

Prospect Town Council  
Regular Meeting  
Approved Minutes  
May 5, 2020

Chairman Slapikas called to order the Regular Meeting of the Prospect Town Council @ 7:00 p.m. The meeting was a Virtual Meeting by videoconference via GoToMeeting as authorized by Executive Orders 7B and 7I. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present: J Slapikas**

A roll call for attendance was taken by Chairman Slapikas.

**Via Online:** P. Murray, T. Graveline, S. Pilat, R. Blanc, P. Geary, L. Fitzgerald @ 7:09 p.m., M. Patchkofsky, & S. Lusas Kolodziej

**Also, in Attendance via phone/online:** Mayor Chatfield. There were additional callers online that could view, listen and chat.

**Mayor's Report:**

-Mayor Chatfield advised that there were two more positive cases of COVID-19 in Prospect making the total 44, with no hospitalized patients.

-The Mayor advised that there will be raising of the catch basins, milling and paving of Rte 68 from the junction of Rte 68 & Rte 69 to Rte 70 in Cheshire.

**Transfers:**

The Council was emailed a transfer in the amount of \$22,420. Discussion.

**Motion** made by S. Lusas Kolodziej, seconded by R. Blanc to transfer the amount of \$22,420.00:

From	To	
#7053 Ice & Snow Maintenance \$22,420.00	Assessor #5250 Supplies	\$ 403.00
	Town Buildings #6100-05 Water	\$ 5,000.00
	Solid Waste #6590-00 Custodians	\$ 5,233.00
	Town Clerk #5500-01 Assistant	\$ 7,914.00
	Town Clerk #5500-02 Clerk	<u>\$ 3,870.00</u>
Total		\$22,420.00

The Council voiced their concern with transfers into #5500-01 Town Clerk Assistant (\$7,914.00) and #5500-02 Town Clerk -Clerk (\$3,870.00) as both of these individuals had left. Chairman Slapikas commented that a new Town Clerk Assistant was not hired until the end of March beginning of April. T. Graveline commented on the amount of monies to be transferred into the Town Clerk's Office line items, as there should be monies in those two-line items after both individuals leaving. M. Patchkofsky commented on having three people in the Town Clerk's office. The Mayor advised that he wanted to have the Town Clerk's office fully staffed. The Mayor advised that when the Town Clerk was ailing, he hired a retired Town Clerk from Watertown to cover and she stayed on; she is involved in training of the new Asst. Town Clerk. A clerk for that office had not been hired as of yet. The Council advised that one person is paid through both salaries of the individuals that had left, noting that there should still be some monies left within these line items. Chairman Slapikas asked for further comments. M. Patchkofsky questioned the amount expended so far for line item Town Buildings #6100-05 Water (\$5,000.00) and was advised \$2,228.00. Disc. The Council voiced their opinion again that there still should be monies within the Town Clerk's Budget to cover the salaries of one person. The Mayor withdrew this transfer request until next Tuesday's meeting.

-Road Repair and Improvements, 8-24 Letter dated 4/16/2020 – Approved by PZC - Town of Prospect Highway Safety Program 2020 to improve and repair Town Roads and for Fire Dept. Radio Repeaters. Disc. The Mayor stated that the cost for the Radio Repeaters is \$115,000. Council members questioned the Radio Repeaters for the Police Dept. The Mayor advised that the monies for the Police Dept. Radio Repeaters will be coming out of Police Overtime. The Mayor also stated that there will be no bonding for the Police Dept. Radio Repeaters.

-Bonding, Mayor Chatfield advised that he will request an approval for bonding for Roads (Milling, Catch Basins, Paving) in the amount of \$785,000 (Roads) and \$115,000 for the Fire Dept. Radio Repeaters for a total of \$900,000. Disc. The Mayor stated that the first payment would be 8/2021; nothing will be coming out of this Budget. The Mayor commented on the roads listed and stated that a list of the roads is in the both that goes with the Budget. Disc. The Mayor stated that there will be two calls to the meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> Call the adoption of the 2020-2021 Budget; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call the adoption of the Bonding Package. Disc. The 'Call' of the meeting will be taken at the Council's May, 26, 2020

meeting. **Motion** made by P. Murray, seconded by L. Fitzgerald to add to the meeting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call of the meeting for Bonding of \$900,000 for Highway Safety Program 2020 to repair and improve Town roads and for Fire Dept. Radio Repeaters. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Lusas Kolodziej, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Pilat **Opposed/None Motion carries.**

Council members discussed adding to the Agenda Budget related items: Mayor's Office. **Motion** made by T. Graveline, seconded by R. Blanc to add to the Agenda Budget related items: Mayor's Office. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved**/ J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murry, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion carries.** A discussion took place on line item #5000-04 Clerical Asst. PT 3. Chairman Slapikas commented on the recommended amount of \$65,000 and suggested from the budgeted amount of \$56,595 of the 2019-2020 fiscal year, adding a 2.25% increase for a total of \$57,868. Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by S. Lusas Kolodziej to approve the salaried amount for line item #5000-04 Clerical Assts. PT 3 in the amount of \$57,868. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion Carries.**

#5000-08 Code Red: The Mayor requested to change line item #5000-08 Code Red from \$4,130 to \$7,130. **Motion** made by T. Graveline, seconded by S. Lusas Kolodziej to change line item #5000-08 Code Red from \$4,130 to \$7,130. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion Carries.** Disc. M. Patchkofsky asked the Mayor to check into other options of reaching out to the public with emails or texts messages, and biweekly check-ins to reach out to the public other than Code Red. The Mayor suggested that there could be other options with Code Red and he will check in to them.

**#5000-09 Payroll Service:** Disc. Chairman Slapikas will email the Council 4 packets for review for payroll service vendors. P. Murray requested that the Council interview the vendors. Mayor Chatfield advised that he had narrowed the selection to 2 vendors, but the interviews probably would not be until October. Council members stated that they would like to have a virtual meeting with the payroll services prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>. Chairman Slapikas commented that a discussion could be held after the Budget and prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>. The Council commented on line item #5000-09 Payroll Service \$12,000 and leaving this amount in place. M. Patchkofsky commented that Direct Deposit would be negotiated with the Union contracts and should become a Policy. Disc. The Mayor stated that he would set up times for Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> of May for the Council to interview the potential payroll services vendor before one is chosen for hire. Chairman Slapikas advised of the times to be at 5:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. #5000-09 Payroll Service: **Motion** made by P. Geary, seconded by T. Graveline to approve the line item of #5000-09 Payroll Service in the amount of \$12,000. **9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion Carries.** S. Lusas Kolodziej advised that she would not be on the call as she would be working. Chairman Slapikas advised that the total of \$12,000 remained.

**#5000-07 Finance Director (\$40,000):** Motion made by S. Pilat, seconded by M. Patchkofsky to approve the budget line item of #5000-07 Finance Director (\$40,000) for discussion. A lengthy discussion took place on the Finance Director. M. Patchkofsky commented on a consulting firm or a Finance Clerk, hiring @ \$18 to \$20 per hour with a contract for one year. Mayor Chatfield advised that he was in disagreement as the Towns of Bethany and Beacon Falls had a Finance Director and he did not want what previously happened to happen again. The Council commented on having policies and procedures in place noting internal controls. S. Lusas Kolodziej commented on creating a position and adjusting as needed. T. Graveline and P. Geary commented that they did not feel the Town would need a Finance Director at this time. Council members supported someone with an Accounting background, such as an Accounting Clerk, with their sole responsibility being Financial; policies and procedures with financial oversight. R. Blanc noted the cost of a Finance Director and also felt that this individual was not necessary at this time. Comments were made to reducing the proposed amount of \$40,000. A motion was made. **Motion** made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by S. Pilat to reduce the amount of \$40,000 by half. Disc. The Council also commented that they would like a job description for this position by the Public Hearing. A rollcall vote was taken to leave as is the amount of \$40,000.

**2 Approved**, S. Lusas Kolodziej, S. Pilat

**7 Opposed**/ J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, T. Graveline, R. Blanc, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, P. Geary

**Motion** fails for the amount of \$40,000. Chairman Slapikas stated that the line item #5000-00 Salary will remain in the amount of \$88,903 for the Mayor.

P. Geary commented on line item #5000-07. A motion was made to change the title of line item #5000-07 Finance Director. **Motion** made by P. Geary, seconded by T. Graveline to change the title to Accounting Clerk or Financial Clerk. Disc. A request was made to change the title to Municipal Financial Clerk. T. Graveline requested to change the title from Finance Director to Municipal Financial Clerk. T. Graveline suggested to change the new title to Municipal Accounting Asst. **Motion** made by T. Graveline, seconded by P. Murray to amend the previous motion and to change the title to Municipal Accounting Assistant for line item #5000-07. Disc. A request was made to create a new line item to for the current consultant as a transition would need to be made from the Consultant to the Municipal Accounting Assistant. Disc.

Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by P. Geary to amend and to change the title of line item #5000-07 to Municipal Accounting Assistant and drop down the amount to \$10,000. Disc. A rollcall vote was taken.

**9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion Carries.** **Motion** made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by T. Graveline to create a new line item #5000-10 in the amount of \$10,000 for a Transitional Consultant to help with the transition from the Consultant to the new Municipal Accounting Assst. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion Carries.**

Bottom Line Total: \$243,109.

**-Motion** made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by R. Blanc to send the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget to public hearing on May 12, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved**/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. **Opposed/None Motion Carries.** Disc.

**Public Participation:** Chairman Slapikas noted that if any callers had questions for the Council or the Mayor to hit \*6 on their phone.

Tom Galvin, 27 Rockridge Terrace commented that 3 years ago someone was positioned for Finance Director but the Mayor did not want to make changes and he voiced his opinion and was stonewalled. T. Galvin advised that he felt this would happen again.

Chairman Slapikas asked for further comments, no other comments were made. Chairman Slapikas closed Public Participation.

T. Graveline commented on the Budget of the Assessor line item #5250-03 Car Expense advised that there was not a total of \$700 and asked to have this line item corrected. T. Graveline also questioned line item #7150-00 Fleet Maintenance in the amount of \$105,000. Chairman Slapikas advised that this line item was approved on 4/16/2020. Chairman Slapikas thanked T. Graveline.

**Guests:** None

**Chair's Report:**

Canine: Police: Lt. Nelson Abarzua. P. Geary began the lengthy discussion on the Police canine advising that the Council was not aware that the Town would be gaining a Canine Police Officer. Questions were raised as to the officer and canine; if the canine was the officer's and was the officer training the canine. P. Geary also questioned if this position was negotiated with the Union. Lt. Abarzua advised that this position was discussed with the Union stating what would be best for the Town and then advertised and addressed; the canine will be certified in 4 weeks and once certified will be a canine officer. Lt Abarzua advised that this is a pilot program. The officer, Tony Morrison, is a retired 20-year veteran with the State Police. The canine is #1 in his class; he will be crossed trained for narcotics/opioids and tracking besides patrol. Lt Abarzua advised that the officer lives 32 minutes away in East Haddam. Concerns were raised as to a 32-minute wait for dog and the Council questioned why not use Naugatuck Police dogs or a surrounding town. Lt. Abarzua advised that he would need to get permission from that Town to use their canine; in this way

the officer and the canine are dedicated to the Town. The officer would be using the older white SUV that the animal control officer had used. Council members explained that they did not feel the need for a canine officer. Lt. Abarzua advised of a canine tracking a lost child or elderly resident. M. Patchkofsky commented that the Council was put off guard with the canine, explaining that there is nothing in the Budget for a canine officer. The Council expressed their concern as to cost and liability. Lt. Abarzua commented that the cost for the canine would be \$1.00 per day that the officer would be paid. Lt. Abarzua also commented that the canine would be under the \$1,000,000 insurance policy of the Town. M. Patchkofsky continued that there is nothing on paper as to cost, car, gas, mileage or compensation; there is just too many things. Lt. Abarzua also added that there is a \$39 a month payment for pet health insurance. Council members advised that there is nothing the 2020-2021 Budget for the canine. Council members questioned where the monies would be coming from. The Mayor advised from the Police Overtime Account. Motion made by M. Patchkofsky to table this discussion until further information was received. T. Graveline and P. Murray requested to give to the Council an explanation on the costs as to coverage for this Canine Program as there is nothing in the upcoming 2020-2021 Budget. A rollcall vote was taken. **2 Opposed/S. Pilat, S. Lusas Kolodziej 7 Approved/ J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, T. Graveline, P. Geary, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, R. Blanc Motion carries.**

The Council thanked Lt. Abarzua for his time.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion** made by T. Graveline, seconded by P. Murray to approve the minutes of 4-16, 21, 23 & 28, 2020. Discussion. **Motion** made by T. Graveline, seconded by P. Murray to approve as amended the minutes of 4 21, 23 & 28, 2020. A rollcall vote was taken. **9 Approved/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, T. Graveline, L. Fitzgerald, P. Murray, S. Pilat, P. Geary, S. Lusas Kolodziej, R. Blanc. Opposed/None Motion passes.**

**New Business:**

**Refunds:**

**Motion** made by S. Lusas Kolodziej, seconded by L. Fitzgerald to approve the Tax Refunds dated 5/6/2020 in the amount of \$472.45. A roll call vote was taken. **Approved/ J. Slapikas, P. Murray, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, R. Blanc, P. Geary, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej, M. Patchkofsky. Opposed/None. Motion Carries.**

Transfers: Previously addressed

Resignations: None

Assignments: None

Bids/Grants: None

-Vote to approve printer/scanner for Town Clerk: Motion made by S. Lusas Kolodziej, seconded by R. Blanc to approve the purchase of the Town Clerk's office for a printer/scanner in the amount of \$359.65. Disc. **9 Approved/J. Slapikas, M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, R. Blanc, S. Pilat, T. Graveline, P. Murray, L. Fitzgerald, S. Lusas Kolodziej. Opposed/None Motion Carries.**

**Correspondence:**

Chairman Slapikas read into the record the email received and dated 5/1/2020 from Tom Galvin, 27 Rockridge Terrace, (Schedule B) regarding the breach in the payroll account, the position of a Financial Director and other budget related questions listed:

**'Other Budget Related Questions:**

1. Rather than sifting through all the multiple individual components, for 2020-2021 will the Mayor's 'all in' annual compensation remains at the previously reported \$130,000+ level?
2. Assuming that at least some of the 'Budget Management & Reporting' functions historically performed by the Mayor (and others) may be absorbed by the 'new' position (if approved) will the Mayor's salary (and others) be reduced proportionately?
3. I understand that unlike the 2019-2020 Budget year, there is not a local election this coming November, but will you continue to aggressively use the surplus in the General Fund and anticipated revenue from 'Police Overtime' to reduce the tax burden on Prospect taxpayers?
4. Speaking to the positive balance in the General Fund, can the 'Administration' provide the residents defining the various 'sources' of that surplus including: a) taxes collected but not spent as budgeted, b) borrowed / bonded money not spent in prior years, c) unanticipated revenues / rebates (Region 16 surplus, state, town fees, sale of town assets, etc), d) miscellaneous / other?
5. How is this budget reflecting / addressing the 'unfunded liability' related to Town Employee Post-Employment Benefits that was identified last year by the outside auditors and initially estimated to be 'about' \$650,000?
6. I understand that Region 16 notified the town that it could 'retain' approximately \$177,000 of the Regions 2019-2020 appropriation, and that the town would utilize that 'windfall' to reduce what is possibly a \$1.5m increase in the Prospect Share of the 2020-2021 Education Budget. As Prospect had previously 'retained' upwards of \$1.0m of Region 16 appropriations over recent years, will those funds, that were never returned to, or used to offset Region 16 expenses, also be used to reduce the overall financial burden on Prospect's taxpayers?
7. Given the scope of [human] errors that were openly acknowledged in mid-2017, dating back as far as the 2014-2015 budget year, the current problems, such as 'no one balancing bank statements', and the discovery of various 'procedural irregularities' with several earlier audits, will the 2020-2021 budget include sufficient funding to support a thorough 'forensic' type audit going back a minimum of 5-6 years?
8. For all requested line item budget amounts are greater than \$5,000, and represent the purchase of goods or services that will be provided by outside vendors or individuals, will the Town's Purchasing Policy requiring competitive bidding be strictly adhered to this 2020-2021 budget year?

As I'm sure you appreciate, the [hopefully] once in a lifetime crisis that now negatively impacts essentially everyone, including for many, significant financial impacts, I'm also hopeful that the Town Council will do whatever is necessary to at least maintain the mil rate level at last year's number of 30.95. As always, I thank you and the Town Council for your collective efforts during these unusually difficult times and look forward to your inclusion of these issues into your ongoing budget discussions / decisions and for the timely providing of all requested information. Please let me know if you have any questions or require any clarifications.

Best Regards, and Stay Healthy,

*Thomas J. Galvin*

Thomas J. Galvin  
27 Rockridge Terrace  
Prospect, CT 06712'

8-24 Letter dated 4/16/2020 Re: Town of Prospect Highway Safety Program 2020 to improve and repair Town Roads and for Fire Department Radio Repeaters.  
Town Clerk's Request for new printer scanner.  
Tax Refunds dated 5/6/2020

**Discussion. Motion** made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by R. Blanc to adjourn to continue this Agenda until Thursday, May 7, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m. At the consensus of the Council, this meeting for this Agenda was adjourned to be continued until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, 2020. The meeting adjourned @ 9:53 p.m.

*Jeff Slapikas*  
*Chairman*