

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on June 25, 2019:

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: George O. (Buster) Steere, Jr., President; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice-President; William E. Reichert; Patricia Henry; and Julian (Jay) Forgue.

Also Present: Susan Harris, Deputy Town Clerk; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Gary Treml, Director of Public Works

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Gloucester Police Department - HVAC Replacement

Authorization for Town Council Signature - Installation Agreement - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council has already authorized the Senior Center at the last meeting, but we did not have this on the agenda. Councilor G. Steere noted that Gary Treml, Director of Public Works, has already gone over the figures so we just need to authorize it. Councilor Forgue asked if this is the major repair for the Police Department. G. Treml replied in the affirmative. Councilor Forgue asked if this unit is big enough if they want to put on an addition. G. Treml replied that if there is an addition, we will add a supplemental system for it.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign the Installation Agreement for the Energy Cost Savings Proposal/High Efficiency HVAC Upgrades for the Gloucester Police Station; seconded by Councilor Forgue.

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that the Council has had discussions regarding the future of the Police Station and whether to do a short-term fix or a long-term fix, and G. Treml has stated that this is a long-term fix. Councilor W. Steere asked if the Council has decided what they want to do regarding the building. Councilor G. Steere stated that the Council authorized a feasibility study to determine if we should keep the building or build a new one. G. Treml pointed out that to build a new station, there would have to be a referendum to authorize the funding, we would have to find a piece of property, then we would have to engineer and build the building. G. Treml stated that this would take a minimum of 2 ½ years and in the interim, we have to have that facility functional.

Councilor Henry asked if the Council has already authorized the feasibility study. Councilor Forgue replied that the Town Planner and the Town Clerk are working on getting some information for the Council to consider. Councilor G. Steere stated his opinion that we have to fix it because we have to do something with the building even if we do build a new one, so it has to be in a condition to sell or use it.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

V. Senior Center Cleaning Contract: Additional Twelve Month Extension
Authorization for Town Council Signature - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere explained that this is the same company offering a 12-month extension at the same price. Councilor G. Steere stated that they are doing a good, consistent job.

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to AUTHORIZE the Town Council President to sign the Senior Center Cleaning Contract for an additional Twelve Month Extension; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VI. Seek to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to:

A. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(2) Collective Bargaining - Discussion and/or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to Seek to Convene to Executive Session pursuant to: R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(2) Collective Bargaining; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VII Reconvene Open Session

Disclosure of votes taken or # of votes taken in Executive Session - Discussion and/or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to Reconvene Open Session, seal the minutes of Executive Session and disclose that no votes were taken in Executive Session; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VIII. Discuss/Consider and act upon Department of Public Works Employee Compensation and Benefits for Fiscal Year 2019/2020 - Discussion and/ or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to offer \$0.25 per hour for Class 1 and CDL license, limited to four (4) drivers at the DPW; also add \$0.31 more than the budget projected for raises for people at the DPW, to bring them up to \$1.00; if DPW employees work during a snow storm and the Town Hall is closed, we will give them one (1) comp day due to weather at straight time, at the DPW's discretion; Sick days - if eight (8) hours or less were used, they will receive two (2) comp days, from July 1st through June 30th, nine (9) hours to 24 hours, they would receive one (1) comp day; seconded by Councilor W. Steere.

Discussion: None.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert and Forgue
NAYS- Henry

MOTION PASSED

David Steere, Budget Board chair, asked where are we getting that money the Council added to the Budget. Councilor G. Steere replied that there were a couple of trucks sold at auction by the DPW. D. Steere asked if it was in this Fiscal Year. Councilor G. Steere replied in the affirmative. D. Steere asked how the money will get from this Fiscal Year to next Fiscal Year, stating that it offsets expenses for this Fiscal Year. D. Steere explained that at the end of a Fiscal Year, three (3) things can happen: you have a surplus, you have a deficit, or you are even. D. Steere stated that if you have a surplus, it does not carry over to the next Fiscal Year unless you vote on it. Councilor G. Steere stated that they will have to vote to assign that money after July 1st. Councilor Reichert stated that the Council spoke to the auditors and they said the Council could do it like this, as long as everything is documented.

D. Steere commented that the Fiscal Year budget was based on the Compensation Study, so that study is no good anymore and we have wasted money having it done. D. Steere stated that it is unfair that the Town Hall non-union employees' increases are based on the Compensation Study. D. Steere stated that he does not care about the raises, that is fine, but be fair to the other employees. D. Steere stated that these raises will give some people about a 5% increase. D. Steere stated that it will open up a "can of worms" when the Council goes to negotiate with the union people, because there is only so much money in the budget. D. Steere stated that his biggest concern is the Town Hall employees and if the Compensation Study is going to be used for one, use it for both, or don't use it at all. D. Steere commented that this is the framework the Council approved and that is how we went into it to develop the budget.

Councilor W. Steere stated that he would say to the other people that generally, on average, they got bigger raises than the DPW. D. Steere stated that as long as he has been on the Budget Board, typically it was always tied to the clerks; whatever they got, we made sure the non-union folks got. D. Steere further stated that in fairness, the Council cannot hold the Town Hall employees' salaries

to that Compensation Study when they are not holding the people who wanted that study to it. Councilor W. Steere stated that is why we have to negotiate. D. Steere asked if the Council will negotiate with the Town Hall employees. Councilor W. Steere replied that the Council is doing that now. Councilor G. Steere stated that D. Steere is talking about department heads. D. Steere commented that if the Council uses the Compensation Study next year, these raises will put these people at the top of the eight (8) steps and they will not get a raise.

Councilor Forgue stated his opinion that a study is just a general road that shows where the ditches are, left and right, and does not say you shouldn't veer off of it. D. Steere stated that we wasted \$5,000 doing it.

There was further discussion and disagreement among Council members with regard to the Compensation Study.

Councilor G. Steere thanked D. Steere for his comments, but stated that the Council spent the last two (2) Executive Sessions deliberating over this. Councilor G. Steere stated that it is not something the Council has done lightly.

Councilor Forgue stated that it is hard to appease everybody but the Council is doing their best to do that. Councilor Forgue referred to the economy and the percentage of people out there in the workforce.

Councilor G. Steere commented that we have good help town-wide but the DPW has saved us, literally, over the past 10 years, hundreds of thousands of dollars on a handful of projects, in addition to everyday things. Councilor G. Steere stated that a lot of thought went into these deliberations.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Forgue to Adjourn at 8:00 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED