

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on October 6, 2016:

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Walter M. O. Steere, III, President; George O. (Buster) Steere, Vice-President; William E. Reichert; Edward C. Burlingame; and Steven A. Sette.

Also present: Tim Kane, Town Solicitor; Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Gary Trembl, Director of Public Works; Judy Branch, Director of Human Services; and Ken Johnson, Building/Zoning Official.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

A. Raymond Trinque, of 300 Centennial Street Pascoag, addressed the Council and asked them to endorse the Burrillville Town Council's resolution in opposition to the proposed Invenergy power plant in Pascoag.

B. Paul Roselli, of 665 Maureen Circle Mapleville, member of the Burrillville Land Trust, encouraged the Council to pass the resolution in opposition to the Invenergy project and to look at the "bigger picture". P. Roselli noted that the Land Trust had conducted 17 "learn the facts" presentations throughout the State which have resulted in other cities and towns adopting similar resolutions.

C. Jeremy Bailey, of 585 Wallum Lake Road Pascoag, urged the Town Council to uphold the Resolution passed by the Burrillville Town Council in opposition to the proposed power plant. J. Bailey stated that he is a licensed real estate agent and commented that property values in the area would be negatively affected if the power plant is sited here. J. Bailey further asked the Council to send a letter to the State Siting Board and the Governor in opposition to this plan.

V. Resolution: Resolution in Support of the Burrillville Town Council's Opposition of the Siting of the Clear River Energy Center in Burrillville, RI - Discussion and/or action  
Councilor W. Steere stated that the Council has prepared the following Resolution in support of the Town of Burrillville's Resolution, which was read into the record by Councilor Sette:

**Resolution # 2016-18**

**In Support of the Burrillville Town Council's Opposition of the Siting of the Clear River Energy Center in Burrillville, RI**

**WHEREAS,** on October 29, 2015 Invenergy Thermal Development LLC filed an application to Construct the Clear River Energy Center Power Plant in Burrillville, RI with the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board (EFSB); and

**WHEREAS,** in the months since the filing of that application, the Town of Burrillville has conducted an extensive study of the application with and through credentialed professionals, including studies of noise, water, traffic and air quality; and

**WHEREAS,** after considering expert testimony and conducting thorough public hearings the Burrillville Planning Board and Zoning Board of Review have advised the EFSB that Burrillville, RI is not a suitable site for the Clear River Energy Center; and

**WHEREAS,** the Burrillville Building Inspector and Burrillville Tax Assessor, have also submitted advisory opinions to the EFSB expressing the impact the proposed Clear River Energy Center would have on the Town of Burrillville; and

**WHEREAS,** during the past eleven months, many citizens of Rhode Island, as well as our neighboring communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut, have expressed clear opposition to the siting of the Clear River Energy Center for reasons including the impact on property, environment, water and traffic; and

**WHEREAS,** the Gloucester Town Council joins with the citizens and officials of the Town of Burrillville as well as residents throughout the State of Rhode Island expressing concerns to the siting of the Clear River Energy Center in Burrillville, RI.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that we, the Town Council of the Town of Gloucester, do hereby support the Burrillville Town Council regarding their stand on the siting of the Clear River Energy Center in Burrillville, RI.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution of the Gloucester Town Council be submitted to the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board for consideration during their hearings on Invenergy Thermal Development LLC's application to construct the Clear River Energy Center power plant in Burrillville, RI.

Walter M.O. Steere, III  
Gloucester Town Council President

Jean M. Fecteau, CMC, Town Clerk

**Dated this 6<sup>th</sup> day of October 2016**

seconded by Councilor G. Steere.

Discussion: Councilor Reichert stated that the Town Council thoroughly supports this Resolution. Councilor Reichert stated "things" have been made up. Councilor Reichert stated that a resident, L. Niedel-Gresh, wanted him to recuse himself from this matter due to his oil business. Councilor Reichert noted that he has a small family business that has nothing to do with this project. Councilor Reichert stated we support the Burrillville Council and do not want the plant in Burrillville.

