

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PORTSMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2010

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 7:00PM [or thereafter]

I. CALL TO ORDER [7:00PM or thereafter]

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

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Ferrini, Assistant Mayor Novelline Clayburgh, Councilors Lister, Hejtmanek, Spear, Dwyer, Coviello, Smith and Kennedy

Mayor Ferrini asked everyone to join in a moment of silent prayer. Mayor Ferrini led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

A. PROPOSED FY JULY 1, 2010 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2011 BUDGET

Mayor Ferrini read the legal notice, declared the public hearing open and called for speakers.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

- Budget Summary – City Manager Bohenko

City Manager Bohenko stated that this public hearing will be recessed and reconvened on May 10, 2010 for further comment by the public. He reviewed the City's bond rating and retirement history and informed the Council that vehicle registration revenues are down along with investment income. He reviewed the FY11 budget format which included a 2% reduction in workforce and a second request of 96% of FY10 adopted budget. The total savings for workforce reductions are as follows:

- **Municipal**
 - Eliminate four full-time positions
 - Reduce four full-time position to part-time \$540,366.00

- **Police**
 - Eliminate crossing guards, victim/witness advocate
And one School Resource Officer (savings in School Dept) \$85,811.00

- **Fire**
 - Leave one position vacant \$75,000.00

- **School**

- Eliminate 13 positions / SRO from Police Dept. \$905,000.00

City Manager Bohenko reported that there has been a reduction of 32.19 positions from FY09. He discussed the operating and debt service costs for the indoor pool. The total cost is \$536,711.00 with \$90,000.00 collected in revenue. An outline of financial policies were discussed with the fund balance ordinance, the leave at termination stabilization fund, health insurance stabilization fund, capital improvement plan and the rolling stock replacement program. The proposed FY2011 budget is \$87,803,155.00 which equals a 4.48% increase over last year. City Manager Bohenko advised the City Council that 84% of the operating budget is made up of salaries and benefits. A review of retirement and health insurance costs was explained. In addition, he went over the Rockingham County tax increase and Capital Outlay costs.

- **Police Department – Police Chief Ferland**

Police Chief Ferland spoke to FY11 fixed increases for level service funding equal to a 2.65% increase. As requested by the City Council the department also prepared a budget of 96% of FY10 which include the proposed reductions:

Eliminate – AIT Program
Eliminate – Explorer Program
Reduce SERT Overtime
Eliminate Crossing Guards
Eliminate Victim Witness Advocate
Eliminate Middle School SRO
Eliminate Downtown Beat (4 Officers)
Eliminate High School SRO
Eliminate 10 Auxiliary & Other Op
Eliminate Traffic Officers (2 Officers)
Eliminate Capital
Increase Overtime

Includes Net Staffing Reduction of 10.2 Full Time Employees & 10 Auxiliary Officers

Chief Ferland reviewed the FY11 Proposed Reductions:

Eliminate Accident Investigation Team
Eliminate Explorer Program
Reduce SERT-OT
Eliminate Crossing Guards
Eliminate Victim Witness Advocate
Eliminate Middle School SRO

Includes Net Staffing Reduction of 3.2 Full Time Employees

**Middle School SRO & High School SRO are each funded 50% by Police Department and 50% by School. School eliminated funding. FY11 Police Department combines funds for 1-SRO only at High School.*

Chief Ferland said the budget as presented would be a \$75,000.00 increase over last year and the Department and Commission feel it is a reasonable budget and ask for the support of the City Council.

- Fire Department – Fire Chief LeClaire

Fire Chief LeClaire reported on the services provided by the Fire Department as follows:

- ❖ Fire Prevention
 - Code Enforcement
 - Plans Review
 - Public Education
- ❖ Fire Suppression
 - Structural
 - Transportation
 - Marine
- ❖ Emergency Medical Services
 - Advances Life Support
- ❖ Hazardous Materials
 - START team
 - Spills/Ruptures
 - Unknown substance/powder
- ❖ Marine Response – Fire Boat
 - Fire Suppression
 - Search & Recue
 - Spills

Chief LeClaire informed the City Council that 49% of 2009 calls were Fire with 51% for EMS. Total fire activity for 2009 was 2,314 and EMS was 2,420.

A breakdown of District Response

District 1 – 55% (Fire) – 66% (EMS)

District 2 – 24% (Fire) – 15% (EMS)

District 3 – 20% (Fire) – 17% (EMS)

Out of Town – 1% (Fire) – 2% (EMS)

A report of mutual aid calls were reported at 90 given with 47 received. Of the 90 provided, 56 were for billable ambulance.

