

Fairfax Town Council Minutes
Special Meeting
Fairfax Women's Club
Saturday, June 5, 2010

Call to Order/Roll Call:

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

Larry Bragman
Pam Hartwell-Herrero
John Reed
Lew Tremaine
David Weinsoff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Rock, Town Manager
Jim Moore, Planning Director
Ken Hughes, Chief of Police
Laurie Ireland-Ashley, Finance Director
Roger Meagor, Ross Valley Fire Chief
Judy Anderson, Town Clerk

Mayor Tremaine called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Approval of Agenda and Affidavit of Posting

M/S, Weinsoff/Bragman, Motion to approve the agenda and the affidavit of posting.

AYES: All

Open Time

No speakers came forward.

Interview and appointment of candidate(s) to serve on the Fairfax Youth Commission

Three applicants were interviewed for the two positions on the Youth Commission.

M/S, Weinsoff/Hartwell-Herrero, Motion to appoint Jake Weinsoff and Carlee Murray to the Youth Commission and Nadia Trautwein as the alternate.

AYES: All

Mayor Tremaine stated that he would support a resolution to expand the Youth Commission to allow Ms. Trautwein to become a regular member.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Setting the Amount of The Municipal Services Tax for The 2010-2011 Fiscal Year

Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Setting the Amount of the Special Municipal Services Tax for the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year

Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Setting the Amount of the Utility Users Tax for the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year

Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Setting the Amount of the Pension Override Tax for the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year

Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Setting A Fee For The Purpose Of Funding Local Stormwater Pollution Prevention Activities For Fiscal Year 2010-2011

Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Fairfax Setting the Tax Rate in connection with its general obligation bonds (Measure K Bond Assessment) for fiscal year 2010-2011

M/S, Weinsoff/Bragman, Motion to Adopt the Consent Calendar.

AYES: All

Discussion and Consideration of the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement among the Town of Fairfax, Town of San Anselmo, and the Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District for the Ross Valley Fire Department – Tremaine, Fire Chief (continued from June 2nd meeting)

John Sharp, Contract Municipal Attorney, reviewed the changes made to the draft document.

The Town Council discussed the language in the draft document regarding reaching consensus and the terms of withdrawal. Vice Mayor Bragman suggested changes to the wording in 13.4(b) regarding withdrawal from the JPA and there was a consensus of the Council to accept those changes. The other recommended changes as drafted were also accepted by the Council.

Mayor Tremaine opened the discussion to the audience.

Valeri Hood, Dominga Ave., stated that she had doubts about the agreement and the phrase “in the spirit of cooperation” after the experience with the Ross Valley School District where they ignored the wishes of Fairfax; expressed concern that San Anselmo would receive \$100,000 while Fairfax would receive no extra funds; and urged an equal vote for Fairfax; and suggested that the JPA also address the involvement of the firefighters’ in Fairfax elections by not allowing the Fairfax firefighters to walk precincts in support of candidates in Fairfax nor to contribute to flyers and mailers, because they didn’t live in Fairfax but influenced the elections.

Frank Berto, Sleepy Hollow Fire Board member, stated that the agreement would finish a process begun in 2003 and that he believed the changes made to the agreement would be acceptable to San Anselmo and Sleepy Hollow.

M/S, Bragman/Weinsoff, Motion to approve the amended and restated Joint Powers Agreement among the Town of Fairfax, Town of San Anselmo, and the Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District for the Ross Valley Fire Department.

Roll Call Vote:

Bragman: AYE; Hartwell-Herrero: AYE; Reed: AYE; Tremaine: AYE; Weinsoff: AYE

Introduction and Overview of Proposed 2010-2011 Budget - Town Manager

Town Manager Rock distributed a staff report to the Council and staff that provided recommendations from the Town Manager and the Finance Director for balancing the budget that included staff reductions and staff concessions to reduce a \$430,375 shortfall and to address the ongoing structural deficit. He described all of the factors in the declining revenues and increasing costs for the Town. He explained that the difference between the recommended savings of \$375,117 and the \$430,375 shortfall would be made up by line-item cuts in the budget. He further stated that, due to the newly negotiated JPA with the Fire Service, the Town could be saving \$20,000 in increased cost for the next year because of Sleepy Hollow’s contribution. He noted that some of the recommendations had to be negotiated with the labor groups before going into effect.

