

**In Municipal Council  
Special Meeting**

**June 21, 2016  
6:02 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Frank B. Cook, Vice-President Jeremy Denlea. Councilors: Peter Blais, Richard Conti, Mark Cooper, James DiLisio, Julie Hall, Kate Jackson, Heather Porreca, and Sara Reynolds.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Shannon Heagney

President Cook led the Council and the audience in the Salute to the Flag.

President Cook reminded Councilors and the audience to turn off all cell phone devices as it interferes with the cable broadcast.

**The following SPECIAL MEETING Notice was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

Date: June 14, 2016

To: Members of the Municipal Council

From: Frank Cook, Council President

Councilors:

By authority of Article 2, Section 2-7 (c) of the Attleboro Home Rule Charter, I hereby call a special meeting of the Municipal Council as follows:

Date: TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2016

Time: 6 P.M.

Place: Council Chambers

Purpose: To vote on any matters currently pending before the Council, and any other matters and any other legal matter that may come before the Council.

cc: Mayor Kevin J. Dumas

President Cook explained that during this meeting the order of activities would be reversed and that the meeting was scheduled an hour early in order to make sure that there would be enough time to get to all of the business before the Council.

State Representative Betty Poirier addressed the Council, giving an update on the Senior Spectacular that was recently held and informing the Council members about how successful the event was. Representative Poirier

also presented a check to the Attleboro Senior Center in the amount on \$3,300.00, the Center's portion of the profit from the event.

Madeline McNeilly, the Director of the Attleboro Council on Aging, thanked Representative Poirier and provided details about how the money will be used by the Senior Center, including its funding a Veteran's breakfast at La Salette, and being used for the purchase of sewing machines and decorations for the holiday at the Center.

**The following Mayor's Communication was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

June 21, 2016

Dear Municipal Councilors:

1. I respectfully submit a communication from Superintendent of Schools Kenneth Sheehan regarding the donation of the following items:

Instruments from the AHS Instrument Drive (values to be determined):

1 Clarinet from Eli Malo

1 Flute from James Cameron

Drum Harnesses from Tim Marum

1 Flute from Lisa Ramos

2 Clarinets, 1 Flute from Peter Shore

1 Mandolin from Christine Aveiro

2 Clarinets, 1 Oboe, 1 Alto Sax, 1 Trombone from Gary Hyman

Also, the donation of two cases of paper for Hyman Fine School and 1 ½ cases of paper for Thacher from an anonymous donor.

In accordance with Section 1-12 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro, I hereby request Your Honorable Body to accept these generous donations to the City of Attleboro. (Copies in your packets)

1/6/21/16 – **REFERRED TO THE CITY PROPERTY & CLAIMS COMMITTEE**

2. I respectfully submit two separate communications from City Auditor Deborah Gould and Building Commissioner Douglas Semple regarding the need to increase the expenditure limit from \$65,000.00 to \$75,000.00 for Fund 2603 Protective Inspection Services. Due to the tremendous amount of construction activity for FY2016, the Building Department has reached the maximum limit authorized to be expended in the revolving account. The Account Department is holding the most recent submission of invoices from the department as cumulatively the amounts due the inspector would exceed the amount the Inspection Department is authorized to expend in this fund. Therefore, I hereby request Your Honorable Body increase the expenditure amount in Fund 2603 Protective Inspection Services to \$75,000.00.

In accordance with Article 2, Section 2-9 (b) of the City Charter of the City of Attleboro, I respectfully request Your Honorable Body to consider this as an emergency measure.

I further request Your Honorable Body amend the expenditure limit in the FY2017 budget for Fund 2603 Protective Inspection Services to \$75,000.00 versus the \$65,000.00 per the request of Building Commissioner Douglas Semple as he feels the construction activity will continue in FY2017.

2/6/21/16 – **REFERRED TO THE BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

Sincerely,  
Kevin J. Dumas, Mayor

**The following Other Communication was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

1. Certificate of Vote from Lauren Stamatis, Planning Board Clerk, certifying that at the Planning Board meeting held on Monday, June 20, 2016, the Planning Board voted in favor (5 Yeas, 0 Nays, 3 Absent) to recommend that the Municipal Council approve the petition of the Attleboro Redevelopment Authority (ARA) and Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) to rezone property located at 0 Olive Street, 101 Olive Street, 105 Olive Street, 116 Olive Street, 0 Wall Street, 15 Wall Street, 8 Wall Street, 28 Wall Street, 0 South Main Street, and 65 South Main Street from “Industrial” to “Transit Oriented Development.”

**REFERRED TO THE ZONING & LAND USE COMMITTEE**

#### **Committee Reports:**

Mr. DiLisio reported that the **Ordinances, Elections & Legislative Matters Committee** had no business and he called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

Ms. Hall reported that the **Zoning & Land Use Committee** had no business and she called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

On recommendation of the **Capital Improvements & City Development Committee**, and on the recommendation of Mr. Conti, the following votes were taken:

1. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor’s request to authorize the City to expend the additional MassWorks Infrastructure Grant approximately in the amount of \$714,456.00 for the construction of Riverfront Drive, Riverfront Park and for the restoration of the Ten Mile River between Wall Street and Olive Street, and any further grant amendments.
2. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent), in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 12 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro, to approve the Mayor’s request to authorize the expenditure of approximately \$95,000.00 in FY2017 SHINE Grant funds by the Council on Aging for expenditure during FY2017, and any future grant amendments.

3. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent), in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 12 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro, to approve the Mayor's request to authorize the expenditure of approximately \$72,000.00 in FY2017 Formula Grant funds by the Council on Aging for expenditure during FY2017, and any future grant amendments.
4. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent), in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 12 of the Revised Ordinance of the City of Attleboro, to approve Mayor's request to authorize the expenditure during FY2017 of approximately \$14,201.43 in Community Development Block Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (FFY2016) Grant funds for the Council on Aging, and any future grant amendments.
5. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to transfer \$7,350.00 from Account 6100-530101 (Water Enterprise Fund – Professional Services) to Account 6100-599000 (Water Enterprise Fund – Other Financing Uses); and to further transfer \$7,350.00 from Account 6100-599000 (Water Enterprise Fund – Other Financing Uses) to Fund 3319-499000 Luther Pump-Other Financing Sources, to fund a necessary amendment to the design contract for the Luther Reservoir Pump Station improvements.

Mr. Conti also called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

On recommendation of the **Transportation & Traffic Committee**, and on the Motion of Mrs. Porreca, the following vote was taken:

6. Voted unanimously (Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to strike the following item from the Docket of March 1, 2016:

That Section 10-4.11 Isolated Stop Signs of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro is hereby amended by inserting the following in alphabetical order:

Northwest drivers on Dailey Street at Camp Street.

Mrs. Porreca also called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

On recommendation of the **License Committee**, and on the motion of Vice-President Denlea, the following vote was taken:

7. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the request from The Friends of Capron Zoo, dated May 5, 2016, requesting a waiver of Section 11-15.1 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro to serve beverages on City property at the Capron Zoo on September 10, 2016 from 7pm-10pm for their annual fundraising event Passport to Mexico.

Vice-President Denlea also called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

On recommendation of the **City Property & Claims Committee**, and on the motion of Ms. Reynolds, the following votes were taken:

8. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to transfer \$7,000.00 to Account 16101000-524240 (Public Library – Equipment Maintenance) from the following accounts to make necessary repairs to the HVAC system at the Library:

- \$5,000.00 - 16101000-511000 (Public Library – Salaries)
- \$1,000.00 - 16101000-511900 (Public Library – Salaries Other)
- \$1,000.00 - 16101000-514020 (Public Library – Night Differential)

9. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to declare the following Water Department items as surplus and available for disposition:

<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>
200	Water Meters	Used

10. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to declare the following Library items as surplus and available for disposition:

<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>
7	Solid Wood Meeting Room Tables	Fair
1	Table Rack	Fair

11. Voted unanimously (Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent), in accordance with Section 1-12 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro, to approve the Mayor's request to accept the donation of one HP9050 printer with a value of \$500.00 and three HP4350 printers with a value of \$50.00 each from Travis Technologies as a gift to the City of Attleboro.

12. Voted unanimously (Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent), in accordance with Section 1-12 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro, to approve the Mayor's request to accept the donation of a nine (9) foot artificial Balsam Fir pre-lit Christmas tree manufactured by General Electric from Cheryl-Ann Rizzotto-Keefe, valued at \$300.00, as a gift to the City of Attleboro.

Ms. Reynolds also called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

Mr. Cooper reported that the **Personnel & Human Services Committee** had no business and he called for a Committee Meeting at the next appropriate time.

On recommendation of the **Public Safety & Emergency Management Committee**, and on the motion of Mr. Blais, the following vote was taken:

13. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve, in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 12 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Attleboro, to approve the Mayor's request to approve the expenditure of approximately \$93,650.00 for FY2017 Public Safety Answering Point Support and Incentive Grant funds from the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) - State 911 Department, and any other future grant amendments, by the Attleboro Police Department as specified within the parameters of the grant. No match is required by the City.

Mr. Blais also called for a Committee meeting at the next appropriate time.

On recommendation of the **Public Works Committee**, and on the motion of Ms. Hall, the following votes were taken:

14. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to transfer \$80,571.31 from Account 6000-359000 (Wastewater Enterprise Retained Earnings) to Account 6000-553150 (Wastewater – Water Meter Supplies) for the Wastewater Department to pay for 748 meters at a shared cost of 50% of their value.
15. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to make the following transfers for the Water Department to purchase various treatment plant supplies, various hand tools and hydrant markers:
  - \$9,411.00 from Account 6100-524270 (Water Enterprise Fund – Maintenance Contracts) to Account 6100-553181 (Water Enterprise Fund – Treatment Plant Supplies)
  - \$6,073.00 from Account 6100-530101 (Water Enterprise Fund – Professional Services) to Account 6100-543020 (Water Enterprise Fund – Hand Tools)
  - \$1,200.00 from Account 6100-530101 (Water Enterprise Fund – Professional Services) to Account 6100-553180 (Water Enterprise Fund – Supplies Water/Wastewater)
  - \$2,001.00 from Account 6100-530101 (Water Enterprise Fund – Professional Services) to Account 6100-548030 (Water Enterprise Fund – Supplies Vehicles)
16. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to approve the Mayor's request to appropriate \$82,200.00 from Account 6100-359000 (Water Enterprise Fund – Retained Earnings) to Fund 3323 Backwash Holding Tanks, to remove carbon material from two back wash holding tanks at the Russell Tennant Water Treatment Facility.

On recommendation of the **Budget & Appropriations Committee**, and on the motion of Mr. DiLisio, the following vote was taken:

17. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent) to adopt the following **EMERGENCY PREAMBLE**:

That the Attleboro Municipal Council vote to take action as provided in accordance with Article 2, Section 2-9 (b) of the City Charter of the City of Attleboro regarding the emergency which presently exists relative to the Mayor's request to increase the FY2016 expenditure limit from \$65,000.00 to \$75,000.00 for Fund 2603 Protective Inspection Services.

Due to the time constraints involved, the nature of the emergency makes it necessary to take action without waiting the prescribed time as provided in the City Charter because the Accounting Department is holding the most recent submission of invoices from the Inspection Department because cumulatively the amounts due would exceed the amount the Department is authorized to expend in this fund and payments to the Inspectors will need to be paid before the end of the Fiscal Year.

18. Voted on Roll Call (9 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney and Ms. Jackson absent), as an **EMERGENCY MEASURE**, to increase to approve the Mayor's request to increase the FY2016 expenditure limit from \$65,000.00 to \$75,000.00 for Fund 2603 Protective Inspection Services.

**Ms. Jackson entered the Council Chambers at 6:27 P.M.**

19. Voted on Roll Call (10 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ms. Heagney absent) to approve the Mayor's request to appropriate \$68,049.54 from Account 1000-321100 (General Fund Reserve for Encumbrances) to Account O9400020-532010 (Special Education Collaborative Tuition) in prior FY2015 encumbrances that remain unexpended for the School Department.

There was no **OLD BUSINESS**.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

On the motion of Ms. Hall and Mr. DiLisio, the following vote was taken:

20. Voted unanimously (Ms. Heagney absent) to refer the following item to the appropriate committee for further study and recommendation:

The creation of a Collaborative Budget Efficiency Committee (CBEC) whose mission will be to provide independent perspective and analysis around the City Budget, with the goal of increasing efficiency and innovation with a focus towards increased sustainability and stabilization. Central to this mission will be to foster increased collaboration, transparency and public participation in the Budget development process by conducting a comprehensive review of the City's organizational structure, staffing and efficiency in response to the ongoing economic challenges facing the City as a whole.

Under the direction of an Independent Financial/Business Analyst, the CBEC will review all relevant operational and financial data and solicit ideas for improved efficiency from all sources, including:

Municipal Departments, the Municipal Council, the School Committee and Leadership, and the Residents of the City of Attleboro and will provide recommendations and estimates for cost savings, cost avoidance, revenue enhancement and Budget stabilization.

The CBEC's membership shall include three (3) non-voting advisory members consisting of a Financial/Business Analyst, the Director of Finance and Controller for the Attleboro Public Schools, and the Director of Budget and Administration for the City of Attleboro as well as five (5) voting members from the community who will be vetted by the Advisors based on factors such as experience applying sound financial business practices, experience enacting operational efficiency, familiarity with the functioning of school systems, and/or familiarity with delivery of city services. Committee Members will be recommended jointly to the Municipal Council and School Committee for final approval.

The CBEC's composition should also include two (2) Co-Chairs and one (1) Secretary responsible for posting the meetings and recording the minutes.

**REFERRED TO THE ADMINISTRATION**

**VOTED: TO ADJOURN** at 6:45 P.M.

**A TRUE COPY**

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk/Clerk of the Council

**MINUTES APPROVED BY COUNCIL:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk/Clerk of the Council

**In Municipal Council  
Regular Meeting**

**June 21, 2016  
7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Frank B. Cook, Vice-President Jeremy Denlea. Councilors: Peter Blais, Richard Conti, Mark Cooper, James DiLisio, Julie Hall, Shannon Heagney, Kate Jackson, Heather Porreca, and Sara Reynolds.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

President Cook led the Council and the audience in the Salute to the Flag.

President Cook reminded Councilors and the audience to turn off all cell phone devices as it interferes with the cable broadcast.

**The following PUBLIC HEARING notice was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

**PUBLIC HEARING** relative to the New 2016 Class 2 Auto Dealer's license from Lucky 7 LLC, 141 Pine Street, Attleboro, MA for 1 customer parking space and 5 display spaces.

Gregory Dagnon, of 281 Grainge Road, North Smithfield, Rhode Island, spoke in favor.

Mr. Dagnon is the applicant, and he stated that he is looking to complement and/or be a part of the City by selling cars and offering services in the City.

Councilor Conti asked Mr. Gagnon if he has any experience in this type of business and for how long.

Mr. Gagnon responded that he has experience as an auctioneer on and off since 1986, along with real estate brokering.

Councilor Conti asked Mr. Gagnon if he planned on specializing in any specific type of vehicles.

Mr. Gagnon stated no.

Councilor Blais stated that he sold the building that this business would be located in 5 years ago and that he does not have any financial interest in this issue.

Richard Lumnar, of 234 Old Post Road, North Attleboro, the owner of 141 Pine Street, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Lumnar stated that it would be nice to see the building alive again, and that he has done some investigating and Mr. Gagnon seems like he would be a really good tenant. He also stated that Mr. Lumnar is looking to have a five-year lease.

Councilor Porreca stated that the fact that Mr. Gagnon is looking for a five-year lease shows that he is serious about making this business work and how dedicated he is to the process.

No one spoke in opposition.

No one spoke neither for nor against.

After consultation with Vice-President Denlea, President Cook declared this **PUBLIC HEARING** closed.

Vice-President Denlea discussed the next steps in the process for the Council to review and/or approve Mr. Dagnon's application.

**The following PUBLIC HEARING notice was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

**PUBLIC HEARING** relative to the FY 2017 Wastewater Enterprise Budget.

Mayor Kevin J. Dumas spoke in favor.

Mayor Dumas stated that he is speaking in favor of the Wastewater Enterprise Budget amount of \$9,629,492.75 for Fiscal Year 2017, as well as the Water Enterprise Budget of \$6,694,338.22.

Paul Kennedy, Acting Superintendent of the Wastewater Department, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the Wastewater budget is coming in at 3% less than it did last year, but the same level of services are being provided. He asked the Council to approve the budget.

No one spoke in opposition.

No one spoke neither for nor against.

President Cook, in the absence of the Budget & Appropriations Chairperson, declared this **PUBLIC HEARING** closed.

**Ms. Heagney entered the Council Chambers at 7:09 P.M.**

**The following PUBLIC HEARING notice was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

**PUBLIC HEARING** relative to the FY 2017 Water Enterprise Budget.

Mayor Kevin J. Dumas spoke in favor.

Mayor Dumas stated that he is in support of the Water Enterprise Budget amount of \$6,694,338.22.

Paul Kennedy, Acting Superintendent of the Water Department, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Kennedy stated that there were a number of projects in 2016 that were started and completed. He explained that although there is a 4% increase in this year's budget, that there are a number of projects that are scheduled for 2017 and that it is his opinion that this increase is modest.

No one spoke in opposition.

