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Tri-Board Meeting Minutes - April 21, 2026

Call to Order: Mayor Dave Sekorski called the Tri-Board meeting to order at 6:45 PM, confirming quorums for all three boards: Town Council, Board of Education, and Board of Finance.

Roll Call

- Town Council: TJ Zagurski, Sue Boilard, Joe Green, Ron Tiscia, and Ray Engle.
- Board of Finance: Chairman Eugene Croce, Vice-Chair Vicky Carey, Jennifer Brunoli, Tony Osipiak and Jon Draper.
- Board of Education: Chair Karen Kulesa, Vice Chair Gerard Bourbonniere, Rebecca Allen, Nicole Corry, Robin Palmer, Gregory Showers, Kelly Tilton, Superintendent Brian Falcone, Assistant Superintendent Beth Melillo, and Business Manager Matthew Tencza.

Fire Exit Notification: Mayor Sekorski provided fire exit instructions, directing attendees to exit through the back doors to the left for immediate outside access, or to the right through the police station entrance.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Dave Sekorski led the Tri-Board Members and the Public Audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Budget discussion with the Board of Education, Board of Finance, Town Council:

Mayor Sekorski provided an overview of how the budget was developed, emphasizing consideration of the re-evaluation impact, major budget factors including contracts and inflation, department requests, and revenue source reviews. He acknowledged the budget was not perfect but represented extensive collaborative work between all parties.

The mayor explained the re-evaluation's impact, noting it was meant to redistribute rather than raise taxes according to market values. Approximately 50% of properties experienced value increases over 50%, with different rates of change for various property types. He provided examples showing the inverse relationship between assessment increases and mill rates.

Councilor Joe Green inquired about staffing for the parks department and library. Chairman Croce explained that the library received two additional positions to allow extended hours, while the parks department received part-time seasonal employees totaling \$68,000 as recommended by the mayor.

Councilor Green also asked about Board of Education capital requests. Board of Finance Vice-Chair Vicky Carey explained that the Capital Improvements Committee had met with the school department separately, noting significant capital needs throughout the town but emphasizing budget constraints.

Superintendent Brian Falcone presented updated information on school capital needs, particularly highlighting safety concerns at Plymouth Center School. The priorities had shifted to sidewalk replacement due to children falling and tripping hazards, estimated at approximately \$65,000. He also discussed roof replacement needs, noting water damage affecting the fire alarm panel, with costs of \$263,920 plus an additional \$260,000 to remove and replace solar panels.

Mr. Falcone explained the school's sinking fund usage, noting they were strategically spending funds on Fisher School heat pump replacements and holding approximately \$280,000 for math program replacement in two years to avoid budget impact.

Board of Finance members expressed the need for schools to work through the Capital Improvements Committee process, though acknowledged the safety urgency of some requests.

Councilor TJ Zagurski raised questions about revenue items, particularly noting a significant drop in parking ticket revenue from nearly \$24,000 to \$150. Chairman Croce explained this was due to coding issues where revenues were buried in miscellaneous lines, which would be corrected in future budgets.

Councilor Zagurski also noted a calculation error in the capital budget total that needed correction and inquired about crossing guard wage increases and the contingency fund usage history.

Board of Finance member Anthony Osipiak sought clarification on the tax collection rate assumptions. A discussion ensued between the mayor and Chairman Croce about whether to use 100% collection rate versus the adjusted 98.4% rate. The mayor explained his recommendation to use 100% collection rate to provide taxpayer relief given the town's historic collection rate of approximately 99.2%. However, Chairman Croce preferred the more conservative adjusted rate.

Chairman Croce requested Finance Director Vijay Dora to change the mill rate calculation to utilize the "Grand List Adjusted for Collections" figure rather than the proposed calculation using 100% calculation rate. Vijay Dora provided the new proposed mill rate after the changes. There were no objections from any member of the Board of Finance, and the new calculation was included in the proposal.

Time was given to allow the Board of Finance members to present the recommended Budget and by a majority vote of its members make changes, if necessary, to the budget and recommend the budget to the Town Council.

Motion: Board of Finance Vice-Chair Vicky Carey moved to present to the Town Council a budget reflecting total revenue and expenditures of \$48,600,702. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by the Board of Finance

(See Board of Finance 4-21-2026 Minutes)

Discuss and take action on the approval of the recommended FY2025/2026 Budget

Mayor Sekorski moved to item 7 for Town Council consideration of the budget as recommended by the Board of Finance.

Town Council Motions and Amendments:

Motion: Councilor Joe Green moved to eliminate line item #43015620, the part-time administrative assistant for the public works director, valued at \$24,405. The motion was seconded by Councilor TJ Zagurski and carried 4-1, with Councilor Ray Engle voting against.

Motion: Councilor TJ Zagurski moved to add \$65,000 to capital improvements for sidewalk replacements at Plymouth Center School for student safety. The motion was seconded by Councilor Green and carried 4-1, with Councilor Sue Boilard voting against.

Motion: Councilor Joe Green initially moved to add \$28,000 for additional supply money for teachers at each school. After a point of order from Councilor Engle regarding the Council's legal authority to specify spending within the Board of Education budget, Green retracted his motion to re-word it as a general increase to the Board of Education budget. The motion was re-made as a \$30,000 increase to the Board of Education budget, seconded by Zagurski, and passed unanimously.

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Motion: Councilor TJ Zagurski moved to reduce the Board of Finance contingency fund from \$75,000 back to the requested \$50,000, a reduction of \$25,000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Green and passed unanimously.

Motion: Councilor Ron Tiscia moved to increase the Board of Education budget by an additional \$68,000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Zagurski and passed unanimously.

After calculations, staff confirmed the total budget modifications