

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**Annual Town Meeting
Abigail Adams Auditorium
89 Middle Street
May 23, 2016, Monday**

Present: Patrick O'Connor, President
Michael Smart, Councilor
Robert Conlon, Councilor
Kenneth DiFazio, Councilor
Jane Hackett, Councilor
Ed Harrington, Councilor
Rebecca Haugh, Councilor
Arthur Mathews, Councilor
Brian McDonald, Councilor
Michael Molisse, Councilor

Not Present: Thomas J. Lacey, Councilor

Also Present: Robert Hedlund, Mayor
Joseph Callanan, Town Solicitor
Kathy Deree, Town Clerk
Richard Swanson, Auditor
Ted Langill, Chief of Staff
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor
Richard Grimes, Chief of Police
Keith Stark, Fire Chief
Kenan Connell, DPW Director
Robert Luongo, Planning Director
Dr. Kenneth Salim, Superintendent of Schools
Lisa Belmarsh, Chair, School Committee
David Chandler, Chair, Planning Department/CPC

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

President O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Town Clerk Kathy Deree called the roll, with one member absent. President O'Connor reported that Councilor Lacey had a prior work commitment.

Presentation of Scholarship Awards

- Chairperson Lois Desmond, Scholarship Committee
- Patrick O'Connor, Town Council President
- Vice President Michael Smart

Scholarship Chair Lois Desmond read a brief overview of the Scholarship program:

“The Town of Weymouth Scholarship Fund Committee is proud to announce the winners of the 2016 Scholarship awards. A total of \$66,500 in financial aid will be awarded to 40 Weymouth residents. The funds for these awards are possible through the generosity of our Business Partners, organizations, Sponsors of Memorial Scholarships and Weymouth citizens who made donations to the fund. The program has been in existence since 1992 and scholarships have been awarded to high school seniors, students currently attending college, and residents returning to school for retaining or to further their post-secondary or college education.”

Ms. Desmond also thanked the committee members who were applauded. Nancy Brennan (1996) and Hank Goldman (2008) are both retiring. She also thanked the many sponsors, including the new ones.

Recipients:

High School Seniors:

Nicholas G. Ames	Megan E. Laurie	Jacquelyn A. Schneider
Ryan N. Brooks	Kevin A. Lyons	Elizabeth P. Sheridan
Samuel B. Brown	Michaela A. MacDonald	Stephanie M. Smith
Michael P. Donohue	Claire E. O’Connor	Emma F. Sullivan
Jose Henri Fossi	Emily L. Perriello	Amelia S. Toye
Brian A. Gozzo	Rictoria R. Rego	Colleen P. West
Keryn T. Hanifan	Abigail K. Robinson	Colleen P. West
Teryk Jang Lapchak	Kate E. Rogerson	
Sasa Jovanovic	Remy P. Sanborn	

Students presently attending College:

Patrick E. Coleman	Bryan Huynh	Julianne C. Smith
Laurel K. Gozzo	Mark E. Mueller	Brandon A. Wencek
Kristin P. Graham	Cashel O’Brien	
Molly E. Griffin	Rachel V. Ricciuti	

Renewal Award:

Anthony C. Byrne	Thomas M. Hickey
Erin M. Crowley	Zachary W. Rush

Recipients received a standing ovation.

Overview of Legislative Activities for Fiscal Year 2016

-Patrick O'Connor, Town Council President

Council President Patrick O'Connor acknowledged the members of Town Council, Administration and School Committee who were present and read the following address:

"Good evening and thank you for attending our Annual Town Meeting. Congratulations to all of the scholarship recipients.

Pursuant to Section 6-6 of the Town Charter, the Town Council President shall deliver an update on the legislative activities of the Council, for fiscal 2016—which commenced on July 1, 2015

The Town Council has held a total of 64 meetings to date for fiscal year 2016. This includes regularly scheduled Town Council Meetings, Special Town Council Meetings, and numerous meetings of the 12 committees under the jurisdiction of the Council .

*Committee meetings: 41
Town Council: 18
Special Town Council: 5*

As the legislative branch of government, the Town Council is responsible for approving measures, new appointments and reappointments, town ordinances, and the operating budget for the town, as submitted by Mayor Hedlund. The Council, while deliberating over the budget, and pursuant to the town charter, cannot increase, but can only reduce the budget.

