

# 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 9, 2015 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, Jim Zalot. Also present: AnnMarie Rheault, Interim Director of Finance; Robin Gudczauskas, Recording Secretary; Rae Ann Walcott, Assessor. Excused absent: Dan Murray.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget Review – Chairman Cook reviewed Estimated Expenses also stating there are items throughout budget that the BOF has no control over.

\*Mayor's Office - AnnMarie reviewed corrections in this department.

Meeting secretary - AnnMarie stated there used to be line item for mayors receptionist under '13-'14 and she combined with Mayors Assistant for proposed budget; meeting secretary in 2013 actual was \$8540 and Administrative Assistant should be \$67,852; under unaudited 2014, meeting secretary \$12,313 and Administrative Assistant, \$78,096. In 2013 a portion was Trish and a portion Ted; 2014 same thing. Administrative Assistant requested budget 2016 is the same in two columns 53,333 for current requested and mayor recommended. \$47,500 was budgeted for current year; Ann Marie stated current salary is \$53,333 and does not know where the \$47,500 came from. Discussion held on salary with Pattie DeHuff giving background to position stating originally a mayor and receptionist and Jan Krampitz got name changed to Administrative Assistant and salary did not increase; when Trish went from Receptionist to Administrative Assistant she took on more responsibilities; appears actual salary was always more than budgeted salary; line item is over budget and asking for increase; is she taking on more responsibility. AnnMarie stated there has been overtime, retroactive increase and benefits/vacation time not taken. Meeting secretary line item in this department covers a multitude of commissions covered by Trish. Vicky Carey stated according to last year, if we had calculated hours of part time we would have paid an administrative assistant \$63,000; we had no H.R. and will share duties with mayor, director of finance and administrative assistant. Chairman Cook asked AnnMarie for breakdown as line item should have been \$47,500; reason for overtime, etc. Base salary 27.35 per hour based on 37.5 hour work week which equals \$53,333.

Town Council - no change

Contract Services – increase due to human resource company, 2000 per month which is significant savings compared to previous person. Pattie DeHuff requested breakdown of what Trish is doing for human resources.

\*Comptroller's office

Grant administrator and bank charges - in 2013 we had grant administrator and got rid of them and now putting 20,000 back in; does not have a problem; write grant requests, keep track of grants and the town gets paid when done. Vicky Carey stated town planner at one time used to do grants and can present person do this, have time with work load or knowledge to do this; Pattie DeHuff stated she will find out. Bank charges are now being accounted for within the budget.

\*Central office - Duplicating taken out and now under Service Contracts as we get charged for copier leases and overage charge. Technology upgrades taken out; Internet access fee, correct budget number.

\*Treasurer – no change

\*Registrars – municipal election year

\*Board of Finance – feels need to add Fraud Risk Assessment; AnnMarie did send message out for quote.

\*Assessor's Office

Salary Staff – salary, secretary line item moved to Building Department, proposal is to get rid of a portion. Cutting is o.k. but not in half; suggests 25 hours instead of 37.5; recommends down to 30 hours per week. One department is salary secretary and one salary staff and should be consistent. Rae Ann Walcott, Assessor, stated she broke down monthly jobs in her office (distributed) giving background that moved to building department for 25 hours and not to be shared anymore; review of breakdown including office activity as well as programs administered, what they bring in and organizations belong to and meetings committed to. Also distributed breakdown of every town in the state by salary, reval, staffing. By cutting office to part time assessor will be detrimental; stating ever since came back here full time and when asked to share here and Thomaston it was way to save both towns money and agreed to do it and it worked fine until reval went to same year for both towns. Gave background of positions and feels a big mistake if this happens and this office is no more important than any other but dependent upon each other. Elderly period starts Feb. 1 and ends October 1. Rae Ann also gave overview of reports to be filed and if not timely there is a fine involved, reviewed.

\*Board of Tax Review – no changes

\*Tax Collector - Biggest change Tax Refunds for \$10,000 is just being budgeted his year; cannot give raise to someone who has been here 6 months and \$810 taken out. Joe Kilduff stated he requested \$12,000 for part time staff and he feels previous part time person was fully trained and if we get new person will need training; discussion held. AnnMarie to determine part time salary and number of hours. Fran stated part timer was doing escrows in January and July; when Fran had days off, part timers would come in to help when she is off for vacation and sick days. Joe Kilduff reviewed back taxes,

estimate \$500,000-600,000; have 60 accounts with attorneys totaling over 400,000 worth of back taxes and question of timing for real estate. Peter stated April 13<sup>th</sup> we finalize revenues and that will be taken into consideration. Joe would like to add Collection Agency Fees and this will be a pass through line item; AnnMarie will have matching line item on revenue side.

\*Legal Services – Town Attorney up \$10,000 due to more time required; Labor Attorney, more contracts to be settled; Foreclosure expenses (delinquent and clean up) and off set in revenue. Pattie DeHuff asked how did we pay for foreclosure, clean up expenses in fy 2014 of 168,828 and how was that paid; Annmarie stated no line item and portion was to come out of tipping fees and where she summarized all expenses found, reviewed.

\*Property & Casualty – Workmen’s Compensation up \$114,000 and number straight from Cirma; and increases throughout for insurance lines; AnnMarie stated all increases came direct. Need to compare to 2014 actuals for the 2016 recommended. Vicky Carey questioned going out to bid on any of these; AnnMarie stated the Mayor talked about that and will revisit with him.

