

APPROVED MINUTES of the Budget Workshop
of the City Council of the City of Rye held in City Hall on
November 28, 2016 at 6:30 P.M.

PRESENT:

JOSEPH A. SACK Mayor
KIRSTIN BUCCI
EMILY HURD
JULIE KILLIAN
TERRENCE McCARTNEY
DANIELLE TAGGER-EPSTEIN
Councilmembers

ABSENT:

RICHARD MECCA, 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.

Mayor Sack explained that within every budget season, the Council holds budget hearings to understand the departments' vision for the future year and progress in the previous years.

3. Discussion of the FY 2017 Budget:

- ***Rye Free Reading Room Budget Review***

Chris Shoemaker, Rye Free Reading Room, introduced staff and committee members from the Rye Free Reading Room. He stated it has been a fantastic year at the Rye Free Reading Room with various projects underway. Mr. Shoemaker presented a list of the year's accomplishments to the Council. He was happy to announce that the Rye Free Reading Room had the third highest attendance record in Westchester County in 2016. He said that the library is requesting \$1.23 million to sustain the current level of service, 52 hours of public service per week. The majority is funded by the City of Rye, with 1/3 of its funding received from private sources. Mr. Shoemaker stated the Library had a strong return on tax dollars.

Mayor Sack stated that he felt the Library was deserving of the funding that the City Manager is proposing. Councilwoman Bucci commented that the Library does a great job of efficiently utilizing its resources and expanding its programming within the community.

Mr. Shoemaker stated that the Library has been undergoing a capital campaign of raising funds and undergoing capital improvements this coming year.

Councilwoman Killian thanked the Rye Free Reading Room for its services provided to the community.

Francis Jenkins, Vice President of the Rye Free Reading Room Board, stated that they are staying afloat, but not offering extra services. He thanked Mr. Shoemaker for his wonderful job. He stated that libraries are in transition currently and the Library is looking forward to expanding services in the future.

- ***Rye TV Budget Review***

Nicole Levitsky, Cable Coordinator, presented to the Council. She introduced Paula Fung and Kate Conn, members of the Cable TV Committee. Ms. Levitsky said the Commission is fully funded by the franchise agreements. They operate the main studio in Rye High School with additional space at City Hall. In the last three months, the Commission has had 40 productions, working with the community.

Ms. Levitsky said that the cable franchise agreements expire in November 2017 and February 2018. She urged conducting the audits that are recommended with the franchise negotiations. The negotiations will require outside counsel. She also urged against removing funding from the department, as there could be unanticipated costs in the future.

Kate Conn, Commission member, stated that she was there to support the work of the Commission and Nicole Levitsky. She said that Rye is so lucky to have an amazing studio in the heart of the high school. She said that her goal was to try and bring more children into the studio. She also discussed the non-profit participation throughout Rye, in which the Commission aids in their visual needs.

Paula Fung also addressed the Council. She stated that she has been excited about the progress with programming. She stated that the Commission operates solely on the franchise funding and does not take from the City.

Mayor Sack asked about the increase in the budget from 2016 to 2017.

City Comptroller Fazzino responded that the difference is based on the salaries for 2017, as 2016 only supported one full time employee.

City Manager Serrano commented that every municipality manages their cable funding differently.

Councilwoman Killian commented on the wonderful work from the Commission and the participation. She stated that it would be important to look at the franchise agreements and franchise fees issue.

There was general discussion over the upcoming renewal of the franchise agreements.

Mayor Sack asked the Commission to provide real numbers to support their progress.

- ***Police Department Budget Review***

Commissioner Michael Corcoran introduced himself to the Council and gave an overview of the department. There was general discussion concerning breakdown of the Police Department and staff numbers.

Mayor Sack inquired about the dedication of officers to specific tasks, of which there was a discussion. Commissioner Corcoran stated that there would only be 37 officers for 2017.

Mayor Sack asked about the decline in traffic enforcement revenue. Commissioner Corcoran responded that there were only 32 patrol officers in 2016, which is less than usual. There was discussion about increasing the projected revenue for 2017, as enforcement has been increasing.

Commissioner Corcoran reported on enforcement efforts with traffic and criminal enforcement. He also discussed funding, emergency preparedness and the department moving forward.

Mayor Sack asked the Commissioner to perform an annual review with the schools regarding the crossing guard contract.

- ***Fire Department Budget Review***

Chief Billington was happy to report that items at the Fire Department are going well. The Department would like to hire an additional firefighter next year.

Mayor Sack stated that the Council would be interested in exploring a new hire in the future. There was then discussion over the equipment line of the budget, including a new fire truck. There was some discussion over capital projects and priorities in January 2017.

There was then discussion over a future fire truck. Chief Billington explained that the truck was 22 years old and needed upgrading.

Mayor Sack thanked the Fire Department for all their hard work and dedication to the community.

- ***Boat Basin Budget Review***

George Hogben, Boat Basin Director, gave an overview of the Boat Basin's operations. He stated that most boat slips are held by both residents and nonresidents. He stated that the budget is mostly self-sustaining, with fees to fund improvements. He highlighted accomplishments of the Boat Basin Commission in 2016.

There was discussion over dredging and removing materials.

There was discussion over mooring fees and a survey of moorings to collect any unpaid fees with the assistance of police enforcement.

- ***Recreation Department Budget Review***

Sally Rogol, Recreation Superintendent, and Ike Kuzio, Assistant Superintendent, presented to the Council. They provided an overview of the Recreation efforts and operations. Superintendent Rogol gave a summary of many annual events that the Recreation Department provides for the community, including the Food Truck Festival, the Turkey Trot, Holiday Window Painting, Halloween Movie Night, summer camp, holiday bonfire, senior activities, etc.

Superintendent Rogol talked about about the future of the Recreation Department and the Disbrow Park study, which will hopefully improve the future of the park.

Councilwoman Hurd asked about the street opening fees with regard to the DPW presentation, and whether the fees would be discussed prior to the budget being passed.

4. Adjournment.

Councilman McCartney made a motion, seconded by Mayor Sack, to adjourn the budget workshop at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn E. D'Andrea
City Clerk