

TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN
Notice of Initial Public Hearing
and
Tentative Budget Schedule
2013-2014 Budget

The Town Council and the School Committee of the Town of South Kingstown will hold an initial budget hearing on Thursday, December 20, 2012 at 7:00 PM in the Town Council Chambers, 180 High Street, Wakefield, RI to discuss and solicit comments from the public relating to the goals and objectives of the development of the 2013-2014 municipal and school budgets. Discussion will include but not be limited to increases in taxes, proposed new projects, contractual obligations and other items or matters of concern. The public is invited and encouraged to attend to comment and express concerns at that time. A summary of the budget adoption process as approved November 7, 2006 and tentative schedule follow.

BUDGET ADOPTION PROCESS
CHARTER AMENDMENTS
APPROVED NOVEMBER 7, 2006

“Sec. 4221 – Proposed Budget.

Budget Schedule

The schedule for the preparation, consideration, adoption and conduct of requested referenda on the annual town budget shall be followed each year as set forth in the various sections of this article, based upon the requirement that final action by the council thereon shall take place on or before May 1st. Prior to December 31st of each year, a summary of the budget process, together with a tentative schedule of dates of the various hearings shall be prepared for public distribution by the Town Clerk and the Town Clerk shall arrange for the publication of a notice thereof in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the town as directed by the Town Council, and post copies in the Town Hall and on the Town Web Site, and as otherwise directed by the Town Council.

Initial Budget Hearing To Discuss Goals and Objectives.

The Town Council shall schedule between December 1 and January 15 of the ensuing year a public hearing for the purpose of discussing and soliciting comments from the electors relating to the general goals and objectives of the budget for the ensuing year. It is recognized that a proposed budget will not be completed at this time. The purpose of the hearing is to receive public input regarding the budget prior to the presentation of a proposed budget by the Town Manager. Without limiting the discussion, such matters as any increase in taxes, proposed new projects, contractual obligations and other items affecting the budget should be discussed. The School Committee shall attend this meeting and participate in the hearing.

Town Manager's Proposed Budget.

(i) Submission of budget and budget message. On or before March first of each year, the town manager shall submit to the town council the town manager's proposed budget for the ensuing fiscal year and an accompanying message.

(ii) Budget message. The town manager's message shall explain the budget both in fiscal terms and in terms of the work programs. It shall outline the proposed financial objectives of the town for the ensuing fiscal year, describe the important features of the budget, indicate any major changes from the current year in financial objectives, expenditures, and revenues together with the reasons for such changes, and include such other material as the town manager deems desirable.

(iii) Budget format. The budget shall provide a complete financial plan of the general fund and utility funds for the ensuing fiscal year and, except as required by law or this charter, shall be in such form as the town manager deems desirable or the town council may require. Other town funds shall be included as directed by the town council. The budget shall begin with a clear general summary of its contents; shall show in detail all estimated income, indicating the proposed property tax levy, and all proposed expenditures, including debt service, for the ensuing fiscal year; and shall be so arranged as to show comparative figures for budgeted and estimated income and expenditures of the current fiscal year and actual income and expenditures of the preceding fiscal year. It shall indicate in separate sections:

(a) The proposed goals and objectives and expenditures for current operations during the ensuing fiscal year, detailed for each fund by major program function as defined by the town council and the method of financing such expenditures;

(b) Proposed capital expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year consistent with the requirements of Section 4226; and

(c) The anticipated income and expense for the ensuing year for each utility or other enterprise fund operated by the town.

The total of proposed general fund expenditures shall not exceed the total of estimated income and designated fund balance.

For each utility fund, budget administration shall be consistent with Section 4225 Administration of Budget.

To inform the public, the town clerk shall cause sufficient copies of the Town Manager's Proposed Budget to be prepared for public distribution and shall arrange for the publication of an announcement thereof in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the town as directed by the Town Council, and post copies in the Town Hall and on the Town Web Site, and as otherwise directed by the Town Council.

Section 4222 - Budget.