Councilor G. Steere stated for the record that he has been accused of having some sort of a "back room deal" to supply water to the power plant. Councilor G. Steere stated he thought that rumor was squashed six - eight months ago when he discussed this with some of the people in this audience tonight, but apparently not, and Councilor G. Steere stated he will "squash" them tonight.

Councilor G. Steere stated that in 2011 he was approached by the Pascoag Utility District who were looking for a source of drinking water to replace the polluted well water. Councilor G. Steere stated that he allowed them to send a company from New Hampshire to conduct geological studies & mapping on his property, noting that this was 2011, long before the power plant proposal. Councilor G. Steere stated this was long before the power plant was brought up. Councilor G. Steere stated that there is a written easement which runs out in November. Councilor G. Steere again stated it was drinking water that was being sought. Councilor G. Steere assured everyone in the room, for the record, that there will never be one gallon of water from his property that will go to cool or supply a power plant. Councilor G. Steere stated he just wants to set the record straight, particularly, to those present who are spreading that rumor. Councilor G. Steere further stated that his heartfelt wish was for the water to come up Douglas Hook Road to serve Main Street in Chepachet on the way to Pascoag.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

VI.    Consent Items - Discussion and/or action

    A.    Approval of Town Council regular meeting minutes of Sept. 15, 2016

    B.    Pole Grant - (Transport Utility Pole: Putnam Pike & Durfee Hill Road)

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to APPROVE the Town Council regular meeting minutes of September 15, 2016; and to APPROVE the request from Mobilitie, LLC (a R.I. P.U.C. certified company) for a transport utility pole, within D.O.T.'s easement, east of the intersection of Putnam Pike and Durfee Hill Rd.; seconded by Councilor Sette.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

VII.   New Business

    A.    Boards & Commission

        1.    Senior Center Board of Directors

            a.    Two expired five year terms - Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Steere stated that this item is for the expired terms of David Chace and Jacky DiPietro from the Senior Center Board of Directors. Councilor W. Steere stated the Council has received correspondence from Dave Chace which states he does not wish to be reappointed and from Jacky DiPietro in which she states she would like to be reappointed.

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to REAPPOINT Jaclynn DiPietro to the Senior Center Board of Directors for a five year term to expire 10/2021; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to TABLE the appointment to the Senior Center Board of Directors for a five year term to expire 10/2021; seconded by Councilor Sette.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

- B.     PRISM & Light Smart Energy Consulting, LLC.  
          Glocester Report for Sept. 2016  
          Entitled: Street Light Acquisition and Energy Efficiency Improvement Options -  
          Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Steere stated that Tom Gentz, from PRISM, is in attendance to present his report to the Council.

Mr. Gentz introduced Jeff Broadhead, Executive Director of PRISM. T. Gentz stated that the Town owns one (1) streetlight with an annual cost of \$506 and the Chepachet Fire District owns and operates 131 streetlights, at an annual cost of \$16,400. T. Gentz stated that the streetlight law that was passed by the legislature states that only municipalities can purchase streetlights. T. Gentz also noted that the Town and the Fire District are paying for the same light, adding that it is a 50 watt light and the Town and Fire District are paying for a 400 watt light.

T. Gentz summarized his report by stating that if the streetlights were purchased by the Town for the town and the fire district, the cost would be approximately \$9,200, which is a relatively small price. T. Gentz noted that the cost savings (if purchased, a change was made to LED lights, and PRISM did the maintenance) would be \$10,494 which would result in a payback of less than a year.

T. Gentz spoke about the issues which were found during the streetlight audit. There are 27 decorative lights in the Village, two (2) of which are down and two (2) that are not working. T. Gentz stated that above those are the Fire Department's lights, which are on at the same time. T. Gentz noted that there is a way, through PRISM with intelligent controllers, to turn the decorative lights off at 11:00 p.m. and turn on the streetlights at that time.