Ambulance Revenues

2007 - \$458,581.83

2008 - \$572,308.97

2009 - \$501,417.89

In addition, Chief LeClaire reported on Fire Prevention and Inspection 2009 Activity and spoke to his duties for Emergency Management.

FY11 Goals are as follows:

- *Maintain current deployment/locations of resources*
- *Maintain minimum response times to all districts*
- *Evaluate consolidation/shared services*
- *Insure that all multi-unit residential occupancies are in compliance with smoke and CO detector requirements*
- *Coordinate Seacoast Evacuation Planning Project*

Chief LeClaire advised the City Council that this budget is 0% over FY10 and that minimum staffing on all shifts falls from 13 to 12.

- **School Department – Superintendent of Schools
McDonough**

Superintendent McDonough reviewed the mission of the School Department – *“Educating all students by challenging them to become thinking, responsible, contributing citizens who continue to learn throughout their lives”*.

He reviewed various statistics of the department and informed the City Council that the 5-year average of graduates enrolling in postsecondary is 76%. He reported that the drop-out rate for 2008-2009 was 1.1% and the number of students expected to start in the fall for PK-12 is 2,667. There are 389 special needs students and there is an increase in SAU #50 for tuition of \$500,000.00. Superintendent McDonough reported that 76% of the staff has advanced degrees. He discussed the various budgets that were requested by the City Council – one with a 2% reduction in workforce and a budget built upon 96% of FY 2010.

Scenario #1

2% workforce reduction

- Reduced by 1.58 million from original recommendation
- Budget increases 2.8% (+ \$1,014,439)
- Adjusted 13.38 FTE positions or a workforce reduction of 3.6% general fund
- Protects the instructional core, unified arts and maintains extra-curricular programs in arts and athletics.

Reduction in staff is as follows:

PHS:

1 Technology Integrator
1 English Instructor
1 Special Education Teacher
.25 FTE Robotics, Electricity Teacher
4 Special Education Paraprofessional

PMS:

1 Behavior Interventionist
2 Special Education Teachers

Elementary:

1 Computer Teacher
1 Special Education Teacher
1 Paraprofessional @ PEEP
.625 FTE Custodian

Other:

Reduced 1 Clerical FTE; added 1 Computer Technician
Loss of funding for School Resource Officers

Other Adjustments

<i>Reduced technology equipment</i>	<i>\$151,238.00</i>
<i>Adjusted out-of-district tuition</i>	<i>\$105,728.00</i>
<i>Reduced repair & maintenance</i>	<i>\$40,000.00</i>
<i>Transportation</i>	<i>\$30,741.00</i>
<i>Furniture replacement</i>	<i>\$22,000.00</i>
<i>Insurance adjustments</i>	<i>\$13,191.00</i>

Scenario #2

96% of FY10

Further adjustments of \$2,474,685.00

Impacts programs

Order of magnitude

- 18.73 FTE Teachers
- 2.8 Paraprofessionals
- 2.5 FTE Clericals
- 2.0 FTE Administrators
- Funding for all athletics, music and drama programs

In closing, Superintendent McDonough said the department believes the proposed budget allows the School Department to keep the good work of the district moving forward and asked for the City Council's support.

- **Conclusion – City Manager Bohenko**

City Manager Bohenko reviewed the FY11 Proposed Tax Rate and reported that there has been an average annual increase of 46 cents over the last three years. The FY11 Proposed Tax Rate would be an increase of \$1.28. He advised the City Council every one cent reduction in the tax rate is equal to an approximately \$38,075.00 reduction in expenditures, an increase in revenues or a combination of both.

City Manager Bohenko announced the FY11 Budget Schedule as follows:

- 4/21/10 Work Session --- School Department
- 4/22/10 Work Session --- Municipal Department
- 4/28/10 Work Session --- Police and Fire Departments
- **5/10/10 Re-Open Public Hearing**

Mayor Ferrini thanked the City Manager, Police Chief Ferland, Fire Chief LeClaire and Superintendent McDonough for their presentations.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT/INPUT

Mayor Ferrini welcomed those in attendance and announced that residents of the City of Portsmouth would be allowed to speak first this evening.

Valerie Fagin, Portsmouth resident, said she is an active member of WAVE and SIPP spoke in support of the school budget as well as keeping the indoor pool open. She thanked the City Council for allowing the public to speak this evening and asked that the 2.8% increase in the School Department budget be approved by the City Council. She said that the children are our future. In addition, she spoke to the benefits received by the indoor pool and urged the City Council to keep the facility open.

Donna Drapeau, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool. She said that this is the only pool of its type in the area and urged the City Council to keep the pool open.

Carolyn School, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and asked the City Council to explore the possibilities to keep the pool open.

Joan Cassidy, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and school department budget.

Mr. LeBlanc, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and it remaining open.

Dr. Flaherty, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool remaining open and the health benefits received by those that swim.

Jennifer Zorn, Portsmouth resident, is a member of SIPP and spoke to the information reviewed on the pool and reported the pool was built with a 50% grant and was to be open to non-residents. She said when the Recreation Board voted to close the indoor pool, the vote was taken prematurely and urged the Council to not close the pool.

Judy Ringer, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and that SIPP is willing to create a public/private partnership for the indoor pool to keep the facility open.

Diane Stradling, Portsmouth resident, spoke regarding the capital budget for sewer upgrades. She has a petition with 128 signatures requesting the Council to reconsider the funding to finish the reconstructing of the Lincoln Avenue sidewalks.

Margaret O'Rouke, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said she has letters from her two physicians asking that the pool remain open. She said the indoor pool is valuable and used by every generation and requested that the City Council allow for more consideration on this matter before a decision is made.

Scott McKee, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the school budget and expressed concern with the direction of the schools long term goals. He advised the City Council that he supports the proposed 2.8% increase to the School Department. It is important that we all work together for the City and said that exceptional schools are the fabric of our communities.

Jim Lamont, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of WAVE and the economic value of schools in the community. He said that home values remain high because people want to live and have their children go to the school system in the City of Portsmouth.

Maria Sillari, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the school budget and said it is important to protect the core of education in the City. In addition, she expressed the need to keep class sizes small.

Emma Adams, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the School Department and said any additional cuts will negatively affect programming. She urged the City Council to support the 2.8% increase to the school budget and focus on the needs of the students in this community.

Patrick Ellis, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the school budget and the devastating affects of a 96% budget of FY10 would have on the department. He said the school budget is an investment in our future. Mr. Ellis also addressed the impact of larger class sizes on students and their ability to learn. He expressed his opposition to the reduction of the Assistant Superintendent of Schools under the 96% budget. In addition, he spoke to the importance of after school programs for the students and urged the City Council to support the 2.8% increase as requested by the School Department.

John Shea, Portsmouth resident, said he feels fortunate to live in this community and appreciates the City Council and what they do for the residents. He spoke to leadership, vision and creativity in the budget and the need for the schools to receive adequate funding to provide the necessary education for our children. Mr. Shea urged the City Council to support the 2.8% increase in the school budget.

Barbara Conover, Portsmouth resident, thanked the City Council and staff for their work on this budget. She expressed her support for the indoor pool remaining open. She said it is a wonderful facility which she and many others utilize. In addition, she would support an increase in fees.

Lucille Perrin, Portsmouth resident, said quality of life is important and spoke to the need for the indoor pool to remain open. She spoke to the individuals that are dependent upon the pool for their exercise. Ms. Perrin said she would support an increase in fees in order for the pool to remain open.

John O'Leary, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the Municipal and School Department budgets and urged the City Council to approve them as submitted. The City has an obligation to invest in education for the future. He said a 2.8% increase in the School Department budget equals \$.27 per year on the tax rate in order to provide an adequate education for our children. He urged the City Council to approve the budgets and invest in our children and the City.

Anna Guth, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the 2.8% increase in the School Department budget. She said that computer classes are important to her son who is a second grader, and that would be lost if the budget increase is not approved.

Peter Somssich, Portsmouth resident, said cutting the budget is painful but it is also difficult to say we need to increase our taxes to sustain our quality of life. The City Council has provided excellent leadership and we must continue to provide quality services. He also spoke in support of the indoor pool and it remaining open.

Jim Ferland, Portsmouth resident spoke in support of the indoor pool and the need to find creative ways to live within our means. He urged the City Council to keep the indoor pool as it is, a valuable asset.

David Kish spoke to the declining population since the closure of the former Pease Air Force Base. He said that the budget since 1995 has expanded more than twice the rate of inflation. In addition, he spoke to the number of employees in the City and feels more work needs to be done on the preparation of the budget.