No one spoke neither for nor against.

After consultation with the Budget & Appropriations Chairperson, President Cook declared this **PUBLIC HEARING** closed.

**The following PUBLIC HEARING notice was read by the City Clerk/Clerk of the Council, Stephen K. Withers:**

**PUBLIC HEARING** relative to the FY 2017 Budget.

Mayor Kevin J. Dumas spoke in favor.

Mayor Dumas stated, as Mayor, he is tasked with providing services to over 43,000 residents of the City and he named the public school and several of the City Departments that are under his direction. He went on to state that all of these departments provide important services to the public. Mayor Dumas went on to explain that there are only so many dollars available and that we do the best that we can in the allocation of the available resources, which sometimes requires thinking outside of the box. He further explained that while some may not see this Budget as ideal, he sees it as a realistic budget. He also explained that he cannot completely offset the reductions to the School budgets primarily due to the lack of State investment; he stated that he has been able to allocate additional funds to the Schools.

Councilor Conti asked the Mayor if he is in a position to reconsider some of the cuts that were made in the Budget, making specific reference to the Building Inspections Department.

Mayor Dumas responded that the reductions that were made in that Department was by a half a Clerk, but that online permitting will be implemented to offset the reduction in staff. He further explained that the Budget for that Department will remain as presented.

Vice President Denlea asked the Mayor if he knew how many layoffs would result from his reductions in the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget if the Municipal Council were to adopt the Budget as proposed.

Mayor Dumas responded, saying that he didn't have the final numbers on him but he did explain some of the reductions in force, explaining the various Departments that would either have a reduction in staff or staff with a reduced number of hours. He also commented on the School Department, mentioning that those numbers were still being worked on.

Councilor Porreca asked Mayor Dumas for clarification about his earlier statement about the reduction in staff in the Clerk's Office ending at a certain time of the year.

Mayor Dumas responded that his office is currently in the process of impact bargaining with the Union related to those who are affected by the reductions in force, explaining that there was an employee in the both the Clerk's Office and in the Elections Office, but that the termination date for these two employees has been moved back so that these employees can become eligible for certain retirement-related benefits based on years of service.

Councilor Conti asked Mayor Dumas whether or not he is of the opinion about whether or not the City would see further reductions from the State.

Mayor Dumas responded that he participates in the local government advisory Committee in which he meets with the Governor and Lieutenant Government and that he will be informed about that issue but that it is still unclear. He further stated that there haven't been any indications that the local cities and towns would have to further reduce their budgets.

President Cook asked Mayor Dumas what would happen if the Council did not complete the process or approve the Budget before June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Dumas responded that a month-to-month budget would have to be presented to the Municipal Council, and that State law limits that to happening only up to a maximum of 90 days, and that if the Municipal Council did not approve a monthly budget then City Government would shut down effectively on that date without a budget.

Vice-President Denlea asked Mayor Dumas if revenue that the City received last year and the Fiscal Year budget for Fiscal Year 2017 both increased slightly.

Mayor Dumas stated yes.

Councilor Hall asked what the other effects of not passing a budget were.

Mayor Dumas responded that there would be several impacts, including that the City's credit rating would be negatively impacted, services provided on a daily basis would cease to exist and employees would not show up to work.

Councilor Conti if the Mayor planned to renegotiate the salary scheme.

Mayor Dumas responded yes, and that the City will also seek outside legal advice since the way that the City does business will be changing.

Councilor Reynolds asked about a possible wage freeze or a payment in lieu of taxes.

Mayor Dumas responded that discussions have been had, but that nothing has been agreed to.

Barry LaCasse, the City's Budget & Administration Director, also spoke in favor.

Mr. LaCasse stated that it has been a long process, starting in January when the Governor released his budget, and that this budget has been one of the most difficult that he has had to work on.

Madeline McNeilly, the Director of the City's Council on Aging also spoke in favor.

Ms. McNeilly thanked the Council for its continued leadership and its commitment to the citizens of Attleboro. She also made the following statement:

The seniors of Attleboro deeply appreciate your leadership in the Fiscal Year 2017 budget in supporting the work of the Council on Aging. While a bulk of the resources for seniors serve the lower income and most frail seniors, the monies to our Council on Aging serve a wider population of older adults with many diverse needs.

As you know, the number of seniors in our state is surging, and by 2020 older adults will comprise 24% of the Commonwealth's population. While our population is aging, the Council on Aging is becoming increasingly strained for resources and personnel to provide adequate services to seniors and their families.

The actual city allocation does not address the continued growth of the older adult population that enters the doors of our senior center every day. Funding from federal and state grants, donations and fundraisers make up a substantial portion of our operating revenue. The grants continue to be an important source of financing and delivery of these vital and essential services. Approximately ½ of our staffing is funded through grants (\$178,590.00) which entails rigorous documentation and reporting requirements.

Since the 2010 Census, the number of individuals over the age of 60 has increased by more than 220,000 older adults, or a 19% to 22% increase of the Commonwealth's total population. Councils on Aging are the first stop on the elder care continuum and are currently serving three distinct cohorts of older adults: the WWII generation, the Silent Generation and the Baby Boomers. Their needs are complex and varied, and the demand for Councils on Aging services such as the healthy aging and wellness programs, transportation, supportive day programs, and job search programs continues to increase.

We look forward to our working together in providing the best services and programs not only for older adults but for all city residents.

Vice-President Denlea thanked Ms. McNeilly for coming in. He asked her if she anticipated a greater need of assistance based on the large number of layoffs that would come from the budget as proposed.

Ms. McNeilly responded that she couldn't answer that question directly, but she did state that the Council on Aging is very busy, and she is fearful of the reductions in the Public Safety budgets since these services are used by her customers. She went on to explain that she receives daily calls from Police and Fire who are assisting elderly customers in need. She finished by saying that she does support the Mayor and that she believes that he does have the City's best interests at heart.

Bill Lennox, the MIS Director for the City, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Lennox asked the Council to support and approve the budget as proposed.

Ken Badertscher, the Director of the City's Department of Veterans Affairs, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Badertscher stated as a father of two boys, he understands the concerns of parents about the reductions in the School's budget. He went on to explain that he is in support of the budget as proposed, that he has had meetings with the Mayor and Mr. LaCasse about his budget, and that he understands that every line item has been reviewed. He also stated that he has the absolute confidence that the budget is a respectable budget and one that the Council should pass.

Vice-President Denlea asked Mr. Badertscher if he anticipates an increase in the services that his department will have to provide given the number of layoffs that this budget will create.

Mr. Badertscher responded that Vice-President Denlea's question is an excellent one, and while he cannot fully anticipate the needs of Veterans at any given time, that he is comfortable that the budget for his department will be adequate to meet the needs of veterans in the City.

Scott Domenici, of 15 Seanna Road, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Domenici made the following statement:

I am a father of 3 children, 2 who are currently in the Attleboro Public School system and my youngest on his way soon. I moved to Attleboro 12 years ago; I currently own two homes within the city. We love it here. We have great resources within the city; good restaurants, Capron Park, athletic fields, playgrounds, as well as areas to hike and enjoy nature. And we have an excellent school system. Through dedicated teachers; I'm thankful to all of them for the impact they've had and will continue to have on them as they grow.

Like so many of you, my wife and I have been actively involved in our children's education; but until earlier this year were not aware of the severity of the issues we have in front of us. I stepped up my involvement as both a parent concerned with the potential impacts to my children's educational development and also as a resident who has grown to love the city I now call home. I've attended PTO meetings focused around the school budget challenges. In addition to the many conversations I've had with other residents and parents, I've spoken with members of the city council, school committee, city budget director, and the mayor. I have attended or watched every department budget review that has taken place. I have done this as part of my commitment to be informed, to research our issues at hand, and gain some understanding of how our city operates as a whole. These are some of my thoughts as I've made my way through this process:

- The negativity needs to stop. All it will do is push people apart at a time when we all need to be working together to find solutions. Many of us have gotten more involved for our children, and it is our children who are watching how we conduct ourselves now. We need to set the right example as we continue to move things forward.
- Though this is our issue, and why we are here tonight, we are not alone. Our neighboring cities and towns are also suffering; many have school budget shortfalls. North Attleboro, Norton, Easton, Hanson, and Whitman are some of the many towns that have put a Prop 2 ½ override to a

vote; none of these votes passed. Folks all over feel that they are paying enough property taxes and that they can't take on the additional tax hike. It makes it all the more impressive that we have been able to provide so many services while maintaining the lowest average single family tax bill among our surrounding communities; all this has been accomplished without a call for a 2 ½ override.

- I have come out of this with an even greater appreciation of the many people who run our city departments. I have attended or watched every budget review; and I have come away impressed with the intelligence, passion, and dedication our municipal and school leaders have shown. It has been a very educational experience for me and I feel confident that we have the right people in place. I truly believe that our Department Heads have done what they can to tighten their belts and live within the means of a reduced budget.
- Our elected leaders have spent a great deal of time reviewing every department's budget down to the smallest line items in order to find funds for the school budget deficit. The mayor has committed 50% OF THE INCREASED TAX LEVY FUNDS IN SUPPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUDGET. Additional savings have been found through surplus health premiums both for this year, and in the coming fiscal years. And the mayor has continued his commitment of an additional \$1 million dollars above net school spending; this during a time when the municipal budget was dealing with a \$2 million dollar budget shortfall of its own. We have closed 75% of the overall school budget gap.
- City funding for Education increased by approximately 6.3% this year. Unfortunately, this accounts for only half of the school budget, and to me where the real issue lies. State Funding of education is down; the Chapter 70 formula is broken. State funding is not keeping pace with the rising education costs. State funding is not keeping pace with the increases we have able to provide as a city; if it had, we would not be looking at the issue we see before us today. In addition, our governor is looking to remove the cap on charter schools, which will also impact our state funding. There is legislation currently being debated by our state senate to incorporate increase school funding with any cap removal on charter schools. There is opportunity here to shape this debate. This is where our collective focus needs to be, where people can rally and make a true impact, here, a cross all communities, with our state senators and reps, and with our Governor. That's the real education reform that is sorely needed.

In closing, I feel we need to move forward with our budget. This does not mean that I am satisfied with a budget that still leaves the shortfall we have. I am certainly not satisfied knowing many good people across the city stand to lose their jobs. I think we should move forward because I believe that our leaders across the city have done what they can to find all available funds. I am for moving the budget forward because I believe it is in the best interests of our city to do so, that the alternative of moving in FY17 without an approved budget is even less appealing. I'm for moving the budget because I'm confident that you will continue to look for ways to bridge the remaining budget gap, and that we will all continue to stay engaged and look for ways to positively move our city forward. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Owen Bebeau, Personnel Director for the City of Attleboro, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Bebeau stated that his department is charged with the administration and payment of health care costs, workers' compensation, and related expenses. He went on to state that he feels that the budget for

his department is fair and reasonable, that he can handles these costs, and he asked the Council to support and approve the budget as presented.

Vice-President Denlea asked Mr. Bebeau what the costs would be to lay off the employees given the reduced budget.

Mr. Bebeau responded that \$100,000.00 was budgeted for that, and he confirmed Vice-President Denlea's follow-up question about whether or not that this cost would be for the layoffs of the roughly 12 City-side employees only, and not the other School Department employees.

Sonny Almeida, the City's Park's & Forestry Director, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Almeida stated that everyone in the room is going to feel some kind of pains because of the cuts that had to be made. He went on to explain that it is very difficult laying off people and that all the departments need the help and the funds to run their departments properly, but the belts had to be tightened and he asked the Council to support and approve the budget. He also stated that he has concerns about what would happen if the budget was not passed and if that would result in further tightening of the belt. Mr. Almeida stated that he has been working for the city for 58 years and that what he does, he does for his love of the city.

Robert Ringuette, of 26 Dexter Street, Attleboro, MA also spoke in favor.

Mr. Ringuette stated that he is a Math teacher in another school district, but he is in support of the budget because of all of the hard work that has gone into its creation. He went on to explain that he has two children in school, that there has been a lot of negativity, and that he was astounded by some of the numbers related to the teacher contracts. He went on to explain that in his own district the school system has experienced early school closings, layoffs and no pay increases. Mr. Ringuette stated that it was a bad time, and the accreditation Committee put his school on probation for 2 years. He stated that this same accreditation committee hasn't been around to the Attleboro School system in 10 years so they'll most likely be coming around soon in order to conduct a review.

Councilor Porreca asked Mr. Ringuette if he looked at the city-side numbers when he reviewed the budget.

Mr. Ringuette responded that he did not because he is familiar with School contracts. He went on to explain that because of his district's own fiscal crisis, he doesn't receive many of the benefits that Attleboro teachers still get.

Mrs. Porreca asked what the largest number of layoffs in his district has been.

Mr. Ringuette responded that many of the non-essential departments were wiped pretty clean, including the elimination of every course that wasn't English, Math or Science, including all of the arts, foreign language and business programs, resulting in school ending at 1:00 P.M. because there weren't enough teachers to provide classes.

Mrs. Porreca also asked Mr. Ringuette if he thinks that same thing would happen in Attleboro with the reduction of 44 school teachers in the City.

Mr. Ringuette responded yes, especially given the amount of step and percentage increases that teachers receive. He went on to describe the step increase system.

Councilor Porreca asked Mr. Ringuette if he knew the number of teachers that are receiving a step increase.

Mr. Ringuette responded that he did not have the information as it relates to the Attleboro School system, but on average step increases are usually 11%. He also explains that veteran teachers at the top of the step system get only the cost of living increases.

Councilor Reynolds asked for clarification about Mr. Ringuette's comment that there were so many layoffs within his school district that school had to close earlier and if believes that the same thing will happen in the city of Attleboro.

Mr. Ringuette responded that if the trend continues and there is an accreditation review that he believes that class sizes will increase, as they did within his district, and that teachers will leave to get the money and jobs that they want in other districts or will leave because they have been laid off.

Councilor Jackson asked Mr. Ringuette if he has ever been a Union Rep. for his teacher association or if he gets involved in the meetings.

Mr. Ringuette responded that he has never been a Union rep but that he does remain involved in the meetings and that he attends every one.

Councilor Porreca asked if after his district was placed on probation if it was solely the responsibility for the teachers and school system to fix the problems.

Mr. Ringuette responded that in his district three Proposition 2 1/2s were passed within a 10-year period.

Dennis Walsh, of 90 Old Farm Lane, Attleboro, MA, and the City's Director of the Recreation Department, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Walsh stated the budget is not perfect, but neither are the times, and that while his budget is lower than it was last year that he is grateful that the Park Department isn't being removed as some in the City have suggested. Mr. Walsh went on to explain that there are a number of departments on both the city-side and School-side that will experience cuts and that he is saddened by it but that he understands that it is necessary. He went on to explain what his new role will be in regards to taking over the Parks & Recreation Department when its Director Sonny Almeida retires. He discussed both the budget for that Department and for his own, and he stated that he thinks that taxpayers pay enough and that a Proposition 2 1/2 Override isn't a solution to the problem. He also stated that 85% of the total budget goes to the school and that he just does not see how giving more to the school's can happen without doing irreparable harm to the other services that the city has to provide to residents.

Vice-President Denlea asked Mr. Walsh if given the increase in revenue and the firing of 10% of the workforce, if this is something that makes sense to him.

Mr. Walsh responded that this is how it has to be.

Lance Hill, of 14 Adelray Lane, the Superintendent of the City's Public Works Department, also spoke in favor

Mr. Hill stated that there will a reduction in staffing within his own department and that while it will mean more work for him and his employees that he understands that it is something that is necessary. He also stated that he has children in the Attleboro School system. He asked the Council to support the budget.

Councilor Porreca asked Mr. Hill what the reduction in hours for one of his staff by half will have on his department.

Mr. Hill responded that there is a high administrative burden in his departments and the duties that the staff person handles will have to be handled elsewhere.

Councilor Porreca asked if the staff member who has been with the City for quite a bit of time is the best reduction for his department.

Mr. Hill responded that it would be more difficult if there was a reduction of force on the labor side and that it was probably the most appropriate if his department has to have a reduction.

Councilor Heagney asked if Mr. Hill was saying that he would have to assume some of the duties given the reduction in his staff person's hours.

Mr. Hill responded in the affirmative, going on to explain that everyone will have to chip in and do more to cover these duties.

Scott Folan, of 295 Clifton Street, Attleboro, MA, and the Constituent Services Director for the Mayor's Office, also spoke in favor.

Mr. Folan asked the Council to vote in favor of the budget as presented.

Laura Fairweather, of 35 Russell Tennant Drive, Attleboro, MA, spoke in opposition.

Ms. Fairweather stated the following:

While I want to feel happy about the progress that's been made in narrowing the school's budget deficit, being over a million dollars short of level services is nothing to celebrate. I am grateful that we're where we are now, compared to where we were a few months ago, but feel it needs to be highlighted that the school department is not asking for a "needs based budget,"- a budget that would upgrade our

technology and fill vacant positions. The school department is asking for a budget that will merely provide “level services.”

I fear that many people don’t understand that our schools are already in a “bare bones” situation. How many of you have really spent time in the classrooms? I have. Between volunteering, subbing, and PTO work, I spend several days a week at my son’s school and my eyes are open to how strong the needs are. We have amazing teachers and great programs, but we also have overcrowded classrooms, a major lack of technology, and teachers who are being stretched thinner than you’d imagine.