Serving as President of the Town Council is an extreme honor. The partisan divide that obstructs far too many legislative branches of government across our nation doesn't exist in our community. We work together to solve the problems facing our community. We may have differing opinions but at the end of the day we stand united in doing everything we possibly can, whether it is popular or not, to make Weymouth the best place to live, work and raise a family. I am honored by my colleagues trust in me to lead this esteemed body and more so to call each of them a friend.

I would like to take a moment to highlight several measures which were addressed by the Town Council during fiscal 2016. The following projects were earmarked by the Council:

We approved \$350,000 from free cash for the allocation to the school department to close their level service gap. Additionally, we approved \$250,294 from free cash to the school department for the purchase of 6 passenger vans.

We approved funding from free cash for long overdue maintenance throughout the Town of Weymouth which includes repairs to guardrails, fencing and sidewalks and repairs to the Veterans Memorial Wall.

The Town Council approved the transfer of \$400,000 from the meals tax to fund park improvements throughout the town which include aesthetic and structural. These include Gifford Park, Humphrey Field, Riley Field--soccer field at Ralph Talbot school, Weston Park, and O'Sullivan Playground.

We approved funding in the amount of \$120,000 from the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund for capital projects to purchase a weed harvester, associated equipment, operational costs and weed disposal for use at Whitman's Pond.

The Town Council approved the reappropriation of \$377,397.64 for the purchase of eight new police cruisers and equipment.

The Town Council approved several projects from CPC funding:

Birches Playground improvements

Construction of the park/trail connection through the former Kibby property.

Additional funds to the design of the Herring Run Passage & Smelt Habitat Restoration Project

Design, construction and upgrades to the Back River Trail through the town landfill.

Digitizing of the 1799 sampler by Hannah Vinson

There were numerous utility petitions processed and approved in the past fiscal year. With all the petitions put forth for approval, we required that utility companies fix our roads to the standards we expect and deserve.

The Town Council handled the approval of the appointment and reappointment of 48 members to various town committees. The Town Council additionally approved the Mayor's appointments of a Chief of Staff, Town Solicitor, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Chief Information Officer.

The following issues were addressed:

We continue to work with emergency responders in addressing the opiate crisis plaguing not only our community but communities throughout the State. This is a fluid issue which we will continually monitor.

The following Ordinance Changes were made: The following ordinances were revised with additional provisions:

Proposed amendment to Southfield Zoning and Land Use By-Laws

The below measures are required criteria for designation of the town by the State as a Green community. The Green community's designation and grant program is administered by the Mass. Dept. of Energy Resources.

Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance-Solar Photovoltaic Installations Building Construction-Adoption of Massachusetts "Stretch Energy Code".

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to my fellow Councilors, the employees of the Council and Clerk's Offices, Mayor Robert Hedlund, his Administration, and the School Department for their ongoing efforts.

Additionally, I would like to extend my appreciation to the residents of the Town of Weymouth, who by their valuable input at meetings, and during public hearings have brought to light important issues, and have illustrated the true definition of democracy. The Council appreciates your participation in local government.

Thank you for your attention this evening.

The next order of business on our agenda are the public hearings for the fiscal year 2017 budget, I would like to recognize Vice President Michael Smart who will proceed with our agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Measures:

