

SPECIAL MEETING-MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
March 26, 2009

Deputy Mayor Gregory Haddad called the special meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Audrey P. Beck Building

I. CALL TO ORDER

- Present: Blair, Clouette, Duffy, Haddad, Koehn, Nesbitt, Paulhus, Schaefer

II. WORK SESSION

- 1. Major Cost Drivers/Tax Dollar Equivalent Worksheet

Flag – Separate fund lines 112 and 113

Flag – Ms. Blair will provide tax bills from Florida, which show how much of each tax bill goes to each major service.

2. Issue Papers

i. Strategic Planning

Flag – How best to link the Strategic Plan to the budget. To what extent is the budget in furtherance of the Plan?

ii. Energy Conservation

Flag – Review the Sieman's report and identify what the next logical steps should be. Evaluate the cost of the energy management system and the pay back period.

iii. Capital Expenditures and Debt

Flag – Could some of the energy systems be funded as lease purchases?
Flag – Investigate the idea of a dedicated mil rate to fund capital expenditures.

iv. Capital and Nonrecurring Fund

Flag – Institute a charge for the Teen Center and increase the charge for Bicentennial Pond
Flag – Ask CCM to investigate the concept of a bond bank either on a statewide or regional basis.

v. Fund Balance

Flag – Adopted Town Council policy is to not use the fund balance to balance the budget.

vi. Ten Year Trend – Education Spending

Deputy Mayor Haddad reported that he, the Assistant to the Town

Manager and the Controller attended the Region 19 Public Hearing on the budget. The Board has asked Superintendent Silva to further reduce the budget.

vii. Debt Service Fund

3. Staffing Reductions – Impact on Services

Flag – The departmental budget narratives should reflect all staffing changes.

Flag – Identify the consolidated position (page 110) as an efficiency measure.

Flag – Identify how the Building and Housing Department will continue to maintain its function with the reduction in the code enforcement officer's position.

Flag – Request additional information to see if there are ways to keep the library open while maintaining the proposed staff reductions. Include the benefits vs. the cost of eliminating six hours a week.

Flag – Include a projection of what FY2010/11 staffing reductions would be.

Flag – Identify the Finance Clerk position (page 13) with an asterisk to show that part of the cut is in the Board of Education's budget.

Flag – Review the overtime and part time personnel cost and identify the impact of additional cuts.

4. General Discussion/Council Questions

Mr. Nesbitt asked that the following be researched:

- Provide the financial and service impacts which would result from reducing the mil rate increase to 0.
- Investigate ways to expedite studies regarding possible regionalization opportunities, including those between the police and public safety departments of UConn and the Town.
- Review the fiscal and service impact of closing Station 207
- Revisit the cross training opportunities in the Housing and Building department. Could the housing inspections on rental properties be slowed down?
- Use current open space funds for maintenance and improvements of existing land.
- Regionalize and reorganize the Animal Control Department
- Discuss ways to reduce legal fees
- Prioritize and consider decreases to the Town's contribution to area agencies

Mr. Haddad suggested that the Town look for additional regionalization opportunities and that the Council revisit the fees for emergency services.

The Deputy Mayor asked for the sense of the Council regarding including an opportunity for the public to speak at the end of each budget work session. The Council was unanimously in favor of the additional agenda item.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Jill Coughlan, 886 Stafford Road, asked if the categories of types of fire and emergency service calls were considered when determining the reduction of forces in the off peak times. Chief Dagon replied that the information was available to him when he reviewed the departmental needs.

David Freudmann, Eastwood Road, asked for an explanation as to why Natchaug Hospital cannot be taxed or added to the nontaxable list of facilities available for PILOT money. Staff explained the efforts that have been made to date and the results.

Ric Hossack, Middle Turnpike, asked the Council be prepared that the state is not going to give us the money currently in the Governor's budget. Mr. Hossack will e-mail a list of additional reductions to Council members.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Blair moved and Ms. Duffy seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Deputy Mayor Gregory Haddad

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk