

## SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MUNICIPAL COMPLEX  
DATE: MONDAY, MAY 11, 2009

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

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

### **II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Ferrini, Assistant Mayor Blalock, Councilors Smith, Kennedy, Spear and Hejtmanek

Absent: Councilors Novelline Clayburgh, Dwyer and Pantelakos

Mayor Ferrini asked everyone to join in a moment of silent prayer in memory of Mayor Evelyn Sirrell. He announced that there will be a Service of Remembrance on Friday, May 15, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. here in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers for Mayor Sirrell.

### **III. RECESSED PUBLIC HEARING** *(Recessed from April 15, 2009)*

A. PROPOSED FY JULY 1, 2009 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2010 BUDGET

### **IV. PRESENTATION – CITY MANAGER BOHENKO**

City Manager Bohenko said that this is a reconvening of the FY10 Budget Public Hearing that was recessed on April 15, 2009. He reported on the various work sessions held with departments and announced that the Final Budget Review work session will be held on Wednesday, May 13, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. here in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers. He provided a handout reflecting further reductions and informed the Council that the anticipated tax rate would increase \$.27. City Manager Bohenko reported that the School Department's budget reflects the cost-of-living increases in the Teacher's contract which was approved by City Council. This represents 1.6% of the budget's 2.2% increase over the FY09 budget. The remaining increase of \$228,410.00 is requested by the School Board. City Manager Bohenko said that \$.21 of the tax rate increase is due to a loss of State revenue and County tax increase and the additional \$.6 is from the School Department.

City Manager Bohenko spoke to FY10 external factors affecting the budget to be as follows:

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| • Loss of Revenue Sharing                 | \$657,157.00 |
| • Reduction in Motor Vehicle Registration | \$250,000.00 |
| • Reduction in Investment Income          | \$250,000.00 |
| • Increase in County Tax                  | \$197,383.00 |

External factors which may affect the tax rate:

- Meals & Room Tax \$921,495.00
- School Building Aid \$1,016,222.00

City Manager Bohenko said the City Council must by Charter approve the budget by June 30, 2009 or his recommended budget will become adopted.

Mayor Ferrini announced that on Monday, May 15, 2009 the City Council is anticipating to adopt the contract for the Professional Management Association and Non-Union employees and reported that they have agreed to take a wage freeze for FY10. He thanked the management staff for coming forward with this contract proposal. City Manager Bohenko thanked the management staff for their leadership.

## **V. PUBLIC COMMENT/INPUT**

Mayor Ferrini reopened the public hearing and called for speakers.

Bill St. Laurent, Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, Portsmouth resident, said the Association would like to extend their appreciation to the City Council, Police and Fire Commissions and Municipal Departments for coming forward with a zero percent budget. He also thanked Mayor Ferrini for requesting a zero percent budget and committing to it. Mr. St. Laurent said the Association supports the budget as long as all departments come in at zero percent. In addition, he thanked the City Manager for foregoing his raise in FY10 and increasing his co-pay for health insurance. He spoke to the various items contained in the Capital Improvement Plan for studies and feels the funding is unnecessary and could be accomplished by department heads.

Erik Anderson, Portsmouth resident, said the simple landscape has changed from last year. He spoke to the diligence of the City Manager, City Council and staff for bringing forward a zero percent budget. He expressed concern with the bond debt for the city and said we need to minimize debt services for out years. Mr. Anderson spoke in support of using \$1,500,000.00 from fund balance this year. He advised the City Council that he concurs with comments made by Mr. St. Laurent relative to funds being spent for various studies. In closing, he commended the City for the hard work in achieving this budget.

City Manager Bohenko clarified that the amount being used from fund balance is \$1,053,000.00. He also said that the bond limitation is a self-imposed rule of 10% and that we could potentially borrow up to 33%.

Emmy Adams, Portsmouth resident, said that the School Board is not asking for much in terms of their budget request. She spoke to the various volunteers and parent donations provided to the schools to compensate for items that are not afforded through the budget. She addressed the concern of increased class sizes and its affect on children's education. She urged the Council to support the funding requested by the School Board.

Jennifer Gaudreau, Portsmouth resident, spoke in support of the School Department budget. She said a continuing concern for parents, is the increased class sizes and its affect on the students and their educational needs.

Bill St. Laurent, Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, Portsmouth resident, said he has many friends that are retired teachers and they have indicated that the class sizes are not a concern.

Kirsten Barton, Portsmouth resident, thanked the City Council, City Manager and staff for how they run the City. She expressed concern with class sizes and said it is important that the budget is not micromanaged. She spoke to the development of policies and the creation of standards for programs at the schools. In closing, Ms. Barton encouraged individuals to take tours of the various schools in the City.

Ethel Sara Wolper – spoke in support of the School Budget and said that she is a professor and class sizes are important.

Valerie Fagin, Portsmouth resident, said she represents High School parents that support the school budget and urged the Council to approve the School Department budget as requested.

After three calls and no further speakers, Mayor Ferrini declared the public hearing closed.

Mayor Ferrini said the City Council appreciates the hard work of departments on the budget.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:40 p.m., Councilor Spear moved to adjourn. Seconded and voted.



Kelli L. Barnaby, CMC/CNHMC  
City Clerk