16 066-General Government Annual Authorization

16 051 A-Town Council

16 051 B-Mayor's Office

16 051 C-Reserve Fund

16 051 D-Municipal Finance

16 051 E-Town Solicitor

16 051 F-Information Services

16 051 G-Town Clerk

16 051 H-Planning and Development

16 051 I- Town Building Maintenance

16 051 J-Administrative Services

16 051 K-Human Resources

16 051 L-Police Department

16 051 M-Fire Department

16 051 N-Licensing and Inspections

16 051 O-Department of Public Works

16 051 P-Health

16 051 Q-Library

16 051 R-Veterans' Services

16 051 S-Parks and Recreation

16 051 T-Elder Services

16 051 U-Civil Defense

16 051 V-Commission on Disabilities

16 051 W-Youth and Family Services

16 051 X-Debt

16 051 Y-Pensions and Benefits

16 051 Z-Schools

16 051 AA-State and County Assessments

16 051 BB-Overlay for Abatements

16 067-Revolving Accounts Annual Authorization

16 068-Gift Accounts Annual Authorization

16 069-Unpaid Bills

16 070-MTBE Settlement Transfer for FY16 Snow Removal

16 071-Free Cash for FY16 Snow Removal

16 072-Sewer Enterprise Fund Annual Appropriation

16 073-Sewer Department-MWRA I/I Phase 9 Allocation

16 074-Sewer Retained Earnings-Capital Equipment

16 075-Water Enterprise Fund Annual Appropriation

16 076-Water Retained Earnings-Water Main Improvements

16 077-Water Retained Earnings-Capital Equipment

16 078-Water Retained Earnings-Water Treatment Plant

16 079-Community Preservation Committee Annual Appropriation

A motion was made by Vice President Smart to open the public hearing on measures 16 066 through 16 079, inclusive, and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. This was advertised on May 13, 2016. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

State of the Town- Mayor Robert Hedlund

Mayor Hedlund congratulated the scholarship recipients and read brief remarks:

“Next week marks five months since taking office and I am pleased with the strides we have already taken and I’m even more excited about the progress that lies ahead.

Unlike my leg...

The State of our Town is Good ... and getting Better!

WHAT WE’VE ALREADY DONE OR STARTED...

- *Filed a Balanced, Responsible FY17 Budget*
 - *\$155.5M Operating Budget*
 - *4% increase over FY16 (\$5.9 million)*
 - *Largely Level Services with some modest growth*
 - *Funded 5 FFs previously covered by a grant that has expired*
 - *Increased funding for Veteran’s Benefits*
 - *Responsible School Budget*
 - *School Operating budget DOES NOT rely on free cash for the first time in many years.*

- 4.1% total increase when you include Free Cash (\$1M) for IT and Curriculum needs.
 - We may be able achieve the goal of funding school IT needs identified by the School's consultant within 3 years
 - Provides a modest increase for Special Education and IT position.
- Fought Spectra harder than any community has when faced with the siting of a facility of this nature.
 - Petitioned the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to conduct a more comprehensive, complete environmental review of cumulative effects of the Atlantic Bridge Project and Access Northeast Project.
 - Conducted numerous meetings with Spectra to push for alternative locations outside of Weymouth.
 - Opposed Spectra's efforts to obtain a wetlands permit (costing Spectra more than a month's delay).
 - Most importantly, sought an independent environmental review by the state's Secretary of Environmental Affairs. No other community or citizens group opposing a natural gas pipeline had asked for this type of review. Weymouth is the only community to take such action.
 - Intervened in several rate proceedings by the state's Department of Public Utilities (DPU) concerning Access Northeast. Weymouth was the first community to intervene in these Access Northeast proceedings.
 - We are attempting to block Spectra's ability to secure the parcel of land to build a compressor station from Calpine.

In the past week alone...

 - Urged the state's Energy Facilities Siting Board to require FERC to conduct a combined, comprehensive review of the cumulative impacts of both Atlantic Bridge and Access Northeast.
 - I wrote State's Secretary of Environmental Affairs asking him to review that the Natural Gas Companies' plans are consistent with state policies designed to protect the public waterfront under the CZM Act
- Began Improvements Columbian Square (Phase I)
 - Drainage Improvements
 - New Parking lot with lighting and curbing
 - Improvements to Chauncy and Camelot
 - Paid for outside of our capital budget funding
 - L-Star as part of their MEPA review obligations
 - Initiated Phase II with submission of measure to Town Council to fund traffic study to update the 2008 Cecil Group study in hopes of moving forward with traffic and major Columbian square work

- *Started a \$400,000 improvement to our parks and playgrounds...funded through the meals tax...*

Improvements are currently underway for...

- *Richard Gifford Playground on Thicket Street*
- *Humphrey Field on Lake Street*
- *Great Hill Park on Bradley Road*
- *James O'Sullivan Playground on Pilgrim Road*
- *Weston Park on Broad Street*
- *Stephen Rennie Park in lower Jackson Square*
- *Riley Field on Essex Street.*

Improvements will include paving, new guardrails, new fencing and hydro seed at specific locations, as well as new irrigation installations, picnic tables and benches, barrels, dog waste bag dispensers, and entrance signage for several of our parks.

We are also moving forward to initiate a more thorough turf management and irrigation plan to improve the playing surfaces at many of our ball fields and soccer fields.

These improvements to our parks and green areas are essential for the well-being of our town and residents.

- *Started Process to Consider the Replacement of Tufts Library*
 - *Example of my efforts to be more aggressive in seeking state grants and cooperation*
- *Continuing Effort to Replace the outdated Chapman School*
 - *School Building Program*
 - *Should get good news to proceed this week*
 - *Continue working toward a feasibility study*
- *Major progress in Redevelopment of Weymouth Landing*
 - *During my 1st week in office I brought landing stakeholders together.*
 - *Was able to help work out a deal with church ... allowing Mr. Delagas to reach needed parking ratio.*
- *Wooden Guardrail and Fencing Replacement - \$100K*
- *Whipple Center Improvements – over \$500K*
 - *Roof, Walking Path, Gym Floor, Parking Lot...now working to add A/C to project.*
- *Sidewalk Repairs – at least \$500K*
- *Renewed effort to repair our Veteran's Memorial Wall*
 - *Finish engineering and design work*
 - *Identified funding for full repairs (including CPA \$)*

CONTINUED and NEAR FUTURE EFFORTS

- \$3 million (bonding) for road and sidewalk improvements
 - o Working off DPW inventory assessment list (outside Engineer)
- Continued Park and Playground Improvements
- Continued fight against Spectra's Compressor Station and pipeline
- Working with State on Route 18 Widening
- Traffic Signal and Intersection Improvements
 - Libbey & Middle -Green & East
 - Libbey & Pleasant -Washington & Broad
- Continue positive working relationship with L-Star to ensure continued progress and growth at SouthField...realizing new revenue and opportunity for Weymouth.
- Continue to identify areas for efficiencies and savings
- Creating a welcoming environment for business – and aggressively utilizing the Mayor's office to encourage business to Weymouth – exemplified by the relocation of Brewster Ambulance from Boston to Weymouth...and from Hingham to Weymouth (SouthField – Deja View)

THANK YOU...

Town Council for continued cooperation and guidance

Department Heads for support and efforts toward improvements

My staff – long hours and dedicated service

Town Employees – Continued efforts to make Weymouth better

The Residents of Weymouth – being engaged and supportive of progress

Presentation of the Budget- Mayor Robert Hedlund, Chief of Staff Ted Langill

Mayor Hedlund and Chief of Staff Langill presented the FY17 Budget in PowerPoint format:

Highlights

- \$1.55 million operating budget
 - o balanced fiscally responsible operating budget
- built on more predictable sources of revenue (no free cash)
- largely level services budget with some modest growth
- cooperative, open collaboration with school administration

- focus on addressing capital needs with appropriate revenue sources
- a budget with flexibility to absorb modes CBA settlements
 - includes 1% COLA for non-union employees
- Optimistic that growing recurring revenues and responsible spending will allow Weymouth to continue making progress addressing our many needs

Operating Revenue

Revenue	FY16	FY17	Change
Tax Levy	\$149,589,688	\$155,506,271	\$5,916,584 (4.0%)
Local Receipts*	\$94,548,098	\$97,255,945	\$3,707,847 (4.0%)
State Aid	\$36,286,537	\$37,193,663	\$907,126 (2.5%)

These three revenue sources make up 95% of total revenue:

Tax Levy = 63%	Local Receipts = 8%	State Aid = 24%
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*includes MVE, license/permits, meals tax, PILOT, tax penalties and interest, Southfield special assessments collected to pay parkway bond