Sean Rafferty, Portsmouth resident, said residents are concern with their ability to pay a further increase in the tax rate. He said if residents would like to see their taxes reduced they should tell the City Council where to make the necessary cuts.

Rob McDowell, Portsmouth resident, said that individuals are being taxed out of their homes and that is a concern for many residents. He spoke to an effective education and how funds should be put where the money is necessary.

Neil (Last name – Inaudible), Portsmouth resident, spoke in favor of the indoor pool remaining open and an increase of 2.8% for the School Department. He said he is willing to pay more in order for the pool to remain open.

Chris Madden, Portsmouth resident, said he feels that the Police Department budget is too large with too many officers. He also said the City averages 2.2 employees per 1,000 residents. He addressed the creation of special patrols for the Police Department to augment staff for seasonal times of year.

(Name Inaudible), Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool. She said she is a member of the swim team and it is important to have the pool remain open for all those that use the facility.

(Name Inaudible), Portsmouth resident, said she has a petition which contains 135 signatures from students in favor of keeping the indoor pool open.

Tara Mickela, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the School Department budget and the value of education for the future of our children. She urged the City Council to support the 2.8% increase.

Rick Horwitz, Portsmouth resident, said some people think more spending equals more quality. He spoke to the cost per student to provide education in the City of Portsmouth and many individuals choose to send their children outside of the district for education. In addition, Mr. Horwitz spoke to the difficult economic times we are all facing and now is the time we need schools to be more creative.

John Shore, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said he use to be a member of the swim team and the indoor pool is a valuable resource for the City and its residents.

(Name Inaudible - Student), spoke in support of the indoor pool remaining open.

(Name Inaudible – Student), spoke in support of the indoor pool remaining open.

(Name Inaudible – Student), spoke in support of the indoor pool and the need for it to remain open.

Olivia Ardito, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the School Department budget and the need for a valued education for all.

Bill St. Laurent, Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, Portsmouth resident, said the information provided this evening by members of the Association could be given to the City for their review and reference. He said it has been difficult to work on the budget and make comparisons with prior years. Mr. St. Laurent said there is a need for a reduction in taxes and many residents are struggling. He urged the City Council to consider residents and their ability to pay.

At 9:45 p.m., Mayor Ferrini declared a brief recessed. At 9:50 p.m., Mayor Ferrini called the meeting back to order.

Larry Drake, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and its need to remain open. He urged the City Council to find ways to keep the pool open. In addition, he also supports WAVE and the funding for our School Department.

Thomas Conneen, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the budget and said it has been a transparent process. He said he supports the indoor pool and keeping the facility open. He asked the City Council to think of how we provide services in the City.

Steve Miller, Portsmouth resident, thanked the City Council for the services provided to the residents. He said he values the employees of the City and also spoke in support of the indoor pool facility. He said the pool is a great resource for many and should remain open.

Mr. Dorley, Portsmouth resident, spoke in favor of the indoor pool and the facility remaining open.

Cynthia House, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and the value of the facility. She said her child is specially challenged and uses the facility and attends aquatic classes that are a valuable resource. In addition, she spoke to the wonderful staff at the pool and urged the City Council to keep the facility open.

Robert Padian, Portsmouth resident, spoke to a zero percent budget increase and requested cost figures for the level of services provided for each employee in the Police Department. He feels the Police Department is too large and their budget could be reduced.

Emily French, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool facility. She spoke to her time on the swim team and how it would be very difficult to replace the facility. She said children depend upon the lessons provided at the pool and urged the City Council to keep the facility open.

Janet Polaksy, Portsmouth resident, spoke to the quality of life and said the City values its community. She asked the City Council to work with SIPP on keeping the indoor pool open.

Lisa McDevitt, Portsmouth resident, said she is a senior at the high school and also serves as captain of the swim team. She said the people that use the facility are like a family and the pool should remain open. In addition, she spoke in support of the School Department budget request of a 2.8% increase and urged the support of the City Council.

Erik Anderson, Portsmouth resident, spoke to the budget process and his opposition to the proposed \$1.28 increase in the tax rate. He urged the City Council to give the departments a number that they are required to work within. He suggested that all the unions in the City should be approached about their cost of living increases. Mr. Anderson said it is a concern that 84% of operating costs equal salary and benefits. In closing, he said that the City needs to re-evaluate contracts and obligations.

