

Town of Plymouth

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Board of Finance

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1. Call Meeting to Order –The Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Finance was called to order on Monday, March 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Peter Cook in the Assembly Room, Plymouth Town Hall. Members in attendance: Vicky Carey, Peter Cook, Pattie DeHuff, Michael Drozdick, Dan Murray, James Zalot. Also present: David Bertnagel, Director of Finance; Robin Gudeczauskas, Recording Secretary; Mayor David Merchant.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget
 - a. General Government – Pattie DeHuff provided everyone with a copy of why she decided proposals suggested and read into record.
Mayor, 001 – is \$61,225, mayor request \$63,000 and propose keep at 61,225
Meeting Secretary – no change
Admin Asst – was \$30,315, mayor request \$47,500 and proposing \$40,000
Reception/Secretary – \$37,250 and propose zero
Advertising, keep at 3500
Expenses \$2000 – same
Staff education, \$1500 – keep same
Web Master/tech, \$7500 propose to \$8000
Vicky Carey questioned (a) who is taking care of Human Resources and unsure how work has been done; receptionist/secretary is earning 37,250 and besides secretary this position is also administrative assistant and some human resources. Mayor Merchant stated she has taken over stuff of administrative assistant and works in conjunction with he and David on human resources, very demanding on her and she will take over a bit more; a good deal of time is human services in backup or assisting; has a full plate. Mayor Merchant and David Bertnagel will do the contract negotiations and will try to save as much labor attorney time as possible. (b) how you came up with figure. David Bertnagel stated he looked at the salary in a variety of ways, survey of surrounding towns, background of positions in mayors' office; reviewed. Vicky Carey stated we are not paying salary for one job but multiple and everyone looks by hours but she will wear 4 hats and if down road need part timer to help; do not see anything for over time or overscheduling and straight hourly rate. Mayor Merchant stated he does not anticipate needing a part time person and feels comfortable with the three to handle anything that comes at them. He would like to see salaries stay with his proposed number. Dave Bertnagel gave history of mayor's salary and the Board of Finance percentages and basically what they are proposing is the same percentage as in past and following same trend. Mayor Merchant, with salaries it

is more about position than the person. Recap given of salaries in the Mayor's budget for administrative assistant stating overall the mayor's budget is reduction of 11.61%. James Zalot thanked Pattie for doing homework but listened to what Dave and the Mayor are saying and proposing and cost of living factor and other individuals who work for government and agrees with and endorses the Mayor's budget. Dan Murray stated the Mayor is consolidating and having one individual satisfy needs of two or more functions and concern is it is a slippery slope and not just here but in other elements of budgets, taking large chunks out of people and dollars and concern is we don't set ourselves up that two years or next year or three years we go back to people to say we need more money because of concessions we made earlier. Would like to see job descriptions for non union individuals/positions and this is example and we are taking two positions into one and need better handle on what position entails and what is it called. Pattie DeHuff stated we have to give the Mayor an administrative assistant per charter and we decide how much they get.

02, Council – combined salary for 5 is 5575 and leave as is

03, Human Resources – HR Director actual is 40,000 and looking to bring to 5000 and leave as is

Conferences & Membership, 300 and leave as is

Safety , spent 2000 this past year, \$500 budgeted and recommend because of what has happened recommend \$5000 as proposed

Employee Physicals, current 1750, propose \$7000 and leave the same

05, Comptroller – propose \$87,750 and agree; salaried position

Staff, currently 35,140 and requested 70,020 – Dave stated we had line item for part time payroll and permanent hours and reduction will be below at part time Overtime at 2000 and proposing 1500 and agree

Longevity, contractual 950 and leave as is

Contract services – financial system maintenance and split between service contracts as well; includes outsourced payroll service and both line items and shows reduction of 2000 for next year

Last year 8177.73 in contract services was spent; service contracts spent 8650 and to 9000 is a fair dollar amount

Conference & Memberships – 750, need for people to be trained and do job properly and keep same

Office supplies, 2000 and spent 1852 last year and recommend cut to 1800 and agree

Education/training – budget 750 and spent 345 and recommending \$500

Part time, 30,500 and moved into Staff – in agreement with zero

Bank charges 2000 and spent 3400 and keep at 2000 and agree (in current year we are 1300)