Operating Revenue

- Revenue Factors
 - Tax Levy: \$3.7 million increase (4%)
 - FY16 Tax Levy Limit plus 2.5%
 - FY16 new growth impact... \$2.8 million in new growth in FY16 (estimated \$1.8M)
 - \$825,000 estimated new growth for FY17
- Motor Vehicle Excise \$325,000 increase (2.5%)
 - Reflects estimated collection based on increase in commitments sent for FY16
- State Aid: \$907,000 increase (2.5%)
 - Estimated Chapter 70 increase of \$380,000 (1.4%) based on House and Senate Budget
 - Estimated UGGA increase of \$345,000 (4.3%) based on House and Senate Budget
- Building Permits: \$325,000 increase
 - Estimated based on YTD collections and anticipated growth in FY17

Operating Expenditures

	FY16	FY17	Change
Total Expenditures	\$149,589,688	\$155,506,272	\$5,916,584 (4.0%)
Town Departments	\$39,817,761	\$40,708,404	\$890,642 (2.2%)
School Salaries	\$25,571,158	\$26,305,691	\$734,533 (2.9%)
Schools (w/o free cash)	\$61,979,972	\$65,160,413	\$3,180,441 (5.4%)
Schools (with free cash)	\$63,629,972	\$66,210,413	2,580,441 (4.1%)
State Assessments	\$2,956,966	\$3,377,146	\$420,180 (14.2%)
Recycling (& white goods)	\$1,325,000	\$1,575,000	\$250,000 (18.9%)
Pensions/Benefits	\$33,267,000	\$33,785,333	\$518,333 (1.6%)
Debt Service	\$10,267,597	\$9,958,884	(\$308,713) (-3.0%)

Operating Expenditures**Percentage of FY17 Operating Budget**

Schools	41.9%	\$65,160,413
Pensions/Benefits	21.7%	\$33,785,333
Police	7.4%	\$11,561,305
Public Works	6.6%	\$10,292,878
Debt Service	6.4%	\$9,958,884
Fire	5.5%	\$8,569,626

Total FY17 Revenue: \$155,506,272

Increase over FY16: \$5,916,584

Enterprise Budgets

	FY16	FY17	Change
Sewer	\$15,315,220	\$15,898,214	\$582,994 (3.8%)
• MWRA assessment is increasing by 5.7% or \$637,246			
• Debt Service decreasing by \$58,860 or 3.5% from \$1,688,696 to \$1,629,836			
Water	\$9,797,056	\$9,797,669	\$613 (0%)
• Debt Service decreasing by \$48,683 or 1.4% from \$3,419,040 to \$3,370,357			

Overall water/sewer rate revenue increase of 2.6% (\$583,607)

** Less than \$10/quarter on the average Water/Sewer bill **

Community Preservation

	FY16	FY17	Change	Current Fund Balance
Revenue	\$735,000	\$776,000	\$41,000	
(1% surcharge, State Match, Investment Income, and Interest & Penalties)				
Admin. Costs (max 5%)	\$36,700	\$38,800	\$2,050	
Open Space	\$73,500	\$77,600	\$4,100	\$158,663
Historical Resources	\$73,500	\$77,600	\$4,100	\$164,715
Community Housing	\$73,500	\$77,600	\$4,100	\$192,180
Debt Service	\$155,450	\$147,313	(\$8,137)	
General Reserve	\$322,300	\$357,087	\$34,787	\$700,853

Weymouth Schools**Operating Budget**

Schools FY16 Budget	\$61,979,972
Cash "structural deficit"	\$1,650,000
Services	\$1,252,769
Transfer Payroll Clerks	\$101,313
IT Support (2) *	\$120,000
Special Education Teacher (1) *	\$56,359

FY17 Additional Spending

- \$900,000 IT Infrastructure/Devices *
 - \$750,000 Free Cash
 - \$150,000 Comcast Account
 - \$150,000 Curriculum / Textbooks *
 - \$150,000 Free Cash
- *From School Needs List

Capital Spending

Available Capital Funding

- Remaining Free Cash \$4,800,000
- Overlay Surplus \$428,357
- Meals Tax \$400,000
- Total Available Funding \$5,628,357
 - not including special purpose reserve

Initial Funding Needs/Proposals

- Snow Deficit \$710,000
- Stabilization \$250,000
- OPEB \$200,000

Ongoing/Proposed Capital Improvements

- Fencing/guardrails \$100,000
- Sidewalks \$500,000
- Senior Center \$560,000
- Park Improvements \$400,000
- School IT \$750,000
- School Curriculum \$150,000
- * DPW Vehicles \$150,000
- Police Cruisers/Motorcycles \$400,000
- Fire- Replace Engine \$650,000
- * Improve Traffic Signals \$210,000
 - * received Town Council approval
- Bonding \$3M Road and Sidewalk Program

Council President O'Connor thanked the Administration for the presentation. Councilor Hackett also thanked the Administration for the presentation. She reported she is in full support of this budget and urged the Administration to put forward measures as soon as possible to address the overwhelming inventory of building maintenance issues and turf facility at Pingree.