T. Gentz stated that the advantage of conversion is an economic advantage for the taxpayers and the rate payers, but we must find a way to solve the problem that fire districts cannot purchase the streetlights. T. Gentz stated that they have asked for a meeting with the Governor regarding this issue.

T. Gentz stated that he would like to introduce several concepts, one of which is to have PRISM's attorney work with the Town Solicitor to prepare documents for the Town to purchase the streetlights, including the Fire District's lights. The Fire District would then pay the Town for the lights, and PRISM would handle the maintenance and possible conversion to LED's.

The second concept would be to wait until the legislature comes back into session which is not until July of next year.

T. Gentz recommended that the Town send a letter to National Grid to purchase the streetlights, and PRISM's attorney and the Town Solicitor can draft a simple agreement that states that after the payment is made, the Fire District will write a check and it will be taken care of.

Jeff Broadhead discussed tariff issues, explaining that the rate tariff is the document and regulation under which National Grid, or any utility, charges its customers. J. Broadhead stated that the tariff that is currently in place is called the S-14 for company owned lights. J. Broadhead stated that National Grid owns the streetlights, but the Town has paid for them many times over. Mr. Broadhead stated when PRISM realized how much towns were being charged, legislation was written allowing Towns to purchase the lights if they wish. However, J. Broadhead noted that most of Gloucester's lights are Fire District lights, which is common in the northern part of the State. J. Broadhead stated that there is a slight risk to the Town regarding the tariff, adding that it would switch from company-owned to customer-owned. J. Broadhead stated that there is a slight possibility that National Grid would refuse to put these lights into the proper cost-saving tariff. J. Broadhead stated that the worst case would be if the lights were switched to the commercial/industrial rate, which is still lower than the current rate.

Tom Gentz again suggested that the Town purchase the lights and to also consider letting PRISM maintain the 27 decorative lights in the Village.

Councilor Sette stated that there are two (2) other fire districts in Town and asked if PRISM has looked at the lights in those districts. T. Gentz replied that there are two (2) streetlights in West Gloucester but he is not familiar with any in Harmony.

Councilor Sette asked the Solicitor if this would require a vote of the entire Town to purchase lights in one district of the Town. Tim Kane, Town Solicitor, replied that if it was real estate, it would require a vote, but he is unsure about lights. T. Kane stated that he does not believe we need voter approval, but he will check the Charter.

Tim Kane asked if the Chepachet Fire District is in favor of such a transaction. T. Gentz replied that he has been working with the Fire District, (Darlene) who has relayed the information to the Chief, however no one from the District is present tonight. T. Gentz stated that we can get a rebate on the one light that the Town and Fire District are both paying for.

Tim Kane asked if PRISM has accomplished this with any other towns and fire districts. T. Gentz replied that so far, there are three (3) fire districts that are working with PRISM.

Tim Kane stated that the first step in the process is to write a letter to National Grid inquiring about purchasing the lights, which would not commit us to anything. T. Kane stated that we would then get a check from the Chepachet Fire District, but the ultimate question is who runs it afterward.

Councilor Burlingame questioned why we haven't heard from the Fire District to entertain this idea. Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that she believed representatives from the Fire District were going to be present tonight, and further that she has spoken to the clerk of the fire district on this subject, but there is nothing in writing from the district.

Tom Gentz stated that he has had discussions with the Fire District and they are in agreement that they would like to reduce costs for the rate payers. Councilor Burlingame stated that he would like to see something formal from them in this regard.

Councilor G. Steere commented that the billing would remain the same; we would just be helping the Fire District purchase the lights.

There was Council consensus that there needs to be discussion with the Fire District before any further action is taken. Councilor Sette suggested that we send the letter to National Grid, and in the interim, have that discussion with the Fire District.

