

At a Special meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on April 28, 2020;

Pursuant to R.I. Executive Orders #20-05 and #20-25 executed by Governor Gina Raimondo on March 16th and April 15, 2020, this Meeting is being Teleconferenced via Zoom. The information to join this zoom meeting was included in our posting as required by the noted Executive Orders.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: George O. (Buster) Steere, Jr., President; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice-President; William E. Reichert; Patricia Henry; and Julian (Jay) Forgue.

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Tim Kane, Town Solicitor; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Matt Floor, IT Director; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Christine Mathieu, Deputy Town Clerk

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Councilor G. Steere stated this meeting was called so the Town Council could address some essential issues that are important to the continuation of town business.

Councilor G. Steere further stated, typically, we allow public participation but due to the nature of the agenda items we will dispense with that tonight. Councilor G. Steere stated there will be an opportunity for all our residents to speak regarding next years budget at our Public Hearing which will be held on May 28th, baring any issues. Councilor G. Steere stated we will post the meeting information on our website soon, that meeting will probably be a zoom meeting also.

Councilor G. Steere stated that participants expressing inappropriate behavior or being disruptive may be removed from the meeting by the moderator.

IV. Town Budget 2020-21

A. Proposed Budget

1. Final Amendments to budget proposed by Budget Board April 22, 2020 (Before sending to Public Hearing

Councilor G. Steere stated this is the last time for changes until the Public Hearing (on May 28th).

Discussion:

Councilor G. Steere stated the Budget Board proposed a raise for the EMA Director at a percentage of the raises purposed for the other department heads. Councilor G. Steere stated he felt that raise should be at least the same percentage, especially in light of the amount of work Gerry Mosca has had.

Councilor W. Steere stated he agrees and would like to find a way to balance out increases for both that position and the Recreation Director position.

Councilor G. Steere stated the Budget Board did consider all the new events and programs the Recreation Director brought forward. Councilor G. Steere stated the amount in the budget now is less than originally proposed.

Councilor Henry stated the Recreation Director will have to spend a lot of time reconfiguring programs and events this year, in light of Covid-19.

Councilor W. Steere stated he understands, it is deserved, but again questioned if we need to balance it out.

Councilor G. Steere again stated the EMA Director should get the same percentage, at a minimum, as the other department heads.

D. Brennan explained the financial effect of the proposed change to EMA.

Councilor Forgue questioned the budget proposal for Human Resources asking if we would be filling that position by the end of the year. Councilor Henry stated it is for next year and we should have someone by then. D. Brennan stated the number proposed could be cut down but the amount we have in the budget, had things gone according to plan, would not have been enough. D. Brennan stated the proposed budget for HR is only an increase of \$269 but after discussion it was agreed to level fund that line item.

Councilor Reichert suggested Council consider a lock in for gasoline and fuel oil which he feels would save a considerable amount. After discussion, it was agreed to pursue that approach and perhaps adjust fuel line items, where they apply.

Councilor G. Steere questioned the changes to the Capital Budget. D. Brennan stated there are no additional items funded to keep the Capital Budget at 2%. D. Brennan stated that DPW and the Police Department took the biggest capital cuts.

D. Brennan stated that based on the adjustments discussed the capital may go up a small amount to reach the 2%.

Discussion resumed on the EMA Director salary. J. Fecteau, Clerk, and J. DelPrete, Police Chief, supported an increase for the EMA Director citing the amount of work he is doing and the amount he has planned for the future.

After discussion, it was agreed to bring that line item up to \$20,000.

B. Approval by Council of proposed Budget 2020-21 for Public Hearing

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to APPROVE the proposed budget, dated April 28, 2020, with the three proposed amendments: said budget is for Public Hearing to be held on May 28th, 2020; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: Copies of the budget will be available to the public on Wednesday or Thursday.

D. Brennan clarified the Council wanted her to raise the same amount of taxes as last year. Council answered in the affirmative.

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

Councilor Forgue - Aye

Councilor Henry - Aye

Councilor Reichert - Aye
Councilor W. Steere - Aye
Councilor G. Steere - Aye

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

D. Brennan requested the Town Council consider waiving the “late” fee for Vision Appraisal that would be in effect for not adhering to timeline in contract. D. Brennan explained it was due to the Town delaying a portion of the revaluation process due to the pandemic. Councilor G. Steere suggested that Council move the deadline. D. Brennan agreed and stated it would be extended thirty days.

V. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to ADJOURN at 8:20 p.m; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED