

1. Call Hearing to Order – Plymouth Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Zovich called the Public Hearing to order on Thursday, April 21, 2016 to order at 7 p.m. in the Community Room, Plymouth Town Hall. Attendees: Vicky Carey, Jay Dorso, Pattie DeHuff, Dan Murray, James Zalot, Ralph Zovich; also present: Mayor David Merchant; Ann Marie Rheault, Director of Finance; Robin Gudczauskas, Recording Secretary.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Legal & Fire Exit Notice - Chairman Zovich read the legal notice into record. Fire exit notification

4. Presentation of Proposed FY2016-17 General Fund Budget

Chairman Zovich introduced Board of Finance members and Ann Marie Rheault, Director of Finance; acknowledged Mayor Merchant, Council members, Chief Police, Superintendent, School Business Manager. Slide presentation given noting the BOE budget is separate but within the town budget it is one line; review of budget goals, critical factors, revenues and expenditures, overview of revenue changes – loss of motor vehicle collections at 95% or a loss of \$293,706, foreclosure sale proceeds down, interest and lien fees down; State Grants and fees reviewed (Education Cost Sharing cut \$61,346 and may be cut more; School Transportation funding down \$17,672; Pilot down \$17,193; Special Ed Outplacement Reimbursement up \$53,000; Revenue Sharing Grant at +\$566,550 which may get cut); summary of revenues with discussion on \$24,383,277 which is amount of money needed to collect in current property taxes to balance budget, other financing sources (police extra duty fund), review of other revenues for a total of \$40,227,126. Summary of Total Expenditures reviewed including emergency appropriations in the current fiscal year; detail of Employee benefits (new account \$393,253 is the town's contribution to Pension which is only a 60% payment of what actuary states we should put in); Capital Outlays/NRE (shows the entire list of equipment requested); school budget, historical enrollment, BOE budget summary by site/department; BOE sources of funding, Corrective action plans; proposed 2% budget increase is below the rate of inflation; Calculation of tax rate for a proposed mill rate of 36.56 mills; Impact of Tax increase.

Whit Betts, State Representative – when final budget is adopted will be back to Plymouth but currently the state as of April 20th has projected deficit of \$141 million not accounted for and they need to find a way to erase that deficit; easy way is to use money from rainy day fund. They do adjourn May 4th and at that time should know what the budget for towns and cities is; as of July 1st they are looking at \$930 million deficit from July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 and each of the next 3 year is a projected deficit; update given.

Henri Martin, State Senator – reviewed unfunded mandates, unfunded pension. ECS is being paid attention to and feel it will be okay.

Dr. Semmel, Superintendent – thanking the board of finance; most valuable thing we can give kids is an education and the BOE goal is to provide the best education; sinking fund from their perspective, they are concerned about using the fund as a one-time expense as he feels that money is there for an emergency, reviewed; special education legally required costs for next year has increase of 387,000 and know with \$300,000 in budget they cannot cover it and will need to take money from the regular ed side of budget; parents interested in moving to district look for educational program, you need a program that we continue to be proud of and suggests as alternative to burden of proof, make sure ECS gets funded at 100% and not 70-80% traditionally. Requested \$488,549 increase request putting back 87,000 to pay for special ed costs or will take money from regular ed side; they have been working with unions and have been working on insurance piece and have every group except for one in a high deductible HSA and believe why saw major reduction in cost for insurance and will continue to contain those costs.

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5. Public Input – Question & Answer Session