\*Employee Benefits – Pensions, 105,000 is actual; Peter asked if Milliman report is every two years. Health Insurance up \$50,000; goal is to go to HSA and recognize savings; Compensated Absence Payouts is funding of long term liabilities; Peter reviewed stating plan was to add \$100,000 per year, reviewed.

\*Benefits Heart & Hypertension – Real numbers and reduction overall.

\*Town Clerks Office – Barbara Rockwell, town clerk, stated she is discouraged with salary, here 16 years and lowest paid department head in the building and one of the most important offices in the building; have attorneys, title searchers, appraisers and public in daily; not a revenue department and take care of such things as land records, vital statics, dogs, genealogy, sportsmen and anything else that comes down the pike. Think department has been overlooked for many years; a lot of work they do that goes to tax office and assessor’s office. Part time line, do not have someone to fill in for any time someone in this office may need; many times inundated and could use a part time person which would help catch up on work. Have over 1000 dogs registered in 20 days in June. Last year 12% went to tax collector and she got half of that. Also has certification for town clerk. Chairman Cook questioned floater to help cover multiple office; discussion held on cross training and that it didn’t work. Will revisit salary.

\*Judge of Probate – Relocation Cost Sharing \$78,600 to Bristol for office relocation.

\*Special Services – minimal increase.

\*Department of Aging – not a line item used

Vicky Carey stated there are 26 commissions, reviewed, and where are they being paid from; AnnMarie stated code enforcement is in land use; meeting secretary. AnnMarie to

clarify commissions, secretaries and where being paid from.

Chairman Cook stated there are a half million dollars worth of items we have no control over in the budget.

#### 4. Public Comment

- a. Janet Olmstead – assessor’s office – assessor’s office is one of the most critical in town hall and without proper staffing, other offices will suffer; reviewed position in building office. Recommending cutting positions and recommending creating positions and have given raises to positions not filled; should have hiring freeze; grants should be done in departments which are seeking them; eliminating position and have person doing records retention which each individual office should do on own; put out invitation for anyone to come in office to see what they do and no one has.
- b. Chris Simo Kinzer, 52 Old Farm Road – invited anyone to visit assessor’s office and did anyone bother to do that.
- c. Brian Dunn, 19 Carriage Drive – reducing hours in assessors or tax clerks is a mistake as pipeline for revenue in town; the town is in financial crisis and should be cutbacks in other places and do not think assessors cut backs have to do with saving money and a personal agenda. The mayor should be here.
- d. John Murphy, 385 Greystone - second that the mayor should be here and asking other people to go part time or eliminate positions; suggest he cut his own hours part time or resign altogether. Having trouble for 25,000 for new carpets and assessor he wants to cut; revenue generators should not cut; do not know rationale and an internal issue. Do not know what paying attorneys for in foreclosures and understand have to get taxes; workers comp and any idea where accidents come from, is it paper cuts, people falling down stairs or has a health and safety audit been done in town; at DPW do they have morning safety meetings; ways to get around expenses. It is a matter of asking questions and go somewhere and ask; why do we approve increase in insurance, go ask questions. If health insurance, why; hypertension and heart stuff. Chairman Cook stated mandate and you cannot get out of it; there are certain people eligible and if they apply and doctor and judge say they get them, we pay it.
- e. Mark Malley, 174 Keegan Road – comment on assessor and town clerk; assessor has never operated with one half time person and do not see realistic way it could. Think part of job is to go in field and verify addition being constructed and add to tax role; if half a person and out of the office, there is nobody in there and cannot remember a time when not 2 full time people. Having no coverage will not work. Town Clerk, there is a whole lot that goes on in there that the people don’t appreciate; traditionally the town clerk and tax collector have been paid on par and understands Barbara’s point and urge you to look at that. Chairman Cook stated the tax collector always got the WPCA stipend.
- f. Melanie Church, 328 Main Street – have problems all over; don’t know where things are coming from and don’t see bottom dollar and waiting to get last year’s numbers and no real number for a bottom; looking at giving raises 1.5% and to all administration which are political party and wrong. Changed 4 years ago, we did

payroll here ourselves and went with payroll company and that company was to take over and we would need someone 12 hours per week and started and hired for 12 hours and was to float into other offices. Supposedly the union put up a stink and she asked and they did not but had already got increase to a full time job. Not only paying fee for payroll company but also paying for a payroll clerk and added a position in there. That is how things happen in this town.

Percentages, need extra here and here; have one budget and live within. We do not need 3 payloaders which is a wish and not a want. The taxpayers end up paying. Last year's budget and start that at what we approved, not extra 250,000 from here to BOE and do not think for Peter to have a secret meeting with comptroller and mayor about positions is right and talk in open. Chairman Cook said he will contact the mayor about positions and when he has answers he will bring them back and discuss them here.

- g. Dan Gentile, 269 Mt. Tobe Road – last meeting Melanie gave you wrong information about BOE audit and gave you a piece of the pie; actual cost of audit for 7 week was \$14,520 not 8444 which was one piece of pie. Need to bring all information. The 7 week audit they did for us is not what they would do here; hours spent by BOE was 75 hours in 7 week time for BOE staff. It was 15,000 for 7 weeks and he said 30,000 for 3 months.

5. Correspondence - none

6. Board Member Comments

- a. Vicky Carey – found statement and gave to AnnMarie who will review; long term liability dates are here. Compensated absence line item has a cap and schedule she previously looked at was not being capped.
- b. Jim Zalot – we made some corrections after review.
- c. Mike – 15 or 16 people here, great to see everyone here.

7. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas  
Recording Secretary