MOTION was made by Councilor Sette to send a letter to National Grid requesting the cost to purchase the streetlights, and to have discussion with the Chepachet Fire District; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

Tom Gentz asked if the Council wants PRISM to handle the maintenance of the decorative lights in the Village. Councilor Burlingame replied that he would like to keep it simple for now and deal with the decorative lights later. T. Gentz stated that if the Council wishes, he could convene a meeting between the Town and the Fire District. T. Gentz also stated that if the Council can get the bills as far back as possible for the one light that was paid for by both the Town and the Fire District, he could assist us in getting money back.

Councilor W. Steere thanked Mr. Gentz and Mr. Broadhead for their time.

C.     Resident Drainage Complaint, Putnam Pike - Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Steere read the following letter from residents regarding drainage issues on Putnam Pike:

9/30/2016

To the members of the Gloucester Town Council,

For many years I and my neighbors have been trying to deal with the RIDOT regarding storm water run off from RT44. During rain storms and snow melt massive quantities of water run off and enter our properties causing washout and flooding. The properties effected the most are the Chepachet Hardware store at 916 Putnam Pike, The Ventetuolo residence at 924 Putnam Pike, the Merchant residence at 928 Putnam Pike and across the street at the Pacheco residence at 917 Putnam Pike.

Many years ago I started this communicating with Bob Smith (now retired) and G. Marion from RIDOT. A few years later when the road was about to be re-surfaced I had them come by again to discuss the issue. Several times since, we have had many meetings, including one with Gloucester Town Zoning Official Ken Johnson. Nothing has been done to even attempt slowing or redirecting the water at all.

I have currently been passed off to Matthew Ouellette, a RIDOT maintenance engineer. I have sent him several videos via email that I took of the flooding waters during a rain storm. So far he has made no attempt at responding to the information I gave him. I have made contact with him twice on the phone, and he confirmed that he has my emails.

There are many issues that come from this flood water, the worst being septic system/ Cesspool flooding, soil erosion, and other property damage.

Any ideas that I have for future expansion of Chepachet Hardware, such as replacing storage trailers with a more efficient and esthetically pleasing building could not be realized until this issue is resolved. I do not feel that it is my responsibility to build a drainage system to consume the State's water. There are catch basins all along this portion of RT44, the closest being at Lee Drive. If we could somehow be tied into that, the problem might be resolved.

This letter is an attempt to get assistance from the Town Council. I have been told from a reliable source within RIDOT that a letter and or request from the Town Council to RIDOT could be instrumental in getting this issue resolved.

Thank You,

(Hard copy of Memo includes the following signatures):

Gregory Murray, Chepachet Hardware 916 Putnam Pike

Resident 917 Putnam Pike Mr. Pacheco

Resident 924 Putnam Pike Mr. Ventetuolo

Resident 928 Putnam Pike M . Merchant

(end of memo)

Discussion: Gregory Murray, of 916 Putnam Pike, was present to answer any questions regarding his memo.

Councilor Sette asked Mr. Murray if he has tried to get his State Representative and Senator involved. G. Murray replied in the negative, stating he believed that DOT would be able to take care of the problem. G. Murray stated that he was told that if the Council got involved, it would go further than just the residents complaining. Councilor Sette stated that if the Council sends a letter, it should go to Director Alviti as well as our State Reps and Senator. Councilor Reichert suggested that Mr. Murray call Senator Fogarty personally. Councilor G. Steere also recommended contacting Representative Cale Keable.

Denise Tetreault, 928 Putnam Pike, stated that this problem started when DOT redid the road. D. Tetreault stated that they have tried different ways to redirect the water, but it is like a stream coming down the driveway.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to send a letter to DOT asking them to remedy the drainage problem at 916, 917, 924 and 928 Putnam Pike, and to send a copy, of that letter, to our State Representatives and our Senator; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: Gregory Murray requested that he also receive a copy of the letter.

Mike DeGrange, of 686 Chopmist Hill Road, stated that he had a similar problem, but after a long battle and with the assistance of Rep. Mike Chippendale, the State installed a berm which alleviated the problem.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.