- a. Aaron Saindon, THS – submitted list of Roo Reps speaking tonight; gave brief intro of high school students who want to take an involved approach to the budget process.
- b. Alison Trudeau – senior, spoke on background at TJS and asking for the BOF to consider needs of students to keep up in ever changing world and pass budget
- c. Trevor Jones, junior – pass current budget to include AP courses which allow juniors and seniors for college placement
- d. Colby Brenner, senior – 4 years at THS and does not want to see teachers leave, none from freshmen year are still there; clubs for community service helped shaped who she is today. Urge the BOF to pass the budget.
- e. Ryleigh Dring, junior, next year Leo club president, reviewed opportunity at THS and please support budget.
- f. Bradley Kozikowski, junior, huge part is sports and band and goes into gym and looks at banners and history of school championship; gave update on band which has been marching in competitions, reviewed. Please pass the budget.
- g. Jessica DuPont, sophomore, urge to pass budget as for the kids of Terryville there have been far too many programs cut and a shame to lose more.
- h. Madison Saucier – need to prepare for journey of applying to colleges; need to receive proper education to achieve goals; if cuts to budget it will increase class sizes and reduction of programs and please support budget.
- i. Aaron Saindon – in conclusion, the high school and education system has one amazing quality of producing leaders such as Roo Reps and the small town experience will help propel him forward . People are amazed at what a small town can do and thank you.
- j. John Murphy, 385 Greystone Road – tax abatements need to be talked about and inform public on those to industries; feel homeowners may need tax abatements soon. Need to look at 25,000 in renovations, broom sweeper and why can't we sub out or find alternative; do we need two police cars every year; need to phase out unions and look again at health insurance. To Mr. Betts and Mr. Martin – consider hb153 to generate revenue.
- k. Melanie Church, 328 Main Street – undesignated fund has over 1 million and the taxpayers need relief and not many parents sitting here and sad reason they can't afford it; understand administration on board side who has a better insurance than teachers, paras and time they step up and cut back and make equal; when a superintendent runs a school here maybe he should move into this town and be part of paying taxes; amounts that the public had to pay this year that were unauthorized, 155,000 for property on Smith Street, 2 emergency appropriations and suggest that be cut from the town side and given back to the taxpayers as they had no say. Chairman Zovich clarified that the BOF did not appropriate money from fund balance this year. AnnMarie Rheault stated fund balance is a means that rating agencies and OPM look at as to the health of a town and ability to move forward with finances. Cannot take undesignated fund balance and give back to residents, reviewed. You need a certain level of undesignated fund balance and as mentioned at several meetings, they are looking for us to increase our undesignated fund balance.
- l. Chris Simo Kinzer, Old Farm Road – thanks to Ralph for presentation; BOF for work done; BOE, Mr. Betts, Mr. Martin, thank you. Unions and some extravagant retirement packages need to be looked at. Have talked with the superintendent on contractual language that bit us and we paid for a superintendent who was guilty on charges and we had to pay to get her out of her contract and crazy. Gave shout out to BOE and saw where they came in at beginning of year and job well done.
- m. Cathy Kosak, Harwinton Avenue – looking at one item and asked on page 10, snow removal, we budgeted 334 and actual 337 and we expend 457,000; and this year recommending less than what went over. Chairman Zovich reviewed 2015-16 amended budget snow removal, what is in budget and what not spent; sand and salt we spent little over half of that. Review of line item held with Ann Marie Rheault reviewing we budgeted next

year for \$200,000 for salt and sand as we will encumber money from this year into next year to buy salt and sand going into fall season. (b) year with money crisis and see 3 departments with large salary increases and a concern. Chairman Zovich stated the Mayor has reorganized the clerical staff; finance director for change of accountant in labor grade.

n. Melanie Church, 328 Main Street – public works department cut in one position of mechanic and moved into highway department; position should be eliminated totally and given back to the taxpayers which is \$50,000. Chairman Zovich stated for clarification the second to last page has a headcount summary for 15-16 and recommended 16-17, reviewed.

o. Peter Cook, 11 Orchard Street - \$50,000 in debt service is that establishing for future or are you saving; Chairman Zovich stated going in for future payments and can be used to pay off capitals or accelerated principal and interest payments in future. (b) last year he was told we cannot pay debt down early; what happened to money from previous years. Ann Marie Rheault stated we do not have excessive amount in debt service; Peter stated for years they put money in until last year took some out. (c) his understanding of sinking fund was a fund school board would require of BOF to use that money. Ralph stated recommend to use that money as only the boe can approve some or all. (c) next year snowstorm; would not encumber but pay for money spent over and above this budget and an honest budget would pay for snow removal. Ralph, clarify, we have underspent sand and salt budget and recommended to public works director to encumber some unused money to buy sand and salt to stock up and we can't predict next winter and sand and salt is cheaper in bulk in summer.

p. Cathy Paskus, 4 Arrow Drive – very disappointed that not more taxpayers are here listening as they are who will vote on this budget; as a taxpayer so proud of students of this town and their education.

q. Melissa Johnson, Chair BOE – thanked the BOF for coming to their meetings and hard work; To Henri and Whit, thank you for info on ECS; proud of Roo Reps; disappointed there was an attack on the superintendent and should have never happened; there are quite a few parents in this room who are taxpayers and respectfully request to add at least 87,000 to their budget as need to cover cost of special needs kids.

Board comments:

a. Vicky Carey, follow up to Peter – we did have discussion with BOE as to their capitals and which line items need to go to capital improvement committee as those items will cost a lot of money and their sinking funds will not cover a quarter of what is needed for asphalt or sidewalks.

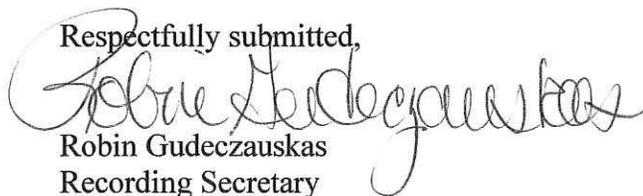
b. Ralph Zovich stated we are now at the end of the public hearing and left with words of wisdom; thanked Connor for setting up his PowerPoint; we heard good news from Senator Martin and Representative Betts. If referendum fails it does not mean mill rate will go down, reviewed.

6. Adjourn to Joint Meeting with Town Council & Bd. of Education

MOTION: To adjourn by Vicky Carey; second by Dan Murray and the vote unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robin Gudeczauskas
Recording Secretary