The following are the comments from the public:

Robert Montgomery Thomas, 848 Washington Street read prepared remarks to deal with the OPEB liability. He suggested they consider a referendum question.

Andrea Honore, 61 House Rock Road, congratulated President O'Connor on his successful election to state Senate. She urged the town to increase the budget for Counsel to continue the fight against Spectra and the compression station. She also thanked the Mayor for not taking the mitigation deal.

Kiki Fluhr (no address given) also urged the administration to fight the compression station and recommended the town pursue breach of contract action against Sithe/Calpine. She urged the administration to continue to keep the public informed.

Solicitor Callanan explained the issues with Calpine. In 1999, the town was urged to acquire the Calpine property; Town Meeting did not agree. In meetings with Calpine it was obvious they did not want to give, sell or work with the town. Spectra can take the property by eminent domain but the obligations to the town would not stop. He outlined the action that the town could take but it would not stop the compressor station from being built.

Diane Rello, (no address given), reported that she had asked what fuel blend runs in pipes under their streets and no one could not tell her. She urged action against Spectra under economic deprivation, reckless endangerment and human rights violations.

Gustavo Perez, 16 Hewitt Road noted this budget is a significant improvement over the last 8 years; an honest, thorough and well thought out budget... However, Weymouth still trails the state average in net school spending. He noted it is now incumbent on the School Committee to assure the public that the money voted is used for the purpose it was intended. The public needs to continue advocacy. He also noted that issues exist around the process by which field rental is managed. Rental activity revenue was intended to be used to fund replacements to the fields; not to negatively impact youth and high school sports programs. He urged a public forum to discuss this with school and town administrators with the Recreation and the Athletics Directors.

Gail Sheehan and Kathleen Curran (Weymouth School Committee) arrived and were acknowledged.

Elizabeth Foster Nolan, 54 House Rock Road agrees that this is one of best budgets in a long time. She urged that any additional funds that come in should be used to supplement public safety. The police and fire departments do not have enough resources to deal with the opiate problem.

Cathy Torrey, 14 Riverbank Road noted her concern with a house in her neighborhood being turned into a halfway home for recovering addicts, and that the neighbors were not notified. She is concerned with the impact on property values. She also noted the increase in costs to public safety resources and reported that this can happen in any neighborhood in Weymouth.

Mayor Hedlund responded that the siting of DMH or DMR group homes has certain protections under the law. He noted the Patriot Ledger recently reported on the disparity

in the number of homes placed in Weymouth versus surrounding towns. He suggested this would be a good issue for discussion with the newest state senator. He also shared Ms. Torrey's concerns and that of Ms. Foster Nolan with regard to beefing up the ranks of the understaffed public safety departments.

Donald Stewart, 549 Essex Street urged CPA funding as the source for the renovations to the Veterans Wall across from Town Hall. He noted that if any project deserves to be funded from CPA dollars, it is this.

Mayor Hedlund thanked Mr. Stewart for his passion on the issue. He has committed to the project, regardless of the mix of funding used to get it done.

Robert Montgomery Thomas suggested in an override meeting last year, that the town consider establishing an education foundation to come up with funding for schools. He noted a similar endeavor in Rockland recently provided funding to provide classrooms with chromebooks. He also commented on the abysmal resident turnout at the Annual Town Meeting.

A motion was made by Vice President Smart to close the public hearing for measures 16 066 through 16 079 and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

ADJOURNMENT

At, 9:42 PM there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice President Smart to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Mathews.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Town Council President Patrick O'Connor
Voted unanimously on 15 August 2016