

Town of Plymouth
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Plymouth Town Council
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Minutes

April 20, 2017

Call to Order: Mayor David Merchant called the scheduled April 20, 2017, Plymouth Town Council/Board of Finance/ Plymouth Board of Education, Joint Special meeting to order at 9:40 p.m., in the Community Room, Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Town Councilwoman Ana LeGassey, Mayor David V. Merchant, Town Councilwoman Sue Murawski, Town Councilman John Pajeski and Town Councilman Tom Zagurski. Also present from the Town of Plymouth were Plymouth Tax Collector Joe Kilduff, Director of Finance Ann Marie Rheault and Plymouth Town Clerk Barbara Rockwell. Present from the Board of Finance were Vice-Chairman Vicky Carey, Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff, Board of Finance Member Jay Dorso, Board of Finance Member Jim Kilduff, Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot and Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Zovich. Present from the Board of Education were Plymouth Board of Education Member Gerry Bourbonniere, Plymouth Board of Education Chairman Melissa Johnson, Plymouth Board of Education Member Karen Kulesa, Plymouth Board of Education Member Michelle Lucian, Plymouth Board of Education Roxanne McCann, Plymouth Board of Education Member Michael Melchionna and Plymouth Board of Education Member Anthony Orsini. Also present from the Plymouth Board of Education was Plymouth Business Manager Phillip Penn and Plymouth Superintendent Dr. Martin Semmel.

Fire Exits Notification-CT General Statutes, Public Act 03-231, Sec. 29-381

Mayor Merchant noted the Fire Exits for the record.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Merchant led the Plymouth Town Council, the Board of Finance, the Plymouth Board of Education and the Public Audience, in the Pledge of Allegiance

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 at the Town Referendum (*a quorum of the Board of Finance members must be present)

Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Zovich stated the Board of Finance had a quorum for the record.

**Plymouth Town Council/Board of Finance/Board of Education Special Joint Meeting
April 20, 2017
Page Two of Five Pages**

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Dr. Martin Semmel, Superintendent, Plymouth Board of Education stated there was public support to add monies back to the Board of Education, especially to cover legal and contractual requirements and briefly elaborated.

Plymouth Board of Education Member Karen Kulesa, stated monies should be added back to the Board of Education for Technology and to meet the contractual legal obligations and briefly elaborated.

When questioned by Plymouth Board of Education Member Michael Melchionna regarding the Technology line item increase, Dr. Martin Semmel stated that last years \$38,000 grant for chrome books was not available this year and briefly elaborated.

Plymouth Board of Education Member Gerry Bourbonnaire stated the SRO was valuable and briefly elaborated, requesting the Board of Finance look at the item again. He further stated the Board of Education was willing to subsidize some of the position pay so the Town wouldn't incur the entire cost.

Plymouth Board of Education Member Anthony Orsini, stated as a former educator and First Responder he wanted to implore the Board of Finance to reconsider and restore the SRO position, noting the value of the person in the school district and the impact he has with children and briefly elaborated.

Mayor David Merchant stated he agreed with the Plymouth Tax Collector's recommendation to fund the board of Education's budget request and fund the SRO position.

Town Councilwoman Ana LeGasse, referencing a previous public comment regarding mill rates, stated Plymouth could not be compared to other towns, noting Plymouth had to stay within its own means and briefly elaborated. Town Councilwoman Ana LeGasse stated the Town's education system needed to be supported and briefly elaborated.

Town Councilwoman Sue Murawski stated she had attended the Board of Finance budget meetings and noted they had leaned conservatively and she was in agreement. She further stated with the State of Connecticut's uncertainty she was in favor putting the budget forward as presented.

**Plymouth Town Council/Board of Finance/Board of Education Special Joint Meeting
April 20, 2017
Page Three of Five Pages**

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 at the Town Referendum (*a quorum of the Board of Finance members must be present) Cont'd.

Town Councilman Tom Zagurski stated he wanted congratulate the Board of Education and the Board of Finance for putting together excellent budgets. Town Councilman Tom Zagurski stated he was in favor of putting the budget forward as presented.

Town Councilman John Pajeski stated he would like to see the Board of Education monies increased, especially for the SRO position, noting the position was as important as a teacher.

Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Zovich stated for the record the Board of Finance does not delegate the assignment of the SRO; that would go to the Chief of Police and the Board of Finance would only be providing funding for the 25th Police Officer.

When questioned by Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Zovich, Plymouth Director of Finance Ann Marie Rheault stated if the 25th Police Officer were reinstated at the highest step possible (Step 5) the amount would be \$68,231.00 and the total budget would be \$40,925,552.

Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot made a motion, seconded by Board of Finance Member Jay Dorso, to increase the budget by \$68,231.00 for the SRO Officer. Roll Call Vote: Board of Finance Member Vicky Carey/no; Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff/no; Board of Finance Member Jay Dorso/yes; Board of Finance Member Jim Kilduff/yes; Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot/yes. Motion passed 3:2.

Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Zovich questioned if any Board of Finance Members wanted to add money back to the Board of Education budget.

Board of Finance Member Jim Kilduff made a motion, seconded by Jim Zalot, to present the Town Council an adjusted budget in the amount of \$40,925,552 with a mill rate of 39.53.

Discussion:

Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff stated there were too many people who were hurting in the community who couldn't afford the budget, but when it came time to vote she would be voting yes to turn it over to the Town Council because of the way the process has to go however she was not in favor of it and briefly elaborated.

**Plymouth Town Council/Board of Finance/Board of Education Special Joint Meeting
April 20, 2017
Page Four of Five Pages**

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 at the Town Referendum (*a quorum of the Board of Finance members must be present) Cont'd.

Vote:

Board of Finance Member Vicky Carey/yes; Board of Finance Member Pattie DeHuff/yes; Board of Finance Member Jay Dorso/yes; Board of Finance Member Jim Kilduff/yes; Board of Finance Member Jim Zalot/yes. Motion passed unanimously.

To move to schedule a date for the annual Budget Referendum for the purpose of adopting a Budget

Town Councilwoman Ana LeGassey made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Sue Murawski, to schedule May 3rd, from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., as the date for the annual Budget Referendum for the purpose of adopting a Budget.

Discussion:

When questioned by Town Councilman Tom Zagurski, Mayor David Merchant stated the Referendum would be held at the Plymouth Town Hall.

Town Councilman Tom Zagurski inquired if the advisory question would be added to the ballot.

Ralph Zovich stated the Town Council could recommend the Town Clerk adjust the ballot predicated on the Town Attorney approving the language.

Plymouth Director of Finance Ann Marie Rheault stated she thought this evening's public speaker was suggesting the advisory question be placed on a separate piece of paper, which would provide feedback; not that it be included on the ballot.

Plymouth Town Clerk Barbara Rockwell stated she thought the better idea would be to add the advisory question to the ballot, noting a separate paper would be confusing and briefly elaborated.

Town Councilwoman Ana LeGassey amended her motion to include the advisory question as presented at the Public Hearing subject to the Town Attorney's approval; Town Councilwoman Sue Murawski seconded the amendment to the motion.

**Plymouth Town Council/Board of Finance/Board of Education Special Joint Meeting
April 20, 2017
Page Five of Five Pages**

To move to schedule a date for the annual Budget Referendum for the purpose of adopting a Budget Cont'd.

Vote:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Town Councilman Tom Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Ana LeGassey, to adjourn at 10:05 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Hale
Recording Secretary