

State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May 2008 A.D. the said meeting was called to order by Town Council President Vincenzo Cordone at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room. This meeting was reconvened in order to continue the Financial Town Assembly held on May 6, 2008.

PRESENT: Vincenzo Cordone, Beverly Kenney, Sylvia Thompson; Town Manager William DiLibero; Finance Director James Lathrop; Public Works Director Douglas Reese; Town Clerk Elizabeth Cook – Martin

Absent: Barbara Capalbo, Thomas Buck

The meeting opened with a moment of silent meditation and a salute to the Flag.

#### GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS

Council President Cordone stated this meeting was continued from last week and that one item had been brought to the Town Council's attention. He stated the two libraries had asked for an increase, noting at the time \$55,000.00 was budgeted for both libraries. The Council's consensus was to give each library an additional \$2,000.00. Ms. Penn Martin, from the Ashaway Free Library, thanked the Council for their consideration.

Councilor Thompson requested the Council place \$500.00 in the budget for the American Legion toward the Memorial Day Parade. She noted the Town granted money toward the parade in the past and was unsure why that still wasn't being done. She added the Town of Richmond gave the American Legion \$500.00 yearly and she felt the town should fund the parade on a yearly basis. The Council's consensus was to give the American Legion \$500.00.

Richard Kenney, of the Hope Valley Ambulance Association, noted the Town's contribution had been cut by \$5,000.00 and felt that was a steep cut. He stated for

many years the Town level funded the ambulance service and now with fuel prices skyrocketing, it would be a hardship for them. Mr. Kenney stated their gasoline bill went up \$600.00 in the last month because of the steep rise in prices when normally they paid approximately \$900.00 a month, now it would be \$1,500.00 per month. He stated medical insurance for their three employees would be going up 40% this year. He stated they had made every effort to supply the Town with funding information but a \$5,000.00 cut was going to be awful hard to take. Mr. Kenney expressed disappointment no one contacted them for additional material and he had to learn about the hearing in the newspaper. Mr. Lathrop stated letters had been sent out. Councilor Thompson stated she had understood they had not come to the last meeting because they had a surplus savings of \$399,000.00. Mr. Kenney replied they had one savings account for \$5,000.00 and an ambulance contingency fund which was about \$18,000.00. He added they had a radio contingency which was about \$3,000. He stated they had approximately \$70,000.00 total and had to keep about \$50,000.00 to pay their insurance. He stressed they did not have a surplus. Mr. Kenney stated they were in debt by \$400,000.00 and hoped the finance director had not interpreted that money as a surplus. He explained they had a \$300,000.00 line of credit at Washington Trust Company for their new building constructed last year and also had a \$100,000.00 personal loan. He stressed the ambulance association certainly did not have a surplus. Councilor Thompson felt they should be level funded at the very least. Mr. Kenney stated he would be happy to be level funded. Council President Cordone stated next year only one department would be responsible for sending letters out to these entities. The Council's consensus was to level fund both Ambulance Corp's.

Councilor Thompson pointed out that Mr. DiLibero, the Town Manager, had pulled together a report of the exact dollar amount saved by having a GIS/IT Department in response to a taxpayer's inquiry. Mr. DiLibero explained in the past each department had different consultants providing IT services to them, at a cost of \$32,335.00 in fiscal year 05/06. He explained the finance director had

looked through past bills to pull out the amount the Town was spending. He noted the following year when the GIS/IT Department was started, the consultant expense dropped down to \$9,010.00 and the next year to \$6,066.00. He added the Town still budgeted for consultants, but not for IT purposes, only for technicians who worked on copy machines, or phone services. He stated the GIS/IT person took care of all computers and net working. He explained the budget increased \$31, 000.00 but having a GIS/IT Department saved the Town some serious money and the service was much better than the band-aid approach used in the past.

Penn Martin thanked the Town Council again on behalf of the Ashaway Library for the additional \$2,000.00. She informed the Town Council that on June 3, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the Chariho Middle School, the Chariho Players would be performing a play called the “Wood River Anthology” which was written from interviews the libraries had conducted with the elderly citizens of the area.

Michelle Walker also thanked the Town Council, not only for the additional funds, but the message that sent to the community. She felt the Town Council members valued reading and the services the libraries provided to the community.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR KENNEY AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR THOMPSON TO ADJOURN THE FINANCIAL TOWN ASSEMBLY.

IN FAVOR: Cordone, Thompson, Kenney

OPPOSED: None.

SO VOTED

Elizabeth J. Cook-Martin

Town Clerk

Lorraine Tarket-Arruda

Deputy Town Clerk