PTOs help fund school needs that are not covered by the school budget. As PTO Treasurer at Studley for several years, I wrote checks for dry erase boards, books, computer software, science kits, and so much more. Teachers have told me that they paid their own money for electronic equipment and bookcases for their classrooms. I don’t see our school district as one that needs to live within its budget, I see our school district as one that doesn’t even have the funds for basic necessities. If the current budget scenario is accepted, the schools will be over a million dollars short of this already bare bones scenario.

We’re here today to talk about accepting or rejecting the budget. There are a lot of things I’ve had to accept regarding my children’s education. I’ve accepted that my older son had 20 kids in his kindergarten class, and then 27 kids in his first grade class and large class sizes for the past 5 years. I’ve accepted that my younger son went from 18 kids in his 1<sup>st</sup> grade class to 26 kids in his 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class this year. I’ve accepted that my sons’ schools do not have full time librarians, and at times, not even a working computer in their classroom. I’ve accepted that when my sons finish their work early, they sit and read a book, or help other students, rather than being challenged because there are no resources available at their schools for enrichment. I’ve accepted that they will not have the opportunity to learn a foreign language until they get to high school, and that advanced math is not offered until 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I’ve “accepted” all these disappointing realities because in spite of what our schools are lacking, my children have had compassionate and talented teachers and my boys love their schools. But with funding falling over a million dollars below level services, I can no longer accept the education this city is providing for my children. This is why I am standing up here urging the council to reject the budget until the school’s deficit is closed.

Many of the pink slipped teachers have already accepted jobs in other districts. They know that even if their jobs are saved this year, they will likely be faced with the same situation again next year. Families are talking about leaving Attleboro Public Schools. Many will go to charter schools- which will cost the city even more- and some will leave Attleboro all together. Forget trying to get people to move here, settle in, raise a family. This is not a city that families, or businesses, will want to invest in. And certainly not a district that will attract top notch educators if we’re ever able to fill vacancies.

What is your number one priority for the City? I think it’s obvious that mine is education. I know I can’t change your mind if our priorities are simply not the same, but if you do care about education as much as you say, and if you understand how important the success of our city’s school system is to the success of Attleboro, then I ask you this: have all options truly been exhausted? If you are not 100% sure that there is not another dollar anywhere in this \$125 million dollar budget that can be allocated to the schools, you must reject this budget.

Thank you for listening.

Councilor Conti asked Ms. Fairweather if the Council does cut the budget and pass one that is reduced if she would feel differently about the budget. He went on to explain that he has isolated 22 amendments that will cut the budget but that he cannot allocate those funds to the schools.

Ms. Fairweather stated that she would have more confidence that the issues are being taken more seriously and that she would see it as a vote of confidence that we are moving in the right decision.

Councilor Blais asked if Ms. Fairweather understood that the rest of the city departments are \$2 million short and the schools are \$1 million short and the complexities of running a city as a whole.

Ms. Fairweather explained that she understood.

Ms. Hall asked Ms. Fairweather if any thought was given in regards to where to cut money in the budget.

Ms. Fairweather stated no.

Christine Cerrone, an employee of the Attleboro Schools for 14 years, also spoke in opposition.

Ms. Cerrone stated that this is not the first time that she has been before the Council discussing concerns about school funding. She asked how the Council could accept a budget that isn't even level funding schools, and that this is a pattern and something that has been happening over and over for years. She stated that the intimidation factor is not working, and that she is asking the Council to identify some real resources to support the schools on a short-term basis that will lead to long-term solutions. She went on to explain that this has to do with the kids deserving better schools, and she referenced a History teacher having only half of the books that she needed for the number of students in her class and stated that we need to stop pointing the finger and placing blame. She asked that someone start paying attention and find a solution to the problem.

Councilor Porreca asked Ms. Cerrone if her position is that the teachers and the schools do not have the appropriate tools to do the task at hand.

Ms. Cerrone stated yes.

Lauren Heroux-Camirand , of 140 Rocklawn Avenue, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Ms. Heroux-Camirand made the following statement:

I have been surrounded by drugs since the day I was born. I have spent 98% of 38 years in a pharmacy in this city. My mother and father opened their own pharmacy, which is now Scorpios, 2 years before I was born. I have spent everyday of my life in a pharmacy, and 11 years ago, I received my doctorate in pharmacy.

I can stand here and tell you with almost complete certainty, Attleboro's drug problem will worsen if we do not make education a priority. I have seen drugs save lives, and I have seen drugs end lives. Many

kids in our community are on prescription drugs for anxiety, depression, ADHD and ADD. There are so many reasons, but for some kids, life is hard. Really hard. And even for kids who seem to “have it all”, life can be even more difficult. We never know what is going on in someone else’s home.

Who do these kids turn to many times when they need guidance, a shoulder or just someone to make them smile? Where is THEIR safe haven? More often than not, it’s in the schools, teachers, football coaches. If we overwhelm our teachers and staff by not providing adequate, minimum resources, we take away the opportunity for kids to make those connections with those coaches and teachers. Even though we have some of the best educators in Attleboro, they are still humans with limits. They may not be able to give some kids the attention they need, and our kids, even the best ones, will fall through the cracks.

Studies show that kids without a sports program or trusted mentors are more likely to abuse drugs, 80% of 17 longitudinal studies found participants in sports is associated to reduced illicit drug use, especially the use of non-cannabis related drugs. In dealing with prescription drugs and fentanyl laced heroin, the possibility of future generations becoming addicted in THIS city will spiral out of control a lot faster and greater than what I have seen over the last 10 years with our opiate epidemic. Bristol County wasn’t labeled by the White House as a “High Intensity Drug Traffic Area” because we have a small problem. It doesn’t just go away. If we as a city and community do not let these children know we put them first, who will?

For me personally, this is not, and never has been about placing blame on the Mayor, or the State, or School Committee. I’m not here to point fingers at anyone. I am a parent, genuinely concerned for my child and this community. We ALL have to be held accountable for where we are today, every one of us. BUT, with awareness comes action. Now that we know, we need to act. This isn’t only a mayor’s job, or a police dept, or school dept or a city council. It’s not up to the hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, teachers and coaches. This job belongs to ALL of us, and if we don’t insist on appropriate funding for our schools, we will have only ourselves to blame for the outcome in years to come. This will not be resolved tonight, but we need to at least try to make it better starting today. If not, this will be, literally, a deadly mistake, that does not have a price tag.

John Robinson, of 317 Newport Avenue, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Mr. Robinson stated he has been a resident of Attleboro for 23 years and that he is also a business owner. He stated that he has a problem with the overtime funding for the Police Department and with the number of Police officers who are leaving the department and the Overtime funding that has to supplement these vacancies. He went on to state that he took his daughter out of the Attleboro Public Schools after her first year, rented an apartment in North Attleboro and put her into school there where she did much better. Mr. Robinson went on to state that the Attleboro school system is broken, that the drug problem in the city is serious, and that if we do not put our children first the problems will only get worse. He explained that having to keep an apartment in another town cost him \$30,000 just so his daughter could graduate having had a better education.

Stu Singer, of 3 Meadowview Drive, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Mr. Singer stated that he has a Master's Degree in Education, a PhD and had some education and sports director-related roles in another school district. He went on to state that this issue is not about a budget line item but that these are people's lives. He stated that the consequences of the decision to cut the school budget will have repercussions for years, or even decades, to come. He explained that this is not a new issue, that the Council received a memo a year ago that this situation was coming, and he asked what was done.

Mr. Singer stated that voting for the budget is effectively voting for the decimation of education and that this is the reality and truth that we are talking about. He explained that teachers provide guidance and give attention to students that need it, and with larger classroom sizes this becomes hardest to do. Mr. Singer also discussed the role of teachers in dealing with children that have challenges, such as anxiety, and again reiterated that with larger class sizes it becomes impossible and most likely these type of children drop out of school. He stated that these issues with the schools that are related to the budget issues the city faces in regards are his fault, because he understood that for almost a decade there were issues with school funding and that he just did not speak up and that he is speaking up now. He stated that it is the city's responsibility, as well as the responsibility of the community as a whole, to make these issues right.

Councilor Heagney clarified that the Council will not be voting on the budget tonight since Mr. Singer referenced a Council vote on the budget happening tonight.

Councilor Conti asked if it is possible to put together a plan in 90 days to solve the problem.

Mr. Singer responded that it is highly possible to work on a viable solution/plan in 90 days.

Councilor Hall stated that she and Mr. Singer had a number of conversations, and that she does not agree that a plan can be put together in 90 days and come up with the money in that short period of time.

Councilor Reynolds asked if Mr. Singer believes that a plan, and not money to fund it, could be put in place in 90 days.

Mr. Singer agreed.

