



Tanya Lane  
Town Manager

# TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET  
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

**MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN**

## MINUTES

### NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING L101 – Lower Level 7:00 P.M.

**March 6, 2017**

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Mayor Zartarian called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### **I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **II. ROLL CALL**

Councilor Anest  
Councilor Budrejko  
Councilor DelBuono  
Councilor Klett  
Councilor Manke  
Councilor Marocchini - absent  
Councilor Nagel  
Councilor Serra  
Mayor Zartarian

#### **Staff Attendees:**

Tanya Lane, Town Manager  
Ann Harter, Finance Director  
Lisa Rydecki, Deputy Finance Director  
Steve Kosofsky, Assessor  
Paul Boutot, Chief Information Officer  
Marie Fox, Registrars of Voters  
Dr. William Collins, Superintendent of Schools  
Jamie Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager – Administration  
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

#### **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilor Manke moved to accept the agenda and the motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel. The motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini – absent).

**IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (In Person/Via Telephone: 860-665-8736)**

Marie Fox, 1901 Main Street: She encouraged the Board of Education to add to their budget a full time nurse at all Newington schools. She felt this was a safety issue and should be in the budget.

**V. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**VI. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Overview of Budget and Budget Procedures**

Tanya Lane gave an overview of the budget meetings to be held. On March 14 there will be a public hearing for the Town Manager’s proposed budget and on March 28 the tentative budget will be set. She added that on April 4 there will be a public hearing on the budget and changes made to it. The budget will be adopted on April 18 and the mill rate set. Department heads were informed there would be no growth in the grand list and to attempt to keep their requests to a zero increase.

There are no new initiatives included in the budget. Challenges included a 7% increase in the MDC assessment and the uncertainty of state funding to towns. The budget was the lowest proposed increase in almost fifteen years. Another challenge included a decrease in the tax rate for motor vehicles from \$32 mills instead of \$37.36 mills. The Town Manager was proposing a mill rate of \$37.36 or a 1.61% increase.

**B. Budget Review: General Government (Town Council, Town Manager, Courts, Elections, Finance, Town Attorney, Town Clerk/Records Administration, Personnel, General Services, Information Technology)**

General Government – Summary

- Facilities Electrician – the change of .5 was due to the hiring of the electrician last year who is full time.

Town Council – 0110

- 8310 – increase due to recognition chairs

Town Manager - 0120

- 8101 – decrease due to having less pay periods in the year.

Probate Court – 0130

- no change

Elections – 0140

- Councilor Anest asked if a primary was necessary this year where would the money come from and it was explained it was in the contingency fund.

- The unfunded mandate to require PC’s for elections is on hold since the State was not funding them and there was no money for them. The cost would be approximately \$2,00-\$5,000.

- 8204 – increase was to allow for additional people to attend conferences

Finance – 0151

- 8101 – increase due to union raises

Assessor – 0152

- 8217 – increase due to need for personal property audit

Board of Assess. Appeals - 0153  
- no change

Revenue collector – 0154  
- 8224 – Councilor Klett asked about the increase in the credit and it was explained that each year the need grew. The increase reflects an upward trend. Councilor Klett commented it was controversial to give a credit to one group when young families do not receive a similar credit. Mrs. Harter explained the fund is capped at \$300K.

Councilor Anest asked if the records could be available online and possibly save a part time employee salary. Mrs. Lane explained it was a good idea but there was no money in the budget at this time to implement it. The Councilor wanted to know if once implemented, it would save a position. Councilor DelBuono asked since the part time position had not been filled, if it could be delayed until the Council discusses it further.

Auditing – 0155  
- Reflects increase due to contract

Purchasing – 0157  
- no change

Town Attorney – 0160  
- 8217 – new line item added since there has been a history of needing the monies  
Councilor Klett asked what had been spent in the past several years to better understand what had been paid.

Town Clerk & Records Administration – 0170  
- 8220 – land record auditor fee increase

Personnel – 0180  
- no change

Central Services – 0195  
- no change

Information Technology – 0197  
- 8208 – increase due to transfer of Police to IT and some Fire Department fees for software applications

Councilor Serra asked about the increase of \$56,582 and was told \$14,400 would be used for the anticipated cost of the Fire Department MDT.

-8220 – MDT charges have gone down due to Fire Department not needing this item  
Councilor Klett asked Mr. Boutot about the possibility of saving money by combining the Board of Ed and Town IT functions. Mr. Boutot explained the work level would not decrease but could save money when fiber optics was installed that would benefit groups. There would still be day to day specific skills needed to run the operations.

Mayor Zartarian asked about the cost of Microsoft products, and Mr. Boutot said they had no bill since it had been paid last year. The last bill was \$224k.

### **C. Budget Review: Board of Education**

The Board of Education budget was a PowerPoint presentation, which is attached.

They concluded with a request for 3.12% but actual new spending was 1.89%. Included in that is 1.23% to fill salary gap and for maintenance. The remainder would fulfill all obligations and allow the STEM academy to open. There were no new initiatives in the budget. They felt it was a responsible budget even considering the challenging economic climate.

Councilor Nagel asked the Board to provide the Council an outline of requests similar to that received from the Town Manager so it would be easier for the Council to review.

Councilor Budrejko asked about the Wellness Program and it was explained it had been left off by mistake but the bottom line was the same. She asked about the projections for enrollment and was told it was hard to determine the exact enrollment since people could move in or out of the district or attend magnet schools.

Councilor Klett asked about a mailer she recently received and Dr. Collins stated they did the survey every five years in the district. He also explained that all schools have a nurse as well as Immaculate Conception. Councilor Klett indicated there had been a decrease in site services and was concerned about the needs of students being met with the cuts. Dr. Collins said that there would be no cuts in services to these students and would overspend to accommodate the need.

Councilor Klett asked about the past committee that consisted of Town Councilors and Board members to aid in having open communication between the two. Councilor DelBuono indicated that in checking with FOI she was told the Council needed to vote on the committee so it could become a formal group and not informal as in the past. Councilor Klett asked it be put on the next agenda so the Council could move forward quickly on it. Councilor Anest indicated the Council had a liaison to the Board of Ed and had some dialogue in that manner.

Councilor Budrejko asked Dr. Collins about the prospect of towns being responsible for teacher pensions in the future. He said it would create turmoil in all towns. He stated if the grants did not come through from the State, it would have a serious impact on towns.

## **VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL**

None

## **VIII. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

None

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Nagel moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor Manke. The motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini – absent).

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson  
Clerk of the Council

Cc: J. Krupienski, Town Clerk  
Att.