and this is the first time you are

not providing a copy for all public; recommend you provide multiple copies, 5-6 extra copies is not going to kill anyone. Chairman Zovich stated we will have complete binder with narrative available to public but handouts will have extra copy.

c. Mike Kennedy, 11 Overlook Terrace Road – remind members we are facing hard economic times, cannot predict future but we are doomed; private sector shrinking and no money and think it is the public sector who needs to start feeling pain the private sector feels and suggest to board that all department get zero percent increase. Has seen taxes go up past 11 years at 45% and his job is in jeopardy because of economy. He does not get pay increases but public sectors get increases and time the public unions start feeling the pain we feel and suggest zero percent increase in budgets for new fiscal year. Chairman Zovich noted some things are contractual and some costs are fixed. Mike stated the town has enough revenue to support what it is they need to support and do not need to ask for more. We are looking at long term problem with economy; employment rate is high. He has been overtaxed on his property for many years now.

d. Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, go out into private sector and they have to live within means, expenditures are bigger and as they get bigger they need to pay out more and they cut back and live within budget. What is going on here, we have contracts and it costs us more for unemployment. You need to layoff; there is waste; public works has waste and see at least four positions can go, there are four people and they don't know what to do with them.

e. Pattie DeHuff, key word this Board of Finance needs to hear is layoffs and that has to be what happens as we have to bring our budget down and we will be hit by the state budget reductions; taxpayers are overburdened, our salaries are not increasing. How can you lay off people so the budget goes down.

##### 5. Board Member Comments

a. Dan Murray – don't disagree with what has been said but at one meeting last year or year before she was proponent for towns to sever our relationships with income structure from state and federal and be self sufficient and if we had that thought structure, we would be in worse condition. Every member on this board has done due diligence in maintaining and for two years in a row we had zero percent; layoffs don't do anything for unemployment and for those who have had that happen it is embarrassing and difficult and there may be other things to do than laying off.

b. Vicky Carey stated she is a taxpayer, works 24 hours and crazy, and not well off but very seriously looking at this budget as her taxes go up too and she supports the town and not willy nilly cutting and adding but if have to, layoffs should not be only option; may be union issues and we might have to go to cutting services for example where we only have transfer station open 3 days a week and town hall be open 4 days a week. We have options and will see what best ones are. Would like to see no mill increase this year; but will not know until end what we can do.

c. Mike Drozdick - we need to be diligent and where we can cut we will; would like to reduce budget and need to look at facts.

d. Pat Budnick – we did have two years with zero percent increase and we nicked and dimed to get down and looked seriously. Have been from 133 positions down to 120 so there have been 13 people no longer working here and have talked about vacancies; we have done, and not just us, services combined with other towns to save money; looking to combine with Board of Education; looking to merge things to get most for our dime and not like we haven't cut corners because we have. Do know how people have had to live and she is not from a wealthy family but bottom line is certain things have to be lived with. We are looking at things and in the end the Town Council can vote; certain things are out of our control. Melanie Church, according to public works contract they automatically get overtime. Chairman Zovich noted two issues which is the Charter is clear on only Town Council can set operating hours of town departments and we can go back to them with another proposal but do have to abide by contracts; also elimination of VNA came to our attention because underutilized department and if there are certain people who can be redeployed and cross departments and a management and union issue and we will work through the Mayor's office. Two years in row had zero mil increase and last year had reval; analysis on impact of reval and large percentage of property owners whose taxes went down, some stayed or up a few dollars and a high end of commercial and industrial properties got whacked; how do we enlarge commercial and industrial tax base and bring businesses in town and how do we get them to hire more people is the question/goal. The U.S. Dept of Commerce keeps labor statistics and states the economy is picking up, reviewed. Solution is to not layoff people from town hall but bring business to town.

e. Ralph Zovich – Town Council approved Financial Policy on Tuesday. Schedule for budget workshops reviewed noting by Charter the budget hearing has to be April 23<sup>rd</sup> and we need to get done by then. Will cancel meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 28th as it is a holy day.

#### 6. Adjournment

**MOTION:** To adjourn by Dan Murray; second Vicky Carey and the vote unanimous.  
Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas  
Recording Secretary