Lucy Pacheco, of 15 Birch Street, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Ms. Pacheco quoted from the City of Attleboro's Vision statement that is on the City's website:

"Attleboro must continue to be an attractive, vibrant and affordable place to live, work and raise a family. The preeminent vision of his Administration is keeping Attleboro affordable for families while fostering an environment that will allow businesses to excel. The redevelopment of the downtown and advancements in the Industrial Business Parks are evidence that Attleboro is a City on the move, and will continue to advance as a modern 21st century community. "

Ms. Pacheco went on to state that nowhere in this Vision Statement is there any mention about education. She explained that she understands that the Chapter 70 formula is broken at the State level, and that the Mayor has sat at the Budget review board but was there for only half of the meetings. Ms.

Pacheco stated that our elected officials are supposed to represent the interests of their constituents and that education needs to be made a priority.

Ms. Pacheco also stated that she cannot afford to move her children to a new community that has a better school system and that she's not going to do that and that the city needs to fund the schools adequately to make them better. She stated that adding staff to support the so-called free projects and laying off teachers is not her vision for the City. She asked the City to hold the Mayor to his budget and not to approve anything that the Mayor sends down unless it deals with school funding and she referenced no more land grants or purchases, among other items. She asked for 50% of the excess revenue over budget to be given to the schools by the Mayor before the Council approves anything else that the Mayor sends to the Council for approval. She stated that parents like her will be watching and will continue to fight for education and are uniting as one community to make education a priority.

Councilor Porreca asked for clarification about Ms. Pacheco's comments about Chapter 70 money and whether or not if the city gets more money, then the city will have to give more money too.

Ms. Pacheco stated that is her understanding and that if the city asks for \$3 million more in money where is it going to get the matching \$3 million dollars that it needs to in order to be granted that additional money.

Dan Dobbins, an employee of the Attleboro school system since 1993, also spoke in opposition.

Mr. Dobbins stated that while there have been comments at the public hearing about teacher salaries being too high and out of line, that he has documentation that city departments have increased their salary budget lines from 11% to as much as 60%, including adding staff and increased salaries in these offices. He stated that the school department's budget cannot be cut any thinner since they cannot meet the needs of the students now. He went on to explain that in the school department they are doing everything that they can with the budget that they have.

Mr. Dobbins stated that he truly believes that the Attleboro School system is at a tipping point and that a catastrophe is about to happen. He stated that for ten years in a row the School budget has never been balanced, resulting in the School Committee only having 3 choices to address the shortfall: in a loss of services, raising fees and letting go of teachers. He also explained that other cities and towns have faced similar challenges but that they have somehow found a way to make it work. Mr. Dobbins stated that the Cityside budget has grown immensely while the school department's budget has been cut, something that he referenced as being unacceptable. He asked the Council to be part of the solution and to leave no stone unturned in regards to finding the additional \$1.2 million dollars to level-fund the school budget and fix it.

Mike Crowley, of 20 Beagle Club Road, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition. Mr. Crowley stated that he does not view this issue as a dog and pony show, that he found those comments offensive (an apparent reference to a comment made earlier by Councilor Blais). Mr. Crowley stated that far too many people have worked on both sides in order to find a solution to the budget issue, and that the issue is far too serious to reduce it to such a description.

Mr. Crowley stated that he is not originally from Massachusetts originally. He explained that Massachusetts is an amazing state because the State has always led the country as far back as 1775 in just about everything that the country has done. He referenced marriage equality and infant mortality as being far ahead of other states, and he further stated that the state has always been #1 in education. Mr. Crowley stated that his home state of Indiana is always #49 and #50 in terms of ranking for its education system and that we are lucky to have a state with such a great educational system.

Mr. Crowley referenced his first appearance in front of the Council on May 3, 2016, and stated that he came up with 15-20 different ideas that could solve the school budget issue immediately, explaining some of those ideas such as a payment in lieu of taxes from Sturdy Memorial Hospital, salary freezes, etc. He stated that the plan was put together 60 days ago and that he has consistently received a no in response to some of the suggestions and that he does not believe that the suggestions could have been fully vetted in that amount of time. He went on to explain that there has been blame pointed at those involved in the efforts to come up with these suggestions, and he referenced Councilor Hall's statement at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting that the residents of Attleboro have entrusted the Mayor to make all of these types of decisions. Mr. Crowley disagreed, referencing the Mayor's decision-making authority as being similar to that of a King and that is not what the residents of Attleboro actually wants. He referenced the difference of ideas and the subsequent debate and stated that such debates are a good thing.

Mr. Crowley stated that the historical facts of the previous budgets throughout the years have shown that the money needed in order to level-fund the Schools is actually there. He stated that the Council has the ability to make real change through a system of checks and balances and that the Council should reject the budget until there are commitments received to address the school budget shortfall. He stated that this issue can be solved if there is the political will to do so, and that it is up to the Council to debate that issue thoroughly.

Keith Brough, of 27 Turcotte Street in Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Mr. Brough stated he has a child in kindergarten at an Attleboro School, that he has worked as a substitute teacher at a number of Attleboro Schools, and that his main concern about the budget is the types of employee cuts such as the 12 paraprofessionals. He went on to explain his concerns, including those that are related to safety and the unintended consequences of teacher cuts, such as the rate that is being paid to substitute teachers. He referenced a rate of \$20/hr more being paid in Central Falls, Rhode Island to its substitute teachers. Mr. Brough also referenced a PTO meeting that he recently attended and that he understood that the budget for schools doesn't take into account what the school system actually does.

Chris Reilly, of 47 Parsonage Way, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Mr. Reilly stated that he is a transplant to Attleboro, although he has lived in the city now for a number of years. He also stated that his children are in the City's school system. Mr. Reilly explained that like many residents of the city, he wasn't following the local politics and issues, since he saw some of the improvements being made and he assumed that all was well. He went on to further explain that the cuts in the school budget concerned him, and made him pay more attention to what was happening in the city. He stated countless residents are fed up and that they believe that the city has lost its way. He explained that this is all about leadership and priorities and that he does not believe that the city cannot

fully fund its schools. He explained that he met with the Mayor in order to offer some solutions and that those solutions have fallen on deaf ears. He referenced the payment in lieu of taxes from Sturdy Memorial Hospital as a suggestion and how the city's Administration is not willing to discuss that as an option.

Mr. Reilly went on to state that the city will continue on the undesirable path of looking good on the outside but having significant problems that it is not willing to address. He stated that in the fall, if this budget is passed, the Council will be the ones to receive the calls given the increased class sizes or students who cannot afford the higher fees to participate in sports. He asked the Council to stand up to the Administration and the Mayor and reject the budget. He stated that no one ever moved to a city because they have a fancy new fleet of police cars or have a palace for a DPW building. He referenced a quote by President John F. Kennedy: "A child who is miseducated is a child lost" and asked the Council to not vote for the budget and that it demand that the Mayor engage in a dialogue with Sturdy Memorial Hospital for a payment in lieu of taxes given its \$400 million cash reserve.

Carrie Montgomery, of 27 Cynthia Lane, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition. Ms. Montgomery made the following statement:

Good evening. My name is Carrie Montgomery and I live at 27 Cynthia Lane here in Attleboro. I am a parent of two young children. I have a Masters degree in Education and was raised by educators. I came here tonight to ask you to reject the proposed budget.

My oldest daughter just finished Kindergarten this past year. A week before she started school in September, we were told there were too many students entering Kindergarten this year at Hill Roberts, so they were hiring a 4th Kindergarten teacher.

I was thrilled. And then we hired a phenomenal teacher, Mrs. Reilly. I volunteered several times and watched her adeptly manage a class of 26 kids with a variety of needs, attention, and skills. She was inspiring!

Mrs. Reilly was given a pink slip this past May.

Next year, if this budget is passed, and schools not adequately funded, there will only be 3 Kindergarten teachers at Hill Roberts, with classrooms at about 35 each.

To me, 35 students in a class is unacceptable. I honestly don't even know how it's not a fire hazard with all the desks.

On top of physical safety, there's the long-term hazards of such large class sizes.

Studies, like that published in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, have shown "smaller class sizes in Kindergarten leads to a greater likelihood of attending college, owning a home, and a 401K as adults more than 20 years later."

I know it can be hard to believe how far reaching a small Kindergarten class size is.

Yet as I think of what they learn in Kindergarten, it starts to be understandable.

For instance, Mrs. Reilly taught my daughter to read! She taught her to count, to add, to subtract, to compare lengths and weights, to construct a story, to identify fantasy from reality, to write, to add spacing between words, to read punctuation out loud, understand her community and so much more.

If students fall behind in Kindergarten, they continue to fall behind in each subsequent grade, and this lapse can build exponentially.

Attleboro ranks 264 out of 292 in school spending across Massachusetts. This is not future forward.

At the very least, Attleboro should be able to support level services in the school. We're not asking for class size of 18:1, like my cousin who teaches first grade in Brockton has- although that would be terrific!! But at the very least, our schools need level services.

I'm asking you to reject the budget until the \$1 million deficit is closed.

I am asking for support for the amazing educators we have, for retention of these teachers. For us to create a sustainable path forward. For proof that we believe our students are valued, and that we want Attleboro kindergarten students to be in the best position they can be 20 years from now, to attend college, earn a 401K, and own a house - a house hopefully in Attleboro.

**VOTED: TO RECESS FOR 10 MINUTES** at 9:31 P.M. This Motion failed (4 Yeas, 7 Nays. President Cook, Vice-President Denlea, Mrs. Porreca, Mr. Conti, Mr. DiLisio, Ms. Heagney and Ms. Reynolds voting Nay).

Paulo Araujo of 71 Jefferson Street, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Mr. Araujo stated that he has two children, one who is currently attending Attleboro High School. He stated that having a good school system is very important to the parents who are in attendance and he asked the Council to vote no on the budget. He also stated that he has lived in the city on-and\_off since he was 8 years old, that he attended Attleboro Public Schools, and that if it wasn't for a teacher in his Junior year that encouraged him to go to college, he probably would have never received a degree in Social Work and helped so many people as a result.

Mrs. Porreca asked what he taught.

Mr. Araujo responded grades 2-5.

Mrs. Porreca asked if he has ever received a decrease in staffing in the school district where he worked and what the repercussions were.

Mr. Araujo responded that a few years ago a social worker was laid off and as a result the other social workers had to go to that school for one day a week to fill in. Mr. Araujo also explained the role of Teacher Aides and the work that they do in order to keep many of the students enrolled in school.

Laurie Brisselle, of 131 Richardson Avenue , Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Ms. Brisselle stated that she didn't have a statement prepared since she had not planned on speaking at the Public Hearing. She stated that the issues related to the school budget shortfall is not a new issue, and years ago there were wage freezes and she asked the Council to reject the budget. She stated that the school are at the bare bones and stretched thin and that it is ridiculous and the schools cannot do it anymore.

Marie Donahue, of 43 Chesett Lane, Attleboro, MA, also spoke in opposition.

Ms. Donahue stated that several years ago there was a bumper sticker that said "Teach and Touch the Future" and she asked the Council to keep that saying in mind. She went on to explain that the kids are worth it and explained the importance of some of the classes that are going to be lost given the budget cuts.

Councilor Cooper asked Ms. Donahue to repeat the bumper sticker words.

Charlie Oliver, of 11 Thayer Farm Road, Attleboro, MA, spoke neither for nor against.

Mr. Oliver stated that he is speaking on behalf of Joan Pilkington Smyth, the Director of the Attleboro Library, who could not attend the Public Hearing given a death in the family.

Mr. Oliver read the following statement from Ms. Pilkington-Smyth:

As a city dweller and Director of the Library, I am passionate about the community and all that it does and should offer to our residents. I would be here tonight, but life happens and at times calls us elsewhere.

Many of us move to Attleboro for its affordability- housing wise and in comparison, tax wise. Maybe we work outside the City and treat our community like a suburb of Boston. We may sleep here, focus on our families, and not quite find the time to engage fully into our community.

As a transplant of Attleboro 35 years ago, my husband and I began our adventure. Newly married and wanting to get to know our new home, we embarked on an effort to get involved. We did so by serving on various city, non-profit, school, and church committees. Our children frequently attended meetings with us- realizing that you can make a positive impact on your community. We are certainly not alone in our efforts, as many people who live in Attleboro and become involved learn about the myriad of ways our community reaches out and connects with each other.

But what has kept us here for all those years?

It is the quality of life that his small city provides for all of its members. There is truly a connection for everyone- all ages, all interests, all skill-levels, and all needs.

Who hasn't taken themselves or their children to Capron Park? Who doesn't have some of their earliest memories, or long standing memories of their favorite animals? Who isn't proud of the work that has been done on the exhibits, park, or playground to make this a gem of the City?

Who hasn't spent some time on a ballfield, basketball court, football/soccer field to watch their children, friends' children, or as in our case with grown children, some other 5-15 year olds play ball on one of our local fields? Who doesn't marvel at the effort that the Recreation Department puts into keeping the fields going day after day after day?

Who doesn't realize that either now, or in the not too distant future the Council on Aging might be a life-saver?

Who hasn't cursed the Public Works Department for either plowing their street too quickly so it meant they had to go to work; or cursed the fact that it has not been done yet, because we all know, our street should be done first?

Who doesn't understand the connections many of our City Departments and the Schools- public, private, and higher ed, have with other community organizations to bring innovative events and programs to our City?

The Library staff members, in the last few and coming months are working with several community groups and individuals on several projects: another Community-wide Reading Project; the Arc and Kennedy Donovan Center to bring integrated programming for all ages and all abilities; the Y, Recreation Department, Parks/Forestry Department, and Attleboro Schools bringing the most comprehensive Summer Reading programming in the area for all ages with free events and lots of reading entertainment; we will begin an arts/exercise program for individuals with Parkinson's Disease this fall brought to us by the American Parkinson Disease Association; a Writer's Workshop Series; a parent is organizing an Adult Coloring support group for parents of children with and without challenges as an opportunity to connect; a former newspaper Publisher is bringing an Indie Writers Conference to the Library; there will be our usual programs, book groups, music opportunities, and general information forums as well. Through my own involvement with the Attleboro Arc Council of Churches, I appreciate the Library's participation with our Summer Kids' Café meal program. As your Library, we have a handle on the pulse of our community.

We may move here, live here, and not stray from our own immediate needs, but if we open our eyes to all Attleboro has to offer, we just might decide to stay and become a part of this vibrant community. The city and its varied departments, working with the community make this possible. I'd like to thank all of the City Departments for what you do every day to make Attleboro home for me and my family.

Mr. Oliver stated that he agreed with Ms. Pilkington-Smyth's statements, that he hopes the negativity in regards to the budget ceases, that the Library does great thing despite its limited resources given its talented staff, and that the systematic disabling of city departments across the board is not a satisfactory outcome for any citizen or for the quality of life in which Ms. Pilkington-Smyth has spoken.

Vice-President Denlea mentioned that 2 Library employees will be laid off and asked Mr. Oliver if the Library hours will remain the same.

Mr. Oliver stated that the hours of operation on Saturday would be reduced and that there could be an impact on the 2018 budget given spending and certification requirements and that he is very concerned.

Stephen Withers, Jr., of 25 Commonwealth Avenue, Attleboro, MA, and Chairman of the Attleboro School Committee, spoke neither for nor against.

Chairman Withers stated that the School Committee has been warning about this day coming for years now, although he believes the warning wasn't taken seriously. He went on to explain that the School Committee decided that this year it would become very vocal about this concerns and that the community has responded by becoming involved. Chairman Withers also went on to state that statements that others disagree with being characterized as negative is not a fair description and that on these issues people should disagree. He went on to explain the current situation related to the School budget issue and where it currently stands.

Vice-President Denlea asked if he knows how many employees will be laid off in the School Department if this budget is passed.

He responded that 7 paraprofessionals would be laid, off, as well as a custodian, 2 clerks and approximately 32-35 teachers, which amounts to approximately a 10% reduction in staff.

Vice-President Denlea asked if class sizes would be increased.

Chairman Withers stated that fees would be increased, as well as a drastic increase in class sizes and services will suffer. He further stated that the schools have a dedicated staff and an administration that will continue to provide a quality education but that services will definitely suffer.

Vice-President Denlea asked how much money it would cost to lay off all of these employees, specifically asking if it would cost \$400,000-\$500,000 to lay off so many employees.

Chairman Withers agreed, explaining that the number of layoffs that were made took into account the amount of unemployment payments that will have to be made, and that the number is significant.

Councilor Porreca asked Chairman Withers as he looks down the road, what are the significant repercussions for future fiscal years.

Chairman Withers stated that not having been level service funded, if there is a budget crisis next year for the school after laying off so many teachers then the problem will be significantly worse for future fiscal years. He explained that the schools will be starting in a hole next year.

Councilor Hall asked what level-service funding meant.

Chairman Withers responded it is the amount that the school department would need to provide the same level of services as were provided the previous year.

Councilor Hall asked who decides to level-fund the schools.

Chairman Withers stated that a needs-based budget wasn't asked for given the budget issues, which is why level-funding was requested.

Councilor Hall asked if he feels that there is \$1.1 million dollars somewhere in the budget.

Chairman Withers stated that he doesn't know.

Councilor Blais stated that the largest part of the shortfall for the schools are the salaries that are being paid, and he asked what the cost was for salaries that were negotiated for next year.