              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

D. Foster/Glocester Regional School

1. Authorization of Correspondence to School Committee and/or Superintendent

Re: Correspondence rec'd from Reg. Business Manager - Discussion and/or action

Councilor W. Steere stated that Diane Brennan, Finance Director, received correspondence from the Business Manager, for the Regional School District, questioning the taxing of tangible property, rental equipemnt. Councilor W. Steere noted that it is not known if the Business Manager had authorization from the Superintendent or the School Committee to send this type of correspondence. Councilor W. Steere stated that he found it disturbing the way the correspondence portrayed things that could happen if the request was not met. Councilor W. Steere suggested that the Council write a letter to the School Committee asking them if this is what their wishes are and if they condone this type of behavior from their Business Manager.

Councilor Sette agreed that it was insulting the way the questions came and the insinuations that were there. Councilor Sette questioned if the equipment in question was purchased through a State bid there are certain fees that should not be charged. Councilor Sette stated if it wasn't done that way he wonders why not. Councilor Sette also stated, in regards to the next item on the agenda, that we vote on a Budget at the Financial Meeting for a certain amount and once you start to spend more you need to go back to the voters to ask for more money. Councilor Sette referenced that this is part of Title 16. Councilor Sette stated that he does not believe that this has been done for certain recent purchases. Councilor Sette noted that they are asking for a rebate of \$7,400 and he feels that more than that amount has been spent already without going back to the taxpayers. Councilor Sette questioned if they worked with the leasing company to lower these fees.

Councilor Burlingame stated that he saw Diane Brennan's response to the request and he feels that it expressed exactly what the law was, what they should have done and why we are not going to pay it. Councilor Burlingame stated that since they made the decision to lease rather than purchase, they set themselves up for a problem with the company. Councilor Burlingame stated that we must ask them the details of the lease agreement with Wells Fargo and if any of this was addressed, including the taxing.

Councilor Sette stated that it is \$200,000 worth of equipment which could have been purchased with Capital money. Councilor Burlingame stated they may have circumvented the expense and by leasing it plowed in into maintenance of effort because if purchased it would be a Capital Expenditure which could not be included in the maintenance of effort. Councilor Burlingame suggested that the Council send a letter to the School Committee asking what were the terms and conditions of the lease agreement.

Walter Steere, Jr., School Committee member, stated that this was an agenda item at the Committee's meeting Tuesday night. W. Steere, Jr. stated that their attorney gave his opinion that it is perfectly legal for the Town to tax the equipment. W. Steere, Jr. pointed out the problem is that the taxes paid will show up as a line item in the School Department's budget and the Region will ask for more money because the town taxed them.

Councilor G. Steere asked why the School Department did not buy the equipment. W. Steere, Jr. replied that he has been told that it is more cost efficient to lease.

Councilor Burlingame stated cost effectiveness includes the cost of lease and any additional costs that go along with it.

Walter Steere, Jr., School Committee member, stated he doesn't know anything about this letter but that he doesn't think it makes sense to tax the region and then the region will come back and tax the town.

There was discussion regarding the letter from the Business Manager. Councilor W. Steere stated that she may have had authorization from the Superintendent to send the letter but she did not have authorization from the School Committee. W. Steere, Jr. stated the item was just on the agenda, after the fact.

W. Steere, Jr. stated that it does not make sense for the Town to tax the Region, and then the Region would come back and tax the Town, although Foster would have to pay 1/3 of the amount. Councilor Burlingame noted that Glocester provides services, such as plowing, to both schools, because they are physically located in Glocester, and we don't send a prorated bill to Foster for their share.

W. Steere, Jr. stated he is not privileged to those letters and he doesn't think the Council should start this fight. Council pointed out this wasn't "started" by the Council.

Councilor Burlingame stated that this is nothing new; it has always been done this way, but the Business Manager has decided to make an issue out of it. Tim Kane raised the question if we could exempt them from the tax, or are we duty-bound by law to tax the personal property. T. Kane noted that the School Committee's Solicitor has ruled that we are doing the right thing. W. Steere, Jr. replied that the School Committee's Solicitor ruled that we can do it, but he didn't say we had to do it.

Councilor Sette stated that when you lease printers and copiers over a three-year period, for what you pay per month on those machines, you probably could have bought the items outright for less.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to send a letter to the Regional Business Manager asking for the terms and conditions of the lease and what the assumptions were as to the payment of taxes on the equipment; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
              NAYS:       0

MOTION PASSED

2.       Request for Regional District accounting of funds expended  
          Discussion and/or action

Councilor Burlingame stated that he requested this item because Walter Steere, Jr., School Committee member, informed the Council about two (2) meetings at which expenditures were approved. Councilor Burlingame explained that at the 6/28/16 meeting, the Committee voted to purchase a facilities vehicle for \$61,471 and to put light pole holes in the athletic fields at a cost of \$17,750. Councilor Burlingame stated that he does not recall seeing these items in the Budget and we must ask the Business Manager if it was budgeted and if it came from the General Fund surplus.

Councilor Burlingame noted that Mr. Steere voted no at this meeting while the other members voted yes. Councilor Burlingame stated Mr. Steere must have had a good reason for voting against the expenditure.

Councilor Burlingame stated that on 7/14/16, \$210,000 was approved for bleachers, \$106,909 for bathroom renovations, and \$97,255 for concrete construction. Councilor Burlingame stated that this amounts to \$400,000 which he does not recall being defined in the Capital Budget for 2016/2017. Councilor Burlingame acknowledged he could be wrong but he does not recall. Councilor Burlingame also wondered why bathroom renovations were necessary since we just came off a 60 million dollar renovation project for the new school and the high school. Councilor Burlingame stated that we need to ask what is the basis for these expenditures. Councilor Burlingame pointed out that W. Steere, Jr. voted no to both. W. Steere, Jr. stated he had reasons.

Walter Steere, Jr. stated that all of these renovations are on the 5-year plan but some of them have been moved up to this year. W. Steere, Jr. stated the bathrooms in question are to the left of the bleachers. Regarding the bleachers, W. Steere stated that they had to be handicap accessible, but he had recommended that they be made smaller than the original plan. W. Steere stated the other members of the school committee did not agree and wanted to go with the original plan. Walter Steere, Jr. stated regarding the pick up truck was originally in this year's budget and was cut out and now it is back to be paid out of 2017 but he does not know why they did it this way. Walter Steere, Jr. stated the lighting posts are for future lighting (2019) but he feels it will happen sooner.

Councilor Sette stated that he recalls discussion regarding the 5-year plan and there was talk of installing security cameras. Councilor Sette stated that we have security needs but are spending all this money on other things. Councilor Sette stated that he feels that the things that are most important at the schools should be done first. Councilor Sette stated there is a difference between luxury and necessity and some of these are luxuries. Councilor Sette stated the letter sent from the Business Manager references the funds for taxing takes away from the education of our students, perhaps these expenditures also take away from education as well as safety of the students.

W. Steere, Jr. stated the region seems to spend a lot more funds than they budget. W. Steere, Jr. stated that we budgeted for 30 out-of-town students this year and we now have 61, which is (31 X \$18,000) revenue that was never expected. Councilor Burlingame asked if State Law allows for spending revenue that was not included in the budget or do they have to wait until the next financial meeting so the voters can decide how they want to spend it, if they want to spend it. Discussion followed on budgeted versus unbudgeted revenue. Councilor Burlingame stated at a meeting with the Regional Business Manager, this spring, it was acknowledged that there would be additional revenue of approx. \$ 300,000, she (Business Manager) indicated that there are "other expenses" and the surplus would only be out approx. \$100,000, which Councilor Burlingame stated was not true. Councilor Burlingame stated now you have \$500,000 more coming in this year, are you authorized to spend that extra money coming in our should you have to wait and let the voters decide how they want to spend it, if they decide to spend it.

W. Steere, Jr. stated that perhaps RIDE knows the answer to that question. W. Steere, Jr. stated at budget committee meetings we thought we would have over 40 students but some members of the school committee didn't want to budget for that in case it wasn't that high.

Councilor Burlingame stated years ago we had this discussion at the local level. Councilor Burlingame stated the motion was made approving expenditures, revenue, and amount to be raised

by taxes. Councilor Burlingame stated if the expense was going higher than budgeted they had to come back with a plan to balance and it didn't mean extra revenue could be applied and why doesn't that same rule apply to the region.

W. Steere, Jr. agreed that you are allowed so much money when budget is passed and we are spending a lot more than that.

Councilor Burlingame stated that should be part of the question.

Councilor G. Steere stated this is all part of a well orchestrated plan by Supt. Barnes stating he knew at the time of the budget meeting (when voted) that he had approx \$342,000 extra. Councilor G. Steere stated then we went to a school committee meeting where they said they would have an \$80,000 surplus at the end of the year and we asked "what about the extra \$300,000 from the tuitioned-in kids?" Councilor G. Steere stated that the response was "we're just going to spend it." Councilor G. Steere stated that it looks like they have done that again this year.

W. Steere, Jr. stated that the extra tuition money is going to two (2) line items; salaries and benefits, because they said they would have to hire more people for the extra students, which is not altogether true because local student population is still going down. W. Steere, Jr. stated that is were that money is parked in the budget. Some of that money is going to go towards the capital projects. Councilor Burlingame stated that part is alright, if we had an extra \$500,000 coming in and applied it to capital projects because, if the rules were followed, it wouldn't then be added to the maintenance of effort.

W. Steere, Jr. stated we are spending more than was authorized by the voters. Councilor Burlingame stated the voters should have the option to spend and at least keep it out of salaries and benefits.

Councilor Sette stated that if it is placed in salaries and benefits, that is maintenance of effort. W. Steere, Jr. stated that he asked that question and was told that maintenance of effort is taken from what was approved at the Financial Town Meeting and that extra revenue does not add to maintenance of effort. Councilor Sette explained that when the budget comes in next year, it will show that more teachers were hired and the number will automatically increase. Councilor Sette stated any time you take money out of your surplus and not cut your budget in the next year you create a structural deficit.

Councilor Burlingame suggested that the Council send a letter to the Business Manager and the Superintendent asking if the facilities vehicle and light poles that were approved on 6/28 were part of the 2015/2016 budget and what was the source of the revenues, and further to ask the source of the revenue for the bleachers, bathroom renovation and concrete construction which was approved on 7/14.

Councilor Burlingame stated we need to ask these questions now, early in the budget process. Councilor G. Steere stated that we should ask where the money came for regarding the truck, because he specifically asked as they were proposing to pay for it out of the Operating Budget, which would drive up the Maintenance of Effort. Walter Steere, Jr. stated that the truck was not in the 5-year plan because it is not reimbursable by the State. Councilor G. Steere stated that the truck is still a depreciable item and should be a Capital expenditure and should not drive up maintenance of effort.

Walter Steere, Jr. noted that another expense is that we have four (4) students going to school in Coventry as part of the Pathways program. W. Steere, Jr. stated another line item that has been tabled, for now, is a late bus for out of district students who play sports after school.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to send correspondence to the Superintendent and Business Manager asking for an explanation regarding where the funding source was for the facilities vehicle (\$61,471) and light poles (\$17,750) from the 6/28/16 meeting, and the basis for the bleachers (\$210,000), bathroom renovations (\$106,909) and the concrete construction (\$97,255) from the 7/14/16 meeting; seconded by Councilor G. Steere.