A. Town Council's Preliminary Budget.

The council shall review the budget submitted by the manager in public workshops, and on or before March 22nd of each year adopt a Preliminary Budget. The council may revise the Town Manager's Proposed Budget; provided, however, that if an increase is approved in the total of expenditures as proposed by the manager, the council also shall provide for increasing the total anticipated revenues and shall indicate the revenues necessary to maintain a balance between revenues and expenditures. No revenue from any source other than the tax levy shall be included in the budget as adopted by the council unless the facts clearly warrant the expectation that such amount actually will be realized in cash during the budget year.

B. Public Hearings.

Following approval of the preliminary budget, the council shall schedule and hold two (2) public hearings, on separate days on both the municipal and school budgets, at which the school committee shall be represented. These hearings shall be scheduled and be completed on or before April 18th of each year. To inform the public prior to said hearings, the town clerk shall cause sufficient copies of the preliminary budget to be prepared for public distribution, and shall arrange for notice of the public hearings and a summary of the preliminary municipal and school budgets in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the town as directed by the Town Council, and post copies in the Town Hall and on the Town Web Site, and as otherwise directed by the Town Council. At the hearings, all those desirous of being heard shall be heard.

C. Petitions to the Council.

Following adoption of the Preliminary Budget by the council, any qualified elector of the town may circulate a petition requesting the council to increase or decrease by any amount any item of expenditure in the said budget or to insert a new item of expenditure. Such petition shall specify the budget item or insertion and amount thereof and must be approved by the town clerk as to form prior to circulation, and must be returned to the town clerk on or before April 21st of each year. Upon receipt of such petition, the town clerk shall cause the signatures thereon to be verified by the board of canvassers forthwith, and if it contains no less than twenty-five (25) valid signatures of qualified electors of the town, shall transmit the same to the council. The council, before final adoption of the budget, shall consider and vote upon each such petition(s) proposal; provided, however, that the council may change the appropriation for the school committee in total only.

D. Final Town Council Approval of Budget.

The council shall, on or before May 1st of each year, complete its consideration of any petitions it shall have received pursuant to Section 4222 C, make any final changes in the Preliminary Budget it may deem advisable, and give final approval to the Budget by a vote of a majority of all the members of the council. Following such approval, the town clerk shall cause sufficient copies of the Budget to be prepared for public distribution, and shall arrange for publication of an announcement thereof in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the town as directed by the Town Council, and post copies in the Town Hall and on the Town Web Site. The budget so adopted shall be the Budget for the town for the ensuing fiscal year subject only to change pursuant to subsection E and F of Section 4222 hereof.

E. Referendum petitions.

Following final approval of the budget by the town council, any qualified elector of the town may circulate a petition requesting that a referendum be held on the appropriation for the general fund or the school fund in the budget as approved. Such petition may propose a reduction or increase in the total appropriation for said funds. In the event that a reduction or an increase as proposed in any such petition is approved by the electors of the town voting thereon, the council shall cause the total appropriation for said funds to be adjusted upward or downward accordingly. The council or the school committee, whichever has jurisdiction over the fund affected by such action, shall make reductions or may make increases within said fund to match the new appropriation total; however, if the council or school committee shall determine that expenditure of an added appropriation to the general fund or school fund for a suggested purpose would not be fiscally responsible, it shall adopt a resolution to that effect and shall not be required to expend the funds for said purpose, provided, however, such funds shall not be spent for another purpose and shall revert to the undesignated fund balance of either of the affected funds.

The town clerk shall cause petition forms to be printed with standard language and spaces for the insertion of dollar amounts, budget fund designations, whether an increase or decrease of expenditure is called for, and other necessary information. All petition forms shall be approved by the town clerk before circulation, and must be returned to the town clerk on or before May 12th of each year. Any language added to a petition, or any alteration of the language thereof, subsequent to its approval by the town clerk, shall be of no force or effect. The town clerk, upon the return of petitions to his or her office, shall cause the signatures thereon to be verified by the board of canvassers, such verification to be completed on or before May 16th of each year. There shall be no limit to the number of separate petitions which an elector may sign.

