

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER 6th FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM

SEPTEMBER 26, 2017 – 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Field, Chair; William Eccles, Vice-Chair; Robert Green; Paul Krasusky; Joseph Sce and David Skoczulek

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kristen Morgan

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Werbner, Town Manager; Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services; Lisa Hancock, Director of Finance and Records; Beverly Bellody, Director of Human Services; Walter Willett, Superintendent

- 1. Call to Order:** Rick Field called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited.
- 3. Moment of Silence:** Observed.
- 4. Public Participation (2 minute limit):** None.
- 5. Consideration of the Town Council's Proposed FY 2017-2018 Budget**

Mr. Werbner said at the joint meeting of the Town Council and Board of Education held on September 19, 2017, he had passed out several different budget options. The options were based upon the construct of the Governor's compromise budget. There was a different impact in FY 17/18 versus FY 18/19 based upon the way the Governor was phasing out some of the ECS payments and phasing in the normal costs of teacher pension obligations. The Town Council asked the staff to develop a budget for FY 17/18, and a hypothetical budget for the following fiscal year that would smooth out any mill rate increase over a two year period of time. They were to use adjustments with fund balance to accomplish this task. In addition, for FY 17/18, they were instructed to budget a reduction of \$343,291 to Town operating expenses; a reduction of \$993,340 to Board of Education operating expenses and to assess the first year cost of teacher pensions of \$435,915 against the mill rate. For construction of the hypothetical budget in year two, they have assumed no increase in Town operating expenses from 17/18 levels and a reduction to the FY 17/18 budget figure of the Board of Education in the amount of \$180,033, which is the first year cost of a five-year phase in of the normal cost for teacher pensions and is currently identified as \$900,165. The remainder of the teacher pension cost for FY 18/19 will be assessed against the mill rate.

Using the assumptions stated above in fiscal year 2017/18 and using \$230,000 of fund balance, the mill rate increase would be 0.86 or 2.51%. In fiscal year 2018/19, using \$1,075,000 of fund balance the mill rate increase would be 0.88 or 2.51%.

The resolution before the Council is only for FY 17/18, as that is the only action this Council can take.

Mr. Eccles said this is what they asked for, and it accomplishes what they asked for.

Mr. Skoczulek advised that after their joint meeting last week, he received a call from the BOE asking if they would consider anything further if it was kept to a single specific request. Although, he felt they had a consensus and they were happy with where they were at. The request was that they gauge the impact on the single year that they can actually vote on for the sum of \$400,000, which would be \$175,000 for a Curriculum Director, and \$225,000 for two reading and two math K-5 interventionists. The numbers were run, and the Council received an e-mail reflecting that it would be a 1.12 mill increase or a 3.45% increase. Mr. Skoczulek appreciated the call and request from the BOE, but still supports what was discussed at the last meeting, and is favor of the budget that is before them tonight.

Mr. Field said he is in favor of this budget. He feels that they vetted this pretty good at the last meeting.

Mr. Krasusky said that they have done a nice job of spreading the numbers out evenly over the two years. Mr. Field said the original two year proposal showed a much lower increase in year one, but there would have been a significant increase in year two. They tried to balance it out to make it easier on the town and the taxpayers. He said if something happens before October 30th, they will put the brakes on and start all over with new numbers.

Mr. Krasusky said the numbers are at 2.51% for each of the next two years. He asked Mr. Werbner what the historic average increase has been in the last ten years.

Mr. Werbner said it was less than 2%.

Mr. Krasusky said we are in the range that we've been at historically. Even with the state impact, we are slightly above.

6. Approval of Budget Resolution

Bill Eccles motioned to accept the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed the Town Manager's proposed budget and has made certain modifications to estimated revenues and expenditures, the details of which will be properly incorporated into the total budgetary document by the Town Manager and Director of Finance and Records;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby adopts a FY 2017-18 Town Operating and Capital Budget in the amount of \$54,905,866 to be appropriated as follows:

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Town Government	\$11,524,765
Board of Education	\$38,340,608
BOE Teachers' Retirement Contribution	\$ 435,915
Debt Service	\$ 4,550,000
Capital	\$ 54,578
TOTAL	\$54,905,866

Said appropriations shall require an increase of .86 mills for a mill rate of 35.05.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, pursuant to the requirements of the Town Charter, is authorized to advertise this budgetary outlay as part of the

October 12, 2017, Annual Budget Presentation Meeting at the Tolland High School Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.

Seconded by Robert Green. All in favor. None opposed.

- 7. Approval of a resolution authorizing the form of the ballot for the October 30, 2017 budget referendum and any subsequent budget referendum; the time and place for the budget referendum; authorizing the Town Manager or his designee to place the required legal notices in the local newspapers; and authorizing the preparation and printing of an explanatory text and the mailing of same to local residents and in addition sent out via the Town's Tolland Notification system and included with absentee ballots in accordance with the provisions of CT General Statutes 9-369b explaining the budget referendum question.**

Bill Eccles motioned to accept the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Tolland Town Council has adopted a proposed FY 2017-2018 Town Operating and Capital Budget to be considered by the Tolland electorate at a October 30, 2017 budget referendum; and

WHEREAS, the Council must now establish the appropriate ballot language for this referendum and the date, time and place of said referendum;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council the following:

1. The ballot question for the October 30th referendum shall be worded as follows:

"Shall the Town of Tolland's proposed 2017-2018 budget of \$54,905,866, reflecting a spending decrease of \$900,716 or (1.61)% which requires a tax rate of 35.05 mills for an increase of .86 mills or 2.52%, be adopted? Yes/No."
2. The time and place for the referendum shall be between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on October 30, 2017 at the Tolland Public Library Program Room.
3. The Town Manager or his designee is hereby authorized to place the required legal notices in the Journal Inquirer and other places as conditions permit, advertising the October 30, 2017 Referendum and the October 12, 2017 Annual Budget Presentation Meeting.
4. The Town Manager or his designee is authorized to prepare and print an explanatory text and the mailing of the same to local residents; to be included with absentee ballots and documented via the Town's Tolland Notification system in accordance with the provisions of CT General Statutes 9-369b explaining the budget referendum question.

Seconded by Robert Green.

Mr. Eccles asked that explanatory text be added to make it clear that the BOE is down \$1m, and the town is down X number of dollars. He wants people to understand that they are not getting everything they want because the budget is 2.5%.

The location for voting will be in the Library's Program Room.
THIS WILL BE THE ONLY LOCATION.

All in favor. None opposed.

8. Adjournment: Bill Eccles moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Robert Green at 7:13 p.m. All were in favor.

Michelle A. Finnegan
Town Council Clerk

Richard J. Field, Council Chair