Town Manager Rock presented the budgets for the Town Attorney, the Town Treasurer, and the Town Manager.

He explained the shared costs that appeared in each department budget. In response to a question from Councilmember Weinsoff, Town Manager Rock explained that litigation costs for the Town Attorney were difficult to predict in the budget, and that the budgeted amount could be increased by the Council when necessary. In

response to a question from Councilmember Hartwell-Herrero, Town Manager Rock explained that the water and energy bills were allocated to the various departments but could be totaled in one location in the budget.

Town Clerk Anderson presented the Park and Recreation, Town Clerk and the Election budgets.

Finance Director Ireland-Ashley presented the Finance Department Budget. In response to a question from Vice Mayor Bragman regarding the possibility of a 5% return on Genni Maes, Director Ireland-Ashley stated that the Town needed to have funds available at all times and needed more fluidity on investments.

Planning and Building Services Director Moore presented the Planning and Building Department budget. He stated that Sausalito, comparable in population to Fairfax, had six people in the department compared with 3.5 in Fairfax. In response to a question from Vice Mayor Bragman, Director Moore reported that the tax assessment at the old Albertsons site would change in March of 2011.

Police Chief Hughes presented an overview of the Police Department budget. He explained the use of overtime in the department in response to a question from Councilmember Hartwell-Herrero.

Ross Valley Fire Chief Meagor presented the Fire Department budget. He explained that Ross Valley was the only department that had two-person engines; that they provided fire protection at the lowest cost per person in the county; that they had the largest volunteer program with fifteen volunteers; that over 50% of the fire personnel lived locally; and that 14 personnel were needed to respond to a fire and Ross Valley Fire had seven on duty on a given day. He stated that the fire department's retirement plan was 3% @55, that they had never gone to 3% @50; that the two non-safety employees in the department paid their entire retirement contribution; and that the Department would once again be using reserves, \$300,000, to balance the budget.

Town Manager Rock presented the budget for the Public Works department and for capital improvements. He also reviewed the Miscellaneous budget. He noted that Public Works Director Wilkie was working on the development of a master maintenance plan for Town facilities including parks, storm drains and streets to better plan for repairs and upkeep. In response to a question from Councilmember Hartwell-Herrero asking whether the retrofit of the street lights would result in a reduction of the \$30,000 cost listed in the budget, Town Manager Rock responded that he anticipated that it would reduce the cost.

Mayor Tremaine opened the discussion to the audience.

Ted Pugh, Oak Manor, asked for clarification of the \$200 cash back program and asked how much money would be saved to pay health coverage for the employee only. He suggested ways that the costs for employees could be reduced.

Susan Brandborg, Dominga Ave., expressed concern about the dwindling funds in Measure "K," and asked that the Council remember to find funding for streets and drains.

Mayor Tremaine suggested that the Council look at reorganizing the management of the Town, a suggestion made at the Finance Committee meeting, and that such a discussion should be held in a Closed Session of the Council and that the Council should look at every possible option sooner rather than later.

Councilmember Weinsoff stated that "everything" should include a study of police consolidation since the police cost was 37% of the budget.

Mayor Tremaine asked for copies of the various reports or a compilation of the reports on police consolidation that had been done and agreed to include police consolidation in the Council discussions.

Councilmember Hartwell-Herrero ascertained that the Department Heads did not know ahead of time about the large deficit and suggested that they could be asked to look at their budgets again for possible reductions.

There was a discussion of the carryover funds.

Councilmember Hartwell-Herrero asked about possible savings on water use for the ballfield. She noted that there were special meters that could help control the watering. Councilmember Reed suggested the possible use of gray water and the Council discussed options.

Vice Mayor Bragman stated that the re-opening of the police consolidation issue was not likely to produce savings in the current year; that delaying the hiring of a sergeant in the police department was projected to save \$50,000; that there were savings to be had with the Town's investments, the possible parking revenues to be discussed in September, but that there were no easy answers.

The meeting was adjourned to a special closed session meeting on Monday, June 14th at 6:30 p.m. at Fairfax Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Anderson, Town Clerk

DRAFT