Ms. Salisbury, Portsmouth High School Senior, spoke in support of the indoor pool facility remaining open. She advised the City Council that she has used the facility since she was three years old and it is an important part of her life and there is a real sense of community among the users of the pool.

Tasha Kostantacos, Portsmouth resident, said she is opposed to an increase in taxes and said residents are concerned with the cost of living in the community. She suggested that the City Council review the items brought forth by the Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers for areas of savings.

Glen Normandeau, Portsmouth resident, said he supports the value of all services he receives in the City. He spoke to the crushing affects and impacts the State of New Hampshire is facing with their budget crisis. He said it is important for us to all work together over the next several years because the budgets will continue to be difficult.

Rick Condon, Portsmouth resident and Firefighter, asked the City Council to support the 0% increase in the Fire Department. He said a 0% budget is a cut for the Fire Department and it would reduce the number of firefighters on a shift from 13 to 12. In closing, he urged the City Council to continue to invest in City services for the community.

Isaac Meehan, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool facility remaining open.

Mark Herrholz, Portsmouth resident and Firefighter, spoke in support of the proposed Fire Department budget. He said a 96% budget based on FY10 would be devastating to the department and the services provided. He addressed the issue of response time and how that would be impacted by a reduction in the Fire Department budget. In closing, he said quality of life and services are important to the community and urged the City Council to support the City Manager's recommended budget.

Kelly Parrott, North Hampton resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said the staff is dedicate and committed to providing a high level of service to its users. She said her daughter is a member of the swim team and said it is very important that the facility remain open.

Mark Brighton, Portsmouth resident, said that the indoor pool is a want versus a need. He said taxpayers do not want to be forced from their homes because a small group feels it is important for the indoor pool to remain open. He said there needs to be a reduction in the budget and the cost to the taxpayer.

Mr. French, Greenland, NH resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool remaining open. He spoke to the importance of children learning to swim and the lessons provided at the facility.

(Name Inaudible), Portsmouth resident, said that there are many residents that feel that the pool is a need and not a want and they need to be considered when the City Council makes their decision on this matter. He said that there are over 400 people here this evening in support of the pool.

Russ Grazier, Portsmouth resident, said that the School Department budget is reasonable and to go below a 2.8% increase would be very difficult. He urged the City Council to move forward with the budget because of the importance of quality of life and services provided for the residents of the community.

Dr. John Clairmont, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said he has commitments of over \$12,000.00 for funding for the pool and unless we know the direction the Council will take on this matter we are unable to do the amount of fundraising necessary. He urged the City Council to make a decision on the indoor pool facility in a timely manner.

Jim Tookey, North Hampton resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said it is important to individuals' health. He said the City may be able to find corporate sponsors to assist with the operational costs of the facility.

Grace Flaherty, York, Maine resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said she swims for health reasons and suggested using volunteers to assist with the operational costs.

(Name Inaudible), Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and the School Department budget. The pool is used by special needs children and is the only pool that has a slope that allows for easy access for the children. She urged the City Council to keep the facility operational.

Alfred Arcidi, North Hampton resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and it remaining open. He urged the City Council to realize the value of the facility.

Bob Pollard, Portsmouth resident, said a \$1.28 tax rate is a suggestion and the Council was elected to determine where cuts should be made. It is important for the City Council's leadership when adopting the budget and deciding upon the necessary cuts for a reasonable tax increase.

Carol Hallowell, Kittery, Maine resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool and said many individuals have expressed their concerns with the potential closure of the facility this evening. She urged the City Council to consider the impact on the quality of life to the individuals that utilize the facility.

(Name Inaudible), Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool remaining open. She said that the YMCA facility is not an adequate replacement or a solution.

Ann O'Sullivan, Rye, NH resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool. She said there are many valuable resources that the pool provides and one is the American Red Cross training which is a very valuable program and beneficial to the community. She urged the City Council to keep the facility open.

Bridget Thompson, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the indoor pool. She said she works at the pool and advised the City Council of its value to the community.

Norman Wilson, Portsmouth resident, spoke to the budget increases over the years. He said he is opposed to the suggested \$1.28 tax rate increase.

Jean Robinson, North Hampton resident, spoke opposed to the closure of the indoor pool. She said it is important for the facility to remain open.

VI. RECESS PUBLIC HEARING UNTIL MAY 10, 2010 AT 7:00 P.M.

At 11:00 p.m., Mayor Ferrini recessed the public hearing until May 10, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.



Kelli L. Barnaby, CMC/CNHMC
City Clerk