Central Office 06

Tech support \$50,000 and keep same, agree

Service contract, 22,000 agree with cut of 2000 to \$20,000
Office supplies current 6000 and keep same
Postage is 13,000 and previous year was 11,035 and Mayor proposing to 11,000 and agree
Duplicating has to do with maps, 7500, previous year spent 4700 and maybe some room to cut and suggest looking at that; currently at 3300. Dave stated that is revenue driven and town clerk collects fees
Mileage \$3500 and proposal is same and agree
Technology Upgrades, 14,500 and proposing same and agree
Internet Access fees, current 2000 and agree keeping same

Treasurer, 007
Treasurer, 3600 and keep same

Registrars, 011
Registrars, currently 23,000 and Mayor propose cut by \$3000 to \$20,000
Deputy Registrar, 5700 and propose to \$5500
Election Workers at 10,000 and keep same
Advertising at 1000 and propose same
Conference & Memberships 1520 and keep same
Printing, 3500 and proposing cutting by 500 to 3000
Office supplies, 400 and keep same
Maintenance & Repairs, voting machines themselves, 1500 and state said we are responsible and increase of 1000 to 2500 and agree
Signs, 250 and agree to keep same
Rentals, \$450, Lyceum on election day and leave as is
Telephone, hearing disabled, \$50 and leave
Canvass, \$400 and leave as is

Board of Finance, 013
Meeting Secretary, \$3750 and leave as is
Town Reports, \$4000 and leave as is
Audit, \$70,000; previous 58,500 and Mayor proposing \$65,000
Commodity adjustment, 10,000 with propose \$5000 and agree – we are joining with BOE and buying in bulk for those things and why cut
Contingency, \$50,000 and personally have a problem with this and propose it be zero as only purpose is to move money around. Vicky stated also used in case of contract negotiation raises and we need to cover those in middle of year; this is low as we had started with more; Peter, we have control over it; Dave reviewed.
Discussion held. No changes and leave at \$50,000

Assessor, 014
Assessor, 68,355 and leave as is; Board should give the Mayor the opportunity to see if we need full time position here as at one time did share position with Thomaston
Staff at 35,140 and propose 37,480 which is contractual increase

Code changes, contract, \$250 and leave as is
Longevity, contractual \$825 and up to \$925 (Dave stated it goes by years of service)
Service Contracts, 15,500 and recommending \$16,000 and set fee by vendor
Conferences & Membership, \$500 and leave as is
Office Supplies, \$600 and leave as is
Education, \$700 and leave as is
Personal Property Audits, \$2000 and mayor recommends \$3000, agree with Mayor.
Pattie stated she would like the Mayor to look at need for full time assessor

Board of Assessment Appeals, 015
Salaries, \$750 and leave as is
Conferences & Memberships \$75 leave as is
Printing \$50 and leave as is
Office Supplies, \$15 and leave as is

Tax collector, 016
Tax Collector, \$63,000 requested and at \$48,000 and Mayor recommended \$54,000 and Pattie recommending \$48,000; he is not fully certified
Staff, now at 35,140 with mayor recommending \$37,500 which is contractual
Part Time, recommend \$8000; Dave Bertnagel stated the BOF opted several months for part time assistance and proven to be beneficial for assistance during key times. Mayor stated \$8000 is very conservative number and would like to see stay.

Overtime, 1750 and cutting to \$500
Code change, \$300 and keep same
Longevity, \$525 and leave as is
Service Contracts, at \$21,000 and requested \$23,000 and keeping at \$21,000
Advertising, 750 and keep same
Conferences & Member, 1000 and keep same
Office supplies, 900 and keep same
Postage meter rentals, \$770 and keep same
Tax Refunds – zero and leave as is
Will decide later on tax collector salary

Legal service, 017
Town attorney, \$46000 and cut to \$40,000 and agree (hourly fee is lower and comes in as needed)
Labor Attorney at \$65,000 and mayor recommends \$40,000
Delinquent Collections, \$1000 and keep as is

Vicky Carey stated regarding the contingency fund – CT Handbook for Finance noted contingent fund, read into record

Insurance, 019

Workers Comp, current 422,000 and recommend 424,000 and agree
Property & Casualty at 248,000 and recommend 245,000, agree
Umbrella at \$27,500 and recommend 30,000 (Dave stated excess insurance above liability insurance, reviewed).
Public Official Liability at \$27,500 and recommend 25,000
Police Liability at \$14,000 and mayor recommend cut to \$12,500
Insurance Claims, Deductibles at \$2000 and recommends \$4,000