F. Budget referendum

The town clerk shall cause a referendum by ballot to be held on the Tuesday following the first Saturday in June on all budget changes requested on petitions submitted pursuant to sub-section E hereof, provided that each such petition shall contain signatures of no less than two hundred of the qualified electors of the town and shall request an increase or decrease of a sum of at least \$250,000.00. The ballot used at such referendum shall be prepared by the town clerk in such manner as to include each of the separate petition(s) for increases and/or decreases in the appropriations for a particular fund together with the original approved fund total. The qualified electors shall be instructed to vote either for the original total or for one (1) of the proposed increases or reductions thereof. The appropriation receiving the most votes shall be declared to have been adopted. In the event that certified petitions are received by the clerk's office that include changes to both the municipal and the school committee budgets, there shall be two (2) separate ballot questions, one for the municipal budget and one for the school committee budget, each of which shall follow the ballot format set forth herein. The polls at such referendum shall be open at 8:00 a.m. and shall remain open until 8:00 p.m.

G. Emergency Ballots

Emergency ballots will be available by application only to the Board of Canvassers according to regulations that may be imposed by the Board of Canvassers necessary to implement the use of such ballots at such referendum.

H. Publication of Budget.

A copy of the budget as finally adopted by the Town Council with or without amendment(s) as directed by any required referendum shall be certified by the town clerk and filed in the office of the director of finance. Sufficient copies thereof shall be made available by the town clerk for the use of all offices, departments and agencies and for the use of interested persons.

I. Minor Adjustments in Dates.

If a date is on a Saturday, Sunday or a legal holiday, the time period shall run until the end of the next day which is neither a Saturday, Sunday, nor a legal holiday.

CHAPTER V.

The following Subsection 4228 is added to Section 4220 – Budget Procedures of Article III of The Charter of the Town of South Kingstown:

“Section 4228. Delay in approving budget.

If for any reason the operating budget of the town has not been approved by the beginning of the fiscal year for which it was submitted, the council may authorize all town departments and agencies to make expenditures necessary to continue operation for one month, provided that such expenditures total no more than the expenditures of the same department or agency in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year, together with the amount of any increase in debt obligations or contractual obligations. The council may renew such authorization on a monthly basis until the budget has been approved. The council may negotiate loans in anticipation of tax revenues repayable in no more than twelve months’ time in order to provide funds to cover such expenditures.”

TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN TENTATIVE BUDGET SCHEDULE 2013-2014 BUDGET

Thursday, December 20, 2012 at 7:00 PM	Town Council Chambers Town Council & School Committee Initial Hearing – Goals
Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 6:30 PM	Town Council Chambers Town Council Municipal Capital Improvement Program Work Session #1
Wednesday, January 9, 2013 at 6:30 PM	Town Council Chambers Town Council Municipal Capital Improvement Program Work Session #2
Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 6:30 PM	Town Council Chambers Town Council & School Committee School Capital Improvement Program Work Session #3
Monday, January 28, 2013 at 7:30 PM (deadline - February 1, 2013)	Town Council Chambers Town Council - Regular Session Adoption of Capital Improvement Program
Thursday, March 1, 2013 (deadline - March 1, 2013)	Town Manager's Budget Submission to Council

Monday, March 4, 2013 at 6:30 PM

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council
Budget Session #1**

Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 6:30 PM

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council
Budget Session #2**

Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at 7:00 PM

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council & School Committee
Budget Session #3 Schools**

Monday, March 18, 2013 at 5:00 PM
(On or before March 22, 2013 deadline)

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council
Preliminary Budget Adoption**

Tuesday, April 9, 2013 at 7:00 PM

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council & School Committee
Municipal and School Budgets
Public Hearing #1**

Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at 7:00 PM

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council & School Committee
Municipal and School Budgets
Public Hearing #2**

On or before Monday, April 22, 2013 at 4:00 PM
(deadline Sunday, April 21, 2013)

**Petitions for revisions to
Preliminary Budget**

Monday, April 29, 2013 at 7:00 PM
(deadline May 1, 2013)

**Town Council Chambers
Town Council –Regular Session
Consideration of petitions for
revisions or additions and Town
Council’s adoption of final budget**

On or before Monday, May 13, 2013 at 4:00 PM
(deadline Sunday, May 12, 2013)

Referendum petitions

On or before May 16, 2013

**Verifications of petitions to go to
referendum**

Tuesday, June 4, 2013 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Potential Budget Referendum

NOTE: Meetings are subject to change, please take notice of Agendas posted at the Town Hall, Peace Dale Library, and www.southkingstownri.com.

Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must call 401-792-9642 (TDD) seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the public hearing date.