

February 4, 2012

The special meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Newton was held on the above date at 9:00 a.m. Present were Mrs. Becker, Mr. Elvidge, Mr. Ricciardo, Deputy Mayor Diglio, Mayor Le Frois and Town Manager, Mr. Thomas S. Russo, Jr. Also present were Mrs. Millikin, Deputy Town Manager and Ms. Babcock, CFO.

Mayor Le Frois made the following declaration that "in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this special meeting was given to the two newspapers of record and posted on the official bulletin board on January 18, 2012."

TOWN MANAGER'S REVIEW OF BUDGET

Mr. Russo addressed correspondence from Deborah Phillips, Captain of Newton First Aid Squad, who requested assistance from the Town on their water and sewer bill. Mr. Russo noted that the Town had assisted last year.

After a brief discussion, Council unanimously agreed to have Mr. Russo pursue the costs affiliated with the utility bill and create a draft resolution for Council's review.

Mr. Russo advised Council of the Capital Improvements under Manager, which will address Municipal Building Improvements/Renovations/Furniture/Equipment.

Mr. Russo advised that there is currently no Redevelopment funds noted in the 2012 Preliminary Budget and requested discussion among the Town Council on allocation of same. After a lengthy discussion, Council unanimously agreed to allocate \$50,000.00 this year for redevelopment in Newton. It was suggested the Vision Plan, which was adopted in 2007, be reviewed again with an updated version. Mr. Russo advised Council that he will allocate funds to obtain an RFP for a "Vision Plan - Part II."

COMMENTS BY TOWN AUDITOR

Mr. Tom Ferry, Town Auditor, addressed the Council and advised of Newton's financial status. Mr. Ferry addressed the difficulties with the mandated 2% cap but advised Council that he was impressed with Newton's budget which only has a \$19 increase on the average assessed residential structure. Mr. Ferry noted that every \$69,000.00 equals one tax point.

Mr. Ferry provided some financial advice and strongly urged the Council to preserve a strong fund balance.

Mr. Ferry provided a brief outline and financial status of the Newton Water and Sewer Budget.

After a lengthy discussion, Council thanked Mr. Ferry, Ms. Babcock and Mr. Russo

February 4, 2012

for their diligent work on the budget. Mr. Ferry noted that he is currently working on the audit for the Town of Newton and will submit the report shortly.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

Assistant Chief Brian Fox and Assistance Chief Wechler were present to review the Fire Department Budget and the Capital Improvement Budget. Chief Fox outlined the Capital Improvements and addressed the high band portable radios and pagers and MDT's; the Hurst hydraulic lines and appurtenances; Turnout gear dryers; reserve for turnout gear – 2014, as well as the Refurb of Engine 803 (for 2016). Mr. Russo addressed additional Capital items: Architect/Engineer for Firehouse 2 Renovations and the Fire Museum Renovations.

After a brief question and answer period, Council thanked the Fire Department for their presentation.

PUBLIC WORKS / ENGINEERING / RECREATION REVIEW AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

Mr. Ken Jaekel, Public Works Director, Mr. Rick Straway, DPW Foreman, Mrs. Kerry Deckert, Recreation Supervisor, and Mr. Harold Pellow, Town Engineer, were present to address their department budgets.

Mr. Jaekel reviewed several areas of the Public Works budget as well as the Capital expenditures. The Town Council had questions which were addressed by Mr. Jaekel and Mr. Straway.

Mrs. Deckert reviewed the Swimming Pool budget; Parks & Playgrounds budget as well as the Capital expenditures. Mrs. Deckert believes that the pool should be self-sufficient and outlined her ideas for increasing the pool revenue as well as the pool membership. Council thanked Mrs. Deckert for her presentation.

Mr. Jaekel and Mr. Straway outlined the Capital expenditures for DPW and elaborated on the Fire Museum Renovations which are necessary. Mr. Jaekel also addressed the retaining wall project on North Park Drive as well as the guard rail.

Council thanked the Department of Public Works for their presentation and all of their hard work.

Mr. Pellow outlined the DPW/Engineer Capital expenditures which included the Road Improvements/Resurfacing/Curbing/Sidewalks; Acquisition of signs; and the Drainage study for Fairview Ave., Liberty St., and Thompson Street areas. Mr. Pellow indicated that he will copy the map with all the road updates for the Town Council.

February 4, 2012

Councilman Ricciardo requested a detailed estimate on the refurbishing of the existing street sweeper slated to be replaced.

Council requested an increase in the capital line item for the Memory Park guardrail and fence.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Le Frois opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Neil Flaherty, 154 Sparta Avenue, commended the Town Manager and CFO on the responsible and simplified budget. Mr. Flaherty addressed several questions which were addressed by Mr. Russo and the Town Council.

COUNCIL & MANAGER COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Diglio had a question regarding the Board of Education Election being moved to the November General Election. Mr. Russo advised that the Election in November does eliminate the voter's right to vote on the school budget if said budget is at or below the 2% cap.

Councilman Ricciardo addressed the need for a full-time Recreation Supervisor. Mr. Russo agreed that a full-time Recreation Supervisor may be necessary in the future, but not at this time.

The Town Council commended Mr. Russo and his team for their hard work with the budget.

There being no further business to be conducted, upon motion of Mrs. Becker, seconded by Deputy Mayor Diglio and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine A. Read, RMC
Municipal Clerk