



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 13, 2023 - 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

6:30 PM Departmental Budget Workshop

Mayor Robert C. Willey
Mr. Al Silverstein
Mr. Don Abbatiello
Mr. Ron Engle
Rev. Elmer Davis
President Megan Cook

Also present was the Town Manager Mr. Don Richardson, Finance Officer Carol Callahan, Assistant Finance Manager Charlie Connolly, Miguel Salinas, Director of Planning, Chief Alan Lowery, Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf

Call to Order by President Cook.

President Cook called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

Departments:

6:30 PM ADMINISTRATION, TOWN COUNCIL, CLERK, MAYOR, TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Richardson, Town Manager, stated there are not many changes and no capital requests for Administration, Town Council, Clerk, Mayor or Town Manager. He stated there is a proposed salary increase for employees. He discussed the need for a Public Information Officer. He stated there is a need for that position and it could be combined with the Records Clerk at the Easton Police Department. Mr. Richardson stated that most of the PIA requests are now related to police department requests and body cam footage.

6:40 PM IT

Scott Messick and Joey Faulkner were present for the Information Technology Department. Mr. Messick stated that removing overtime from the budget is a bad idea. Mr. Silverstein asked if Mr. Messick intends to retire in June. He answered affirmatively. Mr. Messick stated that there is a line item for the replacement of PCs. Mr. Messick suggested integrating the on street parking to meter parking and raising parking lots to \$1. He stated that none of this works without enforcement. Mr. Silverstein asked what the maintenance fee is for in the budget. Mr. Messick discussed parking. Mr. Silverstein asked for revenue from parking. He stated IT keeps us running, so they need to have the necessary tools.

6:54 PM HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. Farr was present by Zoom. He discussed professional services including \$37,500 which is ongoing support. He stated it is an annual cost for services provided by ADP. Mr. Farr stated employee training for leadership training is continued in this budget through next year. Mr. Farr stated that the meetings and convention are \$11,000 to keep his accreditation through SHRMA. He stated he comes from a training background and he wants to continue to invest in the staff. Mr. Silverstein asked why HR is not under Mr. Farr. Mr. Richardson stated that handling cash should be under the Finance Department. The Salary Survey and getting employees to the 60% percentile was discussed. Mr. Richardson stated that when the salary survey came in, there were four that were below the 25th percentile. Councilmembers stated that those not where they should be, should be addressed. Rev. Davis stated that the police department then funneled down should be addressed. He stated we need to take care of the outliers.

7:17 PM FINANCE

Mrs. Callahan, Finance Officer, was present. She stated that she is one of the outliers. She stated she is focusing on more scrutiny for rules to follow. Mrs. Callahan discussed Contractual services and fees associated with using credit cards for kiosks. She stated that everything else is falling in line with cost adjustments and inflationary costs. She stated that dues and subscriptions refers to the mapping service on the kiosk service. She stated there is CPA costs for an employee to sit for the exam. Mrs. Callahan stated that

hopefully the Finance Department is on target to meet the Edmunds transition.

7:24 PM PLANNING & ZONING

Mr. Miguel Salinas, Director of Planning, discussed a \$20,000 increase for professional services that are legal fees. \$80,000 contractual services for the Eastern Master Plan. He stated we may need consulting costs for this. Miguel discussed Public Art Facilities or Public Art Master Plan. He stated there is \$6000 in the budget to keep the staff happy and allow each individual staff to attend professional development.

Mr. Abbatiello asked where the Eastern Master Plan would encompass.

7:33 PM MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

Mr. Trevor Newcomb was present to answer any questions. He discussed the department he manages. Mr. Richardson stated that all operating budgets are intact for every department.

Mr. Silverstein asked if the Welcome Center would be contracted to be cleaned due to restrooms being open to the public. Mr. Newcomb stated that they are cleaned now.

Mr. Newcomb asked for \$57,000 to upgrade the technology.

7:46 PM POLICE DEPT

Chief Lowery, Deputy Chief Wright and Kay Spence were present.

Chief Lowery stated that the main things that help with retention and recruitment are pay, retirement, and take-home vehicles. He discussed personnel and the pay study.

Chief stated his personnel requests include an additional clerk and the ability to convert positions.

Chief Lowery stated that training is necessary with a young staff and they need someone to do that.

Chief Lowery discussed what has been cut.

Mr. Silverstein stated he does not know why the Town is not leasing vehicles instead of the capital outlay.

Chief Lowery stated you always ask but he understands there are capital constraints.

Chief Lowery stated that Greg Mueller has been a great asset with recruitment.

Mr. Abbatiello stated that he has spoken with officers and they are impressed with the Chief's leadership.

8:01 PM FIRE DEPARTMENT

President Rick Stacey and Chris Hash were present.

President Stacey stated the day room is going nicely and they are removing asbestos.

President Stacey asked if the doors are included in the carry forward.

Mr. Richardson stated there are no funds in this budget included for bathroom renovations.

Mr. Hash stated there is an increase for the LOSAP for the members and the quarterly incentives.

Mr. Hash stated the Department appreciates the Town's support.

Mr. Hash discussed the replacement of Engine 63. He stated they are hopeful to have the new truck in early June. He stated there may be a carry-over of \$40,000 to fully equip the truck.

President Stacey stated they are taking over a voice over phone system.

President Cook stated that the HVAC system was all that was cut.

Mr. Richardson stated that the additional requests add up to just shy of 2 million dollars.

There are \$836,000 in new positions, \$585,000 in overtime and 42 employees under the midpoint.

He stated he is happy to hear comments from the council.

President Cook stated there may need to be another discussion.

Adjournment.

At 8:16 p.m., President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk