

TOWN COUNCIL GOALS & OBJECTIVES MEETING
Saturday, March 9, 2013

Attending:

Mayor Janet Hughes	Councilor William Shakespeare
Councilor Thomas Brann	Councilor Carol Duprey
Councilor David Ryder	Town Manager Susan Lessard
Councilor Jean Lawlis	

The meeting was opened at 8:45 a.m. by Town Manager Susan Lessard who acted as the facilitator for the meeting.

The Council first discussed ground rules for the day. The following were the consensus

1. Courtesy
2. All ideas have value
3. Stay on task
4. Do not interrupt each other

Each Councilor then did a brief introduction in which they explained a little of their respective backgrounds and the reasons that they had chosen to run for Town Council.

The Councilors made a list of possible topics for work during the 2013-2014 fiscal year. The list was as follows:

1. Zoning/Comprehensive Plan integration
 - 1.a Aquifer protection for wells identified behind the Water District.
2. Sign Ordinance Completion
3. Overall review of all ordinances and updating for consistency
4. Charter update
5. Hampden Academy sale/re-use
6. 20% wage reduction over the next 20 years
7. Benefit examination
8. Organizational structure review
9. Making pool self-sustaining
10. Skehan Center – retention as a community center
11. Making Recreation programs self-sustaining
12. Sharing Services with other communities
13. Review staffing levels
14. Construct parking lot at Turtlehead Park
15. Wellness items such as farmer's markets, the new health center, the Skehan Center
16. Fiscal Accountability – separation of duties, audit protocol
17. Solid waste costs – transfer station operation
18. Revamp ordinance pertaining to political signs to give CEO authority to remove
19. Bus Service

20. Discontinue laptop/internet program for Town Councilors
21. Only pay Councilors for assigned committee meetings that they attend/review Committee structure
22. Freeze wages for three years – allow councilor choice not to receive pay
23. Review policy of allowing vacation to be cashed in
24. Review policy of banking vacation
25. Use outside moderator for next Goals/Objectives session
26. Parks/Trails program
27. Sell second half of Business Park
28. Budget review of department functions
29. Employee morale and retention
30. Sewer budget/rates/improvements
31. Storm water management – MS4 Costs
32. Improve business friendly community efforts

After developing the list of items that Councilors felt should be considered, each Councilor identified their top five of the list. Some items were combined since they related to the same topics. The following were the items each Councilor highlighted as their top five:

1. Item 1 - Zoning/Comprehensive Plan Integration – 5 Councilors identified this as a priority
2. Item 3 – Overall review of all ordinances and updating for consistency – 1 Councilor identified this as a priority
3. Item 5 – Hampden Academy sale/reuse – 4 Councilors identified this as a priority
4. Item 6,22,23,24,29 – 1 Councilor identified these related items as a priority
5. Item 9 – Make pool self-sustaining – 1 Councilor identified this as a priority
6. Item 10 – Skehan Center retention as a community center – 3 Councilors identified this as a priority
7. Item 11 – Make recreation programs self-sustaining – 2 Councilors identified this as a priority
8. Item 13 – Review Staffing levels – 2 Councilors identified this as a priority
9. Item 17 – Solid Waste Costs – transfer station operation – 4 Councilors identified this as a priority
10. Item 18 – Revamp ordinance pertaining to political signs to give CEO authority to remove – 1 Councilor identified this as a priority
11. Item 26 – Parks/Trails program – 2 Councilors identified this as a priority
12. Item 27 – Sell second half of business park – 1 Councilor identified this as a priority
13. Item 29 – Employee morale and retention – 2 Councilors identified this as a priority
14. Item 31 – Storm water management – 1 councilor identified this as a priority

Following the discussion about what topics should be part of the work plan for 2013-2014, the Council discussed goals for the budget for 2013-2014. It was the consensus of the Council to keep the mil rate effort for the Town portion of the budget as close to the same as possible.

There was considerable discussion of whether the Town should absorb all of the SAD #22 estimated increase, since to do so under the current budget proposal from the State would require a dramatic cut in Town Services. The consensus was that 57% of new valuation would be available to offset SAD #22 costs since that is the % of the Town's tax appropriation that they use, and that costs above that would possibly be passed along to the taxpayer in the form of a mil rate increase. It was also the consensus of the Council to ask for a meeting with the SAD #22 School Board to discuss budget impacts. The State anticipates having actual budget numbers available by the end of April which would allow the Town Council to know those numbers before they start reviewing the Town budget in May.

Individual Councilors summed up their goals for the budget as follows:

Councilor Shakespeare – Wants to retain services and to maintain the mil rate for those services as close as possible to what it is now.

Councilor Lawlis – Wants to keep the Town Budget mil rate as close as possible and pass on school increases over and above the amount that 57% of new valuation covers.

Councilor Ryder – Believes that the Council has developed a good list of goals and hopes to complete a high percentage of them this year. He would like to keep services and the Town mil rate as close as possible to the current mil rate.

Councilor Duprey – Wants to keep Hampden a community where people want to live and raise their families. There should be a focus on structuring services to be as efficient and cost effective as possible.

Councilor Hughes – Sees that Councilors have similar goals to continue good services but also wants it to be cost-effective and to structure service delivery efficiently. She looks forward to working productively with the Town Council.

Councilor Brann – Does not want Town services to move backward and is reserving judgment on how much of new valuation should be available to SAD #22 based on what the Town's needs are. He has a wait and see attitude about the mil rate effort.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20p.m.

Respectfully submitted –

Susan Lessard
Town Manager