

***DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES*** of the  
Budget Workshop of the City Council of the City of  
Rye held in City Hall on November 16, 2015 at 7:30  
P.M.

PRESENT:

JOSEPH A. SACK Mayor  
KIRSTIN BUCCI  
JULIE KILLIAN  
TERRENCE McCARTNEY  
RICHARD MECCA  
RICHARD SLACK  
Councilmembers

ABSENT: LAURA BRETT, Councilmember

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Sack called the meeting to order and invited the Council to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Sack asked the City Clerk to call the roll; a quorum was present to conduct official city business.

3. Discussion of the FY 2015 Budget

- **Rye Free Reading Room**

Mayor Sack stated that the proposed City budget for 2016 remains the same, but the Council understands that the library will be requesting further funding. He expressed the need to prioritize in the 2016 budget season.

Chris Shoemaker, Director of the Rye Free Reading Room, stated that the Library understands the realities of the budget pressures and rising costs. The Rye Free Reading Room appreciates the funding from the City that will enable them to sustain their operations. Mr. Shoemaker stated that the staff intends on presenting a case to the Council for more funding for 2016. The largest piece of the funding would be for Sunday service hours as a requested from the community. Mr. Shoemaker further stated that they have an active library in terms of audience and services provided, with a 7% increase of users this year. The library expanded the community programs in 2015, including those for teens and seniors. Further, they were able to expand their operating hours for the public, an increase of six hours more than 2012. Mr.

Shoemaker stated that for 2016, they would like to add another 5.5 hours per week to the operating schedule. The bulk of this would be Sunday hours. Mr. Shoemaker stated that for 2016, the library is asking for a \$35,000 increase. They are also increasing the private funding through their auxiliary board and are not looking for the City to be the sole source of funding. Mr. Shoemaker stated that the Rye Free Reading Room is proud to rank third for program attendance in the county. The library has seen a demand for the programs that they provide to the community. Further, he stated that the library is staffed efficiently with 15 full time employees. He also stated that 70% of library's budget comes from public funding dollars. The hourly operating expenses have decreased through energy efficient measures. Mr. Shoemaker thanked the Council again for the funding from the City of Rye.

The Council discussed the request from the Rye Free Reading Room. Mayor Sack, upon reviewing the proposals, stated that the largest increase is personnel costs.

Mr. Shoemaker agreed with Mayor Sack and stated that the majority of the funding proposed is personnel costs due to the new proposed Sunday hours. He confirmed that the Sunday hours would be during the entirety of the year.

Councilwoman Bucci stated that she is in favor of providing the library with more funding. She pointed out that the City funds 70% of the library operations, whereas neighboring communities fund about 90%. She felt that opening on Sundays would be good for the community.

Councilman McCartney inquired on the personnel increases outside of the Sunday hours. Mr. Shoemaker responded that they are proposing for increased salaries for current personnel, and that the labor contract runs to 2017.

Councilman Slack inquired as to whether the library can take volunteers to run certain tasks of the library. Mr. Shoemaker responded and stated that the library currently uses high school students as volunteers. The current contract precludes volunteers from performing the same jobs as current personnel.

Councilwoman Killian inquired as to whether there are contributions for retirement medical expenses, and Mr. Shoemaker responded that there are not.

Mayor Sack thanked the Rye Free Reading Room for attending the meeting.

- **Police Department**

Joseph Fazzino, Acting City Comptroller, stated that the union contract expires December 31, 2015. Police overtime decreased for 2016 by \$100,000.

Bill Pease, Police Commissioner, informed the Council that the number of summonses this year has increased due to the addition of an enforcement officer in the City. Mayor Sack inquired as to whether the department could provide enforcement numbers to the Council.

Tom Scappaticci of the Rye Police Department added that the revenue from false alarms are difficult to forecast.

Commissioner Pease stated that the department morale is up and the officers have been doing a great job.

Acting Comptroller Fazzino stated that the largest projected increase is retirement hospitalization.

The Council discussed more open issues. Councilwoman Killian praised the Police Department for their work with drug and alcohol abuse. Mayor Sack stated that the budget is important to understand in detail. He thanked the Police Department for attending the meeting.

- **Fire Department**

Chief Cotter, Chief Billington, Lt. Tietjen were present from the Rye Fire Department to discuss the proposed 2016 budget with the Council.

Mayor Sack stated that it was the intention of the Council to work with the Fire Department on improving operations and management of the paid staff and fully analyze the needs of the department.

City Manager Serrano stated that he has met with the department a number of times. There has been no contract since 2010 and it is the intention of the City to continue to work with the department on arriving at a resolution. The parties will be entering the arbitration process for the purpose of the resolving the contract. The City hopes reach a resolution with the Fire Department on management and personnel issues and policies.

Councilman Mecca reminded the staff and Council that last year, the City budgeted for one additional position. After the arbitration award is announced, the City can move forward.

The Council continued to discuss the issues presented. Mayor Sack stated he felt the City needed a paid full time person to manage the department. He thanked the department and stated that the Council appreciates the candor of the staff. It is not easy to balance competing interests. He stated the Council wants to continue to work with the department.

- **Boat Basin Fund**

City Manager Serrano stated that the Boat Basin Commission has worked hard this year. The Commission would like to discuss their future goals, policies and procedures. There is additional proposed revenue coming in from new policies. Everyone is working as a team to move forward and have financial strength for years to come.

Mr. Gregory Gavlik, Boat Basin Commissioner, stated that the main concerns for 2016 are liability, maintenance and finance. In terms of liability, in 2014 there were a number of thefts. The Commission has been exploring the need to expand security for the Boat Basin, and new measures have been implemented to improve the security system. The Commission realized during this process that the Boat Basin was subject to liability risks. The Commission is working to make the Boat Basin more secure and more compliant. In the process of rewriting the Boat Basin rules and regulations, the Commission plans on mandating insurance requirements. The Commission feels that the current mooring regulations are inadequate and they are looking to improve regulations. Second, Mr. Gavlik expressed that maintenance of the facilities is important. He explained that currently, more than 50 other entities use the Boat Basin. Maintenance has been overlooked for many years. Lastly, concerning finances, the Commission raised slip fees and ancillary fees. He stated the kayak program may be another source of revenue. Also, he told the Council that mooring fees were raised for the first time since 2002. With the City Manager's help, the Boat Basin will continue to raise money.

Mayor Sack mentioned that dredging is important, but costs a lot of money. The City has recently been able to afford it because of recent natural disasters. However, it has become increasingly difficult to dispose of the dredging materials. Mayor Sack stated he appreciates the desire to increase revenue, but the Boat Basin may not last.

Mr. Gavlick suggested there are other alternatives. The Boat Basin is surrounded by entities that do not currently contribute to the dredging. The Council continued to discuss the issue of dredging, maintenance and the costs associated with improvements.

Councilwoman Bucci stated that she appreciates that the Commission has identified the issues. The Council and staff then had further conversation about dredging and maintenance costs.

Mayor Sack stated that after the discussion, he encourages the City Manager to continue to talk to the Boat Basin Commission about increasing revenue.

- **Recreation Department**

City Manager Serrano introduced Sally Rogol, Recreation Superintendent and Ike Kuzio, Assistant Recreation Superintendent. He stated that the proposed 2016 budget is flat overall, with some increases concerning recreation fees.

Superintendent Rogol made a statement to the Council, and introduced the variety of annual recreation programs and camp programs. She stated it is the intention of the Recreation Department to keep programs and services affordable for all. There was a decrease in 2015 revenue with the addition of full-day kindergarten in the City. Superintendent Rogol then spoke about other programs and initiatives, including working alongside the Boat Basin to improve items there.

Councilman McCartney, liaison to the Recreation Department, told the Council that the Recreation Department efforts affect people in the community of all ages. As liaison, he has witnessed that the Recreation Department works hard on a daily basis to contribute to the quality of life in Rye. He stated that the Recreation Department should be commended for keeping its budget flat.

There was further discussion between the Council and staff. Superintendent Rogol reported that the department recovers 40% of its expenditures in revenue.

Councilman Slack commended the Recreation Department's work with the South East Consortium and the special needs members of the community. He stated that this piece of what the Recreation Department does is so important. He thanked the department and hopes that the City can find more ways to work with South East to continue to provide recreational services for special needs individuals.

Councilwoman Killian thanked the department in particular for its work with the seniors.

Mayor Sack thanked the Recreation Department for their attendance and presentation of the proposed 2016 budget.

The Council then discussed miscellaneous items, including a proposed increased to commuter parking by \$100 per year. The proposed increase would result in approximately \$90,000 of increased revenue collected in 2016 for 2017. The Council also discussed the possibility of selling permits at the snow lot.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Sack thanked the staff and Council for the budget session. Mayor Sack made a motion, seconded by Councilman McCartney and unanimously carried, to adjourn into executive session to discuss litigation matters at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn E. D'Andrea  
City Clerk