Employee Benefits, 020

Bonding, 2000 and leave as is
Accident/Life Insurance at \$45,000 and leave
Pensions at \$600,000 and recommending \$625,000
Health Insurance at \$1,350,000 and recommending \$1,300,000 (Dave reviewed 7.94% increase this year of which 3% is out of our control due to health care act otherwise premiums would have been up 3.94%). Employees pay between 15%-17%.
Social Security at \$395,000 and recommend \$390,000
Unemployment at \$4000 and leave as is (Dave reviewed how assessed)
Retirees Health Insurance, has increase due to retirees and at \$250,000 and recommend \$265,000
Actuarial/Professional Fees at \$18,000 and leave as is
Wage/Benefit Adjustments at \$23,350 and Mayor recommends \$40,000
Educational Incentives at \$28,000 and leave as is
Long Term Liabilities Funding at \$100,000 and recommend \$200,000; policy approved by board to pay long term liabilities and other post employment benefits and new accounting standard we have to take care of

Heart & Hypertension, 021

Salaries at \$37,500 and cut to \$30,000
Benefits at \$85,000 and reduce to \$80,000

Town Clerk, 022

Town clerk at \$48,525 and Mayor recommends \$54,500 and not in agreement and recommend keep at \$48,525. Mayor Merchant stated based on position and not individuals
Staff at \$37,140 and increase to \$37,500; contractual
Code change at \$250 and agree
Longevity at \$400 and leave
Records- Computer at \$25,000 and Mayor recommends \$20,000
Service contracts at \$400 and leave as is
Advertising at \$1,000; previously \$260 spent and recommend cut by \$500 (Barbara Rockwell stated it for legal notices)
Conferences & Memberships at \$1,350 and leave as is
Office Supplies at \$1,000 and leave as is
Education at \$1,100 and leave

Vital Statistics at \$400 and leave
Fees & Services at \$50 and Pattie recommends eliminate
Ordinance Codification at \$3500 and leave
Board agreed with \$500 out of 014 and \$50 out of 039

Probate Court, 023
Office Supplies – zero
Postage – zero
Service Contracts at \$4190 and recommend \$6500 as we do have to pay probate in Bristol; Dave stated probate offices merged in CT, reviewed

Special Services, 027
Family Services at \$11,000 and stay
Beautification Committee at \$2500 and stay
COST at \$890 and stay
Historical Society at \$2000 and stay
Employee Recognition at \$1000 and stay
Memorial Day Parade at \$3000 and stay

Department of Aging, 028
Expenses at 1000 and stay (Dave stated for speakers and programs)

4. Public comment

Rae Ann Wolcott, Assessor, was full time for Plymouth and working in Thomaston and came back about 6-7 years ago and when came back her clerk was part time and shared with building office; reminded that it starts with grand list and if not a good number you will not save money; important to have full time assessor; all dependent on each other and town clerk and tax collector should be brought up and these positions are vital and important to keep in line with other towns and like positions and hard in economic times but need to look to see they aren't making that much for expertise they have; tax collector has good backup support position. A lot of work that goes on here and welcomes anyone to spend a day and see what is done.

Barbara Rockwell, Town Clerk, basically would say what Rae Ann did, and all offices work together and if she does not get work done in good time and to Rae Ann for what she does and then to tax office. They are down one clerk and have absorbed it; office work has gone down but not to say she doesn't need an assistant; have put stuff on back burner that needs to be done and they would like full time floater to have someone in building to help. No staff for backup if someone is out sick; goes to classes, is a certified town clerk and never compensated and never asked and thought they would do it because she continued education.

Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, went back and looked at job description for

executive secretary which was name change and looked at minutes she had to Denise Bergin and job was human services, town welfare and secretary and what an executive secretary did. Looked back in 1999 and same thing dealing with issues in office of the mayor; for years one person and when Rich Covello came the first time needed two and since then ballooning. She took secretary/receptionist who started in 2010 at 32,773 and increased 3% to 33,756 because she was secretary for administrative assistant and secretary for human services; 2011/2012 went from 33,756 and 6.65% increase; 2012- 2013 went up to 3.47% and totaled and over 10% and nobody else in town hall received a 10% increase. Took proposed amount and multiplied out and came to 30% increase and who today gets at 30% increase and who can afford to give someone a 30% increase, no one. Tax collector was cut down \$3000 all of a sudden and can justify that person being brought up. The private sector people are giving concession and going down in pay; and if everyone thinks so valuable go out and find a job as she guarantees there will be people lined up for jobs. Asking to take numbers and take a look at them. Overtime, comptroller going up for 7.5 hours and on salary; former administrative assistant who put in more than 20 hours a week but was salary and the difference. Spoke with Cathy Kosak who used to be secretary to mayor and never did overtime. Come back with reasonable raises and wants the BOE to come in with zero percent budget. Unemployment rate is high and back to 2004 wages. Also, looking at budget, human resources director and 5000 should be cut; noticed 10,000 was not used for meeting secretary and cut by 2500; when went to pay company to do payroll told we would need someone in office part time for 12 hours and then told union wouldn't accept and went to 30 hours and now noticed it is wiped out and up to 37.5 hours and for 37.5 hours and this position should be scrutinized and cut the budget; registrar of voters were cut and no reason why unless you justify added a full time comptroller and why need full time payroll clerk and questions you need to ask to make accountable.

