



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 22, 2023 - 4:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

4:30 PM: Call to Order by Acting President Abbatiello.

Mayor Megan JM Cook
Acting President Don Abbatiello
Ms. Maureen Curry
Mr. David Montgomery
Rev. Elmer Davis

Also present was the Town Manager, Mr. Don Richardson, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

Various staff and department heads were also present.

Acting President Abbatiello discussed the workshop and stated that it will give new members a chance to ask questions.

Discussion occurred regarding exempt employees. Salaries in relation to the salary study performed in the fall were discussed.

Mr. Abbatiello stated the meeting would open up with questions or concerns from the council.

Mr. Montgomery stated he has broad questions. He asked if we have a process of comparing revenues to the cost of services? He stated that a lot of fees are for services.

Mr. Richardson stated those fees are arrived at from operating costs. Fees were phased in from a three-year period. Mr. Montgomery asked about funds coming from ARPA and where they go to.

Mr. Richardson discussed ARPA distributions.

Mr. Montgomery asked if Port Street is funded through income or tax dollars.

Mr. Montgomery asked why the large cut in Parks and Recreation from last year.

Mr. Richardson stated that Parks and Recreation has items on the carry-forward list.

Mr. Montgomery asked what the funding for EEDC is for. He stated that EEDC would like to meet with the new council.

Rev. Davis asked that the meetings that are held with EEDC be reported back to the council.

Mr. Montgomery asked that the cuts to the Fire Department and Police Department be explained.

Ms. Curry stated she has questions regarding the carry-forwards. She asked what kitchen is being replaced.

Mayor Cook stated that the kitchen is at the firehouse.

Mr. Richardson stated that some of the carry forwards must be completed prior to the bond expiration.

The phase in vehicle allocation for take home cars for the police officers was discussed.

Rev. Davis asked if there could be an allocation for a pathway through Woodlands Park.

Mr. Richardson stated that design for the road can be permitted and is included in the expenditures which must be completed by October.

Mr. VanEmburch, Town Engineer stated that it is most efficient to do it with the staff they have. Many of the projects have to be completed by October. He stated that with the group they have now, it would be most efficient to get projects due to the ARPA projects coming to a close.

Mr. Montgomery asked if there are incentives for the PUD submission. Mr. Richardson stated that there are no incentives.

Park fees were discussed.

Mr. Abbatiello asked that the entities that are using the fields be informed before implementation of park fees.

Mr. Abbatiello asked if anyone has any more questions regarding the budget before discussion of exempt employees. He stated that one of the concerns he has is regarding overtime. He stated overtime has increased dramatically with the exception of 2020. He stated that there are several positions within the town that falls within exempt status which were scheduled to be discussed with this budget. Such as, executive or administration positions, management or staff that have the ability to hire or fire.

Ms. Curry stated most corporate employees get comp time in lieu of overtime. She stated that if someone is in a supervisory position, they should be exempt from overtime pay.

Mr. Abbatiello stated that going forward the budget has been 60/40 and his concern is that if we don't have salary and benefits in line, it may be difficult to do what the town needs to do.

Mr. Montgomery stated that he supports the change. He stated his concern is regarding the liability.

Mayor Cook discussed the salary study. She stated that she agrees that we need to take a deep dive and look at the overtime and see if we need additional staff for next year's budget.

At 5:27 p.m., upon motion by Ms. Curry, seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, Acting President Abbatiello convened into Closed Session.

At 5:47 p.m., upon motion by Rev. Davis, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, Acting President Abbatiello re-convened into Open Session.

Adjournment.

At 5:48 p.m., upon motion by Rev. Davis, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, Acting President Abbatiello adjourned the workshop.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk