

**WEST POINT TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
February 24th 2015
5:30 PM**

I Town Council Work Session

A. Academy Apartments

Andrea Erard, the Town Attorney asked Jen Surber, representative for GEM Management if the Town would be limiting its self if there was an area designated as "The Revitalization Area".

Jen Surber stated not at all. It would be a revitalization area for the project with no commitment of a revitalization area for the Town.

Mr. Lawson advised that at the Community Development Committee meeting comments regarding a felon were discussed and there was never a clear answer given regarding the eviction of a tenant that becomes a felon.

Ms. Surber stated that GEM Management does not rent to felons.

Mr. Hudson asked about tenants that become felons while being a resident at Academy Apartments.

Ms. Serber advised what GEM Management are asking for Town Council to adopt a resolution and for the Town Manager to submit a letter for the application to VHDA. The project will provide \$40,000 in improvements to each apartment at no cost to the Town.

Mr. Hudson asked what the status is for tenants that become a felon.

Ms. Surber advised that she can discuss the felon issue with the owners.

Mr. Edwards stated that surveillance cameras have been mentioned in previous discussions and for West Point Police Department to have access to the property.

Ms. Surber advised that she can provide a letter addressing all of the issues.

Andrea Erard asked for Ms. Surber to prepare a letter.

Mr. Lawson stated that there was a question regarding taxes.

Mrs. Ball advised that Sally Pearson, Commissioner of the Revenue has sent a letter regarding the process for taxes.

Mr. Edwards provided a copy of the letter to Ms. Serber.

Andrea Erard, left the meeting to assist Ms. Surber with the preparation of a letter.

Mr. Hudson advised that Academy Apartments will need to be placed on the agenda for action.

Andrea Erard, returned to the meeting and advised she has worked with Jen Surber on a resolution for adoption by Town Council.

B. FY 2015-16 Budget Discussion

Mr. Edwards presented Town Council the attached budget request from the schools and stated that it is a 9.2% increase in local funding for the budget.

Mr. Shreaves advised that it would be a 12 cents tax increase.

Mr. Edwards reviewed the items with increases and advised that the State is recommending a 3 % salary adjustment for teachers, 1.5% to be paid by the State with a 1.5% match from local funding. Mr. Edwards also stated that due to the tax re-assessment an equalization is required, the Towns tax rate would need to be increased by 6 cents, taking the rate from 64 cents to 70 cents if the budget remains at level funding. If the County equalized at 44 cent, the combined tax rate will be \$1.14.

Mr. Hudson advised that the Town has made the school system their number 1 priority over the past few years and when the HVAC system was replaced, it was a huge project the Town borrowed 5.2 million dollars. Mr. Hudson stated that in meetings with the School it was made very clear to the schools that the Town would borrow the funds for the project and in return the schools would hold the line on the budget to give the Town time to recover from the expense of the project. Mr. Hudson stated that he had asked for this from the schools and Mr. Hudson thought the Town had received a commitment from the schools to allow some recovery time for the HVAC project.

Mr. Edwards advised that the Town is spending less funds this year in their budget and the Schools have an increase of 9.2%. The School Superintendent has advised that he is not willing to negotiate the request.

The consensus of Town Council is that Council has always been willing to work with the Schools but is unable to work with this request without the School Superintendent willing to negotiate.

Mr. Edwards advised that a Joint Meeting with the School Board is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3rd 2015 at 7:00 PM at the School Board Office. Mr. Edwards asked Town Council if they had a message regarding the budget for the School Superintendent.

The consensus of Town Council is that they would need time to review the request.

James H. Hudson, III
Mayor

ATTEST:

Karen M. Barrow
Town Clerk