Chairman Withers stated that the total increase that educators will receive in salary increases is \$1.3 million dollars, but that salaries would have increased \$800,000 just given the step increases.

Councilor Blais asked if he believes if the negotiated contract was in the best interests of the city at the time.

Chairman Withers stated that he does believe that the negotiated contract, although he was not involved in those negotiations, was in the best interests of the city and the education system. He went on to explain the step increase system and the cost of living increases and how that is impacted by the majority of teachers being at their top step. He explained that such increases are standard and not unusual.

Councilor Reynolds asked if this school budget issue is something that has been going on for years.

Chairman Withers agreed.

Councilor Reynolds stated that the paraprofessionals were originally hired because teachers back when there was similar type of school budget funding issue then were let go.

Chairman Withers responded that he did not know.

Councilor Porreca asked if there will be an increase in covering classes due to the layoff of teachers and increased class sizes.

Chairman Withers stated that he doesn't see a connection with an increased need for substitutes given a layoff in teachers.

Councilor Heagney stated that she was laid off as a teacher and if he knew the cycle of layoffs in the schools system historically.

Chairman Withers stated that he doesn't know the historical trends.

Denise Preston, of 121 West Street, Attleboro, MA, spoke neither for nor against.

Ms. Preston made the following statement:

No one likes this budget. There is so much that we should be doing:

- We should have small classrooms staffed by strong educators with the support staff, supplies and technology to do their jobs.
- We should enrich the school experience with sports and extracurriculars to support kids of different abilities.
- We should have more police officers and firefighters to reduce overtime, fatigue and burn-out.
- We should have more Election staff as we head into a Presidential election with newly state-mandated “Early Voting.”
- We should expand on the Attleboro Public Library’s efforts to encourage life-long learners of all ages and all abilities.
- We should do more to support our Veterans. They didn’t hesitate in supporting us.
- We should do more to support our elders who are living longer with fixed incomes in a tough economy.

But Attleboro doesn’t have the money to do it all.

There is a multitude of reasons that we are in this situation right now:

- The formula to determine State money for education has not kept up with expenses.
- We get state-issued “mandates” every year, without funding.
- We have been supporting salaries with grant money that is gone now.
- And just this week we hear that the State is \$300 million short in revenue this year and will be up to \$750 million short next year because the stock market didn’t follow last year’s curve.

Despite all of that, Attleboro has done an amazing job of doing more with less.

We’ve seen that the Attleboro Public School District out-performs districts with higher budgets than ours.

Similarly, I have seen Attleboro’s administration outperform comparable cities:

- We’ve turned brownfields into revenue-generating apartment buildings.
- We’ve re-envisioned our transportation depot.
- We are reclaiming the green space around our river.
- We are getting a world-class athletic center that attracts professional sports teams interested in training our children.
- And most recently, we received a grant to preserve the oldest house in Attleboro and its surrounding lands for all to enjoy.
- Our fireworks are donation-funded.
- Our waste management is second to none.

When I was pressed by members of my Elementary School’s PTO to “do my homework” about the Attleboro budget crisis, what I found was a city that had done an admirable job of funding city

improvements through grant money, improving our city using money outside of our tax levy. We would not be enjoying the Attleboro that we now see without those efforts.

I also found a whole legion of people leaning in and doing more with less. Yes, the teachers and school staff immediately spring to mind, but in reviewing the city budget and watching the budget presentations my eyes were opened to everything that the other departments were doing on budgets that were far smaller than I had ever imagined. I have never been more proud of this city.

Do I want this budget? No, I don't. I want it to be more. We all want it to be more.

But I think the question that you need to be asking is if each department has done their best at prioritizing their spends to satisfy their objectives- within the monies currently available to us. Because the State is not going to help and I don't believe that there is gold bullion hidden in this building.

I have talked to people all over this issue- teachers, parents, administrators, School Committee Members, City Councilors, the Mayor, the Treasurer, our State Representative, even people on the street and what I now believe is this- EVERYONE has been trying their hardest. We have limited control over the total revenue we have to work with, but what we can and do control is how we spend it. Did each department do the most it could with the money it has?

I think we need to resolve this budget and move on. We need to accept our new reality and then turn our interest and attention towards making substantive changes so that we are not here again next year.

- We need to share what we have learned with other communities and school districts so that the Governor and Legislature start to listen.
- We need to work together to support our teachers and other city departments in order to make up for the tough cuts that we've had to make to get here.
- And we need to enact and support long-term plans to grow our tax base, because that is the only road to a long-term solution to this- growing local business and encouraging people to come here- to visit and to live.

I thank you for your time and attention.

After consultation with the Budget & Appropriations Chairperson, President Cook declared this **PUBLIC HEARING** closed.

**VOTED: TO RECESS** at 10:18 P.M.

**VOTED: TO RESUME** at 10:28 P.M.

President Cook announced that Ms. Heagney had to leave the meeting due to an emergency.

Councilor Cooper asked President Cook to review the Budget & Appropriations meeting schedule given the Council is up against a 9-day deadline for passing the budget.

President Cook explained that a Special Meeting had been called for the upcoming Thursday at 9:00 P.M. for the purpose of voting on the budget, and that Ms. Heagney had called for a 6:00 P.M. Budget &

Appropriations Meeting on Wednesday for the purpose of voting the budget out of her Committee. President Cook also stated that he called for a Special Meeting for next Tuesday, June 28, 2016, as he has historically done, in order to address any items that are pending before the Council before the end of the Fiscal Year.

Councilor Cooper asked when the Budget Message would be crafted.

President Cook stated that the Budget Message would be worked on at the Wednesday meeting.

Councilor Conti stated that he cannot attend the Wednesday meeting and that he has 22 budget amendments that will need to be presented at the Thursday meeting,

Councilor Cooper expressed his concerns about drafting a Budget Message in so little time.

**VOTED: TO GO INTO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE** at 10:37 P.M.

Scott Soullier, of 52 Adamsdale Road, North Attleboro, MA, spoke at the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Soullier stated that he owns Spring Hill Farms behind Stop and Shop and BJs Wholesale Club, and that he is looking to get a Right of Way rectified that was passed by the Planning Board on Buena Vista Drive in 1998. He went on to explain that his attorneys have told him that the only way for the Right of Way to happen would be for the City to take the land by Eminent Domain because some how the Right of Way got incorporated in a landowners deed. He further explained that his father went before the Planning Board in both 1995 and 1998 and the landowner was told to make the Right of Way clear because it deems his property inaccessible because one of the Right of Ways is blocked and you need two that are open in order to make a subdivision.

President Cook asked Mr. Soullier if he has spoken to City Planning Director Gary Ayrassian.

Mr. Soullier stated that he has, that he has been paying taxes on the property, and that he has a Certificate of Vote from the Council stating that the land should have been opened up. He also explained that although he has been paying taxes on the land although the title is in someone else's name.

President Cook clarified that the Certificate of Vote was from the Planning Board and not from the Council.

Councilor Conti asked what exists on his easement and if there is a curb cut.

He responded that there is no curve cut, that it is primarily a cul-de-sac and wooded area.

Councilor Conti asked if there is a standard house lot that is bordering on Mr. Soullier's easement.

Mr. Soullier responded no.

President Cook stated that the document that Mr. Soullier handed to him shows that he was a member of the Planning Board at the time, and that his recollection of the amended subdivision plan that was approved clearly shows that whatever the other person did was not approved in the plan.

Councilor Cooper asked if Buena Vista Drive was accepted by the City.

Mr. Soullier responded that it was accepted by the City.

Councilor Cooper asked if the referenced plan is recorded with the Bristol County Registry of Deeds and that the owner, Mr. Soullier, had the responsibility to record it.

Mr. Soullier stated that he had not recorded it. But he explained that the main water and sewer trunk goes through the area's plot, which is why the second Right of Way is needed.

President Cook stated that the paperwork shows that the Council in 2009 did an Eminent Domain taking of part of Buena Vista Drive.

Mr. Soullier responded that he thinks that his father failed to record it, and he doesn't have a clear title to the land to the entrance.

President Cook stated that it was recorded, an apparent reference to the plan that was approved by the Planning Board, and he referenced the recording book's page number reference. President Cook went on to state that there was an Eminent Domain taken after it was recorded, and he suggested that a meeting be set up with Planning Director Gary Ayrassian in order to determine why the land was taken. President Cook informed Mr. Soullier that he should reach out to Mr. Ayrassian to set up a meeting on Thursday, and that he will touch base with Mr. Ayrassian in the morning and that he will try to make it a point to be at the meeting if one is setup.

**VOTED: TO ARISE** at 11:01 P.M.

**VOTED: TO ADJOURN** at 11:01 P.M.

**A TRUE COPY**

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk/Clerk of the Council

**MINUTES APPROVED BY COUNCIL:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk/Clerk of the Council