Discussion:

1. Patricia Henry, of 376 Chestnut Hill Road, commented that some of the money coming in for tuition should go back into educating the students. P. Henry noted that in the Rhode Island Monthly Magazine, Ponaganset was rated 23<sup>rd</sup> in the State. P. Henry stated that Chariho Career and Tech has filed a lawsuit against other communities that have developed “Pathways”, and if the pending lawsuit prevails, it could really impact what we are doing here.
2. Walter Steere, Jr., School Committee member, stated that the law now states that if a district has a good program a child will stay in that district but the new Commissioner wants to make it so that even if you have a program that is great, if a child wants to go somewhere else, they can.

E. Personnel

1. Resignation - Discussion and/or action

A. Public Works - Driver/Laborer 1

Councilor W. Steere read the following memo from the Public Works Director:

September 20, 2016

To: Diane Brennan  
Finance/Human Resource Director

From: Gary Trembl  
Public Works Director

On Monday September 19, 2016 at 7:00 am Todd Lewis resigned, effective immediately, from his Driver Laborer I position at Public Works.

(End of memo)

Discussion: None.

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to ACCEPT the resignation of Todd Lewis from the Public Works position of Driver/Laborer 1, effective September 19, 2016; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

VIII. Town Council Correspondence and/or Discussion

- A. Councilor W. Steere stated that the Council received a letter from Chepachet Hardware regarding stormwater runoff.
- B. Councilor W. Steere stated that the Council received a streetlight report from Mr. Gentz of PRISM.
- C. Councilor W. Steere stated that a resignation was received from the Public Works Department.
- D. Councilor W. Steere stated that correspondence was received from the Business Manager of the Region.
- E. Councilor W. Steere stated that a letter was received from the Burrillville Land Trust with regard to Invenergy.
- F. Councilor W. Steere stated that a thank-you was received from Evelyn Wheeler concerning the tax abatements for historical cemeteries.
- G. Councilor W. Steere stated that a request was received from the Tilted Tavern, which was referred to the Town Solicitor.
- H. Councilor W. Steere stated that a letter was received from DOT regarding requests for the Municipal Road and Bridge Revolving Fund. Councilor W. Steere pointed out that municipalities now must bid for a loan to repair roads instead of receiving grants as was done in the past.

IX. Department Head Reports/Discussion

None.

X. Bds. and Commissions Reports/Discussion

None.

XI. Open Forum

- A. Lorraine O’Connors, co-chair of the Ponaganset Education Foundation, stated that their Wine and Dine fundraiser will be held on November 6, 2016 at Bella Restaurant.  
  
L. O’Connors explained the Foundation and stated that to date, they have granted approximately \$35,000 in scholarships to students in the community.
- B. Lauren Niedel-Gresh thanked the Council for putting the Resolution on the agenda, stating that the Clear River Energy project is something she has been passionate about stopping for quite some time. L. Niedel-Gresh stated that the project is currently in a “pause mode” due to lack of water. L. Niedel-Gresh noted that if anyone wishes to learn more of the details, a “learn the facts” event will be held at the Glad Tidings Church on October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

- C. David LaPlante, of 47 Absalona Hill Road, commended the Police Department regarding a recent drug bust, stating that it takes hard work and dedication. D. LaPlante further stated that a Gloucester Patrolman rescued a driver. D. LaPlante stated that we are lucky to have the people that we have on the Police Department.
- D. Russell Gross stated that if anyone doubts what Councilor G. Steere said about his wells, he can corroborate that it was over three (3) years ago, long before the power plant was proposed.

XII. MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to:

- A. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining: Contract Negotiations - Discussion and/or action
- B. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) Potential Litigation- Discussion and/or action

seconded by Councilor G. Steere.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
               NAYS:        0

MOTION PASSED

XIII. Reconvene Open Session (Disclose votes taken in Executive Session)

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to SEAL the minutes of Executive Session and to disclose that one (1) vote was taken; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
               NAYS:        0

MOTION PASSED

XIV. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to ADJOURN at 9: 42 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE :       AYES:       W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.  
               NAYS:        0

MOTION PASSED