

Town of East Hampton
Town Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 22, 2018
East Hampton Town Hall

MINUTES

Present: Chairperson Melissa Engel, Council Members Josh Piteo, Tim Feegel, Pete Brown, and Kevin Reich, and Town Manager Michael Maniscalco

Not Present: Vice Chairman Mark Philhower (he was present by phone for the budget vote), and Council Member Dean Markham

Call to order & Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Engel called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairperson Engel held a moment of silence in memoriam of Pauline Markham, Town Clerk of East Hampton from 1976 – 2004 and mother of Councilor Markham.

Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by Councilor Reich, seconded by Councilor Piteo, to adopt the agenda. Voted (5-0)

Executive Session

Potential Purchase of Property

Executive session was postponed

Possible Action on Executive Session

Not applicable

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Councilor Reich, seconded by Councilor Piteo, to approve the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting of May 8, 2018. Voted (5-0).

Presentations

Quarterly Report #2 from Town Facilities Building Committee

Lisa Motto of C&E Enterprises and Glenn Gollenberg, Chairman of the Building Committee were present. They updated the Council that the schematic design and estimation process are complete. The project is still on budget. The architects have completed the design development drawing phase; these are now in the estimation process. The OSTA (traffic) application has been submitted, approval is expected in mid-July. The project is still on track to break ground in early September. Councilor Piteo asked about an estimated date for the I-beams; Mrs. Motto stated it would most likely be December.

Public Remarks

None

Bids & Contracts

None

Resolutions/Ordinances/Policies/Proclamations

None

Continued Business

Discussion with WPCA Board on Water Rates, Depreciation of Assets and Creating of a Sinking Fund

Mark Barmasse stated that they had been presented with a budget that included a depreciation allowance for the first time. This was requiring about a \$500 increase in rates/year. He presented the Councilors with a table of State water rates that included what the East Hampton rates have been since the system stopped being subsidized. A sinking fund that has about \$133,000 has been built to accommodate potential improvements to the system. A five year capital improvement plan has been developed, and with this sinking fund they are now on track to fund the identified projects. The budget includes about \$58,000 allowance for capital improvements/maintenance.

The true increase should be about \$90/year per user, which is less than what the Town Council previously heard. The increase is about \$1,243. There is not a need to raise the rates again and are recommending no increase. There are a total of 133 accounts (or users). The rates are high because of the lack of users and the problematic nature of the Royal Oaks system.

By consensus the Town Council stated that they are comfortable with the original recommendation that Tim Smith brought to the Council at the May 8th meeting.

Review of TIF District Timeline

The TIF District has been approved by the P&Z Committee; it will most likely start to be addressed in June.

Approval of 2018/2019 Town Government Budget/Set Town Meeting & Referendum Date – 2nd Referendum (pending recount results)

Vice Chairman Philhower was present by phone during this vote.

Councilor Piteo moved to approve the Board of Finance May 21, 2018 recommended general government budget in the amount of \$15,168,208.00 which will raise the mill rate by 1.09 mills to a calculated mill rate of 32.41 mills. Second by Councilor Feegel. Vote passed (4-2) with Councilors Reich and Brown opposed.

Discussion: Councilor Reich asked how this budget was arrived at. Chair Engel explained that money was taken from capital - \$28,000 for a paver, \$29,000 for a plow truck and \$33,000 for chrome books. The recommendation is for the paver and truck to be paid in the 17/18 fiscal year from the anticipated surplus (as a result of the tax sale) and the chrome books to be paid for in cash by \$117,500.00 of the ECS revenue. The financing costs were discussed; these would have added about 4% on the items. Councilor Reich pointed out that if the chrome books were financed instead of paid for outright, another staff member could have been added back into the budget. He suggested leveraging the small amount of cash available, especially as

he believes the ECS funds will not be available in the future. He is additionally not in favor of this plan because the Library needs a new roof and the boiler at Center School needs replacement. Chairperson Engel stated that they are still waiting on specs for the Center School boiler from Don Harwood and that the Library roof was a change in scope that still needs further exploration. Councilor Piteo and Vice Chair Philhower are both against the financing. The Education Cost Sharing return was discussed; the town had planned on a 1.1 million dollar shortfall, so with the return of the \$700,000 it's not a restoration of money, but then becomes only a \$400,000 shortfall. There was discussion of revenue production by the town, but none by the BOE.

Councilor Piteo moved to set a Town Meeting for the budget on June 4, 2018 at 6:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room with the intent to adjourn to referendum on June 12, 2018. Second by Councilor Feegel. Voted 5-0 (Vice Chair Philhower was no longer present for this vote.)

Discussion: The referendum will be held at the Middle School.

New Business

Review of Planning & Zoning Regulations for Bed & Breakfasts

There is currently no regulation on air b&bs. A possible adaptation to our current regulations on short term rentals was presented from what Chester is trying to adopt. This is regulated through the P&Z Committee. This item will be on the agenda for the June 12 meeting.

Town Manager Report

Update on CT Yankee Fuel Storage Meeting

Mr. Maniscalco attended the annual meeting; there has been some conversation with the town of Haddam about Yankee moving fuel storage.

Update on DPH – High School Water/Copper Issue

Glenn Gollenberg, one of the architects on the High School project, helped to answer questions about the ongoing copper issue at the high school. The Building Committee is currently awaiting DPH consent order for chemical treatment of the copper piping, which is a cost-effective solution.

Senior Van Inspection Reports

The Dept. of Public Works inspected the vans and agree that they are safe.

Other Updates

The mandatory walkthrough for 1 Watrous St. occurred; there are two firms potentially interested in utilizing the property.

The East Hampton Events Magazine is not paid for with tax payer money. It is paid for with advertising from private businesses.

The well at Fire House #1 has high levels of bacteria and ground water is seeping in. The well is only lined to approximately 10 feet deep. Another casing will need to be placed down, as was done at the Town Hall. Chief is in the process of getting price quotes for this.

The town aid road fund will most likely not come through leaving a \$166,000 shortfall for this year. These funds offset maintenance, repair, and paving of existing town roads.

There will be a meeting soon to discuss the Library roof with roofing architects. This second opinion will be obtained before bringing the project forward to the Council.

Appointments

The East Hampton Democratic Town Committee has provided names for ZBA vacancies; these will be forwarded to the appointment subcommittee.

Chair Engel noted that Charlie Nichols will be retiring from the ZBA after at least 50 years. She is looking for a photo of him presiding over a meeting.

Tax Refunds

A motion was made by Councilor Reich and seconded by Councilor Piteo to approve refunds in the amount of \$804.95. Voted (5-0)

Public Remarks

Nancy Oakley, 71 Pocotopaug Dr., stated in reference to an earlier comment that the school district is not a profit center; it relies on funding from the State and Town to operate. Despite that there has been an effort by the Business Manager and Superintendent to raise funds.

Chairperson Engel clarified that she is not looking for the BOE for revenue, but she is looking for cuts.

Communications, Correspondence & Announcements

Three letters were received; one about a skateboard park will be sent to Jeremy DeCarli. One about not charging students to park at the High School will be forwarded to the Board of Finance and one about Loos Pond was briefly discussed, though it was ultimately determined that this property is privately owned therefore the Town has no jurisdiction.

The Memorial Day Parade will occur Monday; Councilors should be at the VFW at 9:00 A.M.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilor Reich and seconded by Councilor Piteo to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliza LoPresti
Recording Secretary