Malcolm McGough, from Bristol and interested in town budgets and find missing out of budgets proposed are actuals against line items for each of the codes and what are actual wages and budget and beneficial for public to see how each departments are doing in terms of expenditures.

Krissy Rullan, Assistant Town Clerk, here 10 years and everyone likes to criticize and some do give extra time not charged from and Mayors get knocked down from beginning and everyone doesn't look at as whole and they are there to help everyone who comes in. If cut they will not be able to help people who come in. More responsibility has been dumped and they don't complain and to compare from 1998 and times and stuff has changed and not everyone realizes what they do. Come in for a month and see what they do and see people who come in and scream and they don't scream back and some people are downright mean and they have to take it. So easy to knock someone down but be in there and deal with a crazy day and see how you leave. On her 4th mayor and does not know him yet and the others started nice and turned evil.

Mike Kennedy, 11 Overlook Terrace Road – work in private sector and all know government money comes from private sector; not opposed for raises or bonuses but he has not seen a raise in over 3 years and if went in and asked employer for 12.5% or 12.31 increase they would tell him to find another job. Economy is struggling and know you sit here and make serious decisions and time you as members of the BOF send message to the public sector that they should not benefit what the private sector does not benefit from and that is raises. Expenses go up just like everyone else. Zero job growth in the state and economy is growing at slow pace and not enough to keep us to live happy and just surviving. Send message to the public sector that enough is enough.

Diane Reed, 5 Chidsey Terrace, not opposed to pay raises and everyone deserves a pay raise; inflation and have to keep up but UPS where husband works is contracts and union and 4 years and fought and got 1.5% raise and given \$.35 the first and second year and .45 the third and .65 the fourth year and do pay union dues and this is a multibillion dollar company. Maybe you can split the difference and instead of giving the administrative assistant a 30% raise, divide it somehow and give some to the clerk and assessor and administrative assistant.

Robert Wilcox, 155 South Main Street, coming from private sector and self employed and his costs are up dramatically for past few years and could never pass those costs on to customers. Due to affordable health care his costs are 53.71% and he funds 100% and no one copaying and did not pass along to customers. Unemployment numbers and actual number is up. Agree with Melanie that plenty of people would line up for jobs if someone walked away from jobs. BOF has to consider all people are struggling.

Chris Ebel, 45 South Main, reiteration what these guys said; self employed and scraping by and not opposed to raises and projected numbers are outrageous but 2-5% and feel raises should be based on performance of the person and not the position. If person is doing above and beyond and give them a little. Numbers are high.

5. Correspondence

- a. BOE Report by Facilities distributed

6. Board Member Comments

- a. Pattie DeHuff – have face book “Patties Perspective on Plymouth” and asked question what people feel about budget so far and asked them to write and if they could not be here asked if she could share their opinions; read into record.
- b. Jim Zalot – Happy Saint Patrick’s Day
- c. Peter Cook – glad to see participation from public and will be interesting year. Has said every year we need to pay people as professionals and has not been in agreement with some raises over years as leads to just this instance when you are trying to treat people as professionals it becomes difficult; looks at tax collector just lost and lost because this board cut the pay of person coming in, we trained

for several years and after getting training and go out and gets a 20,000 pay increase. Happy we have a new mayor and always said Vinnie would come with zero percent and always said we need to give something to grow the office and cannot pay 1990 wages to a 2014 mayor and in order to attract the talent you need to run a town. We talked about administrative assistant and most do not get a significant raise and she is getting a promotion to full time administrative assistant and taking a secretary and part time administrative assistant and making one; when we look at as person you say how much extra money but if look at position you are eliminating a secretary and gaining full time administrative assistant.

7. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn by Vicky Carey; second Jim Zalot and the vote unanimous.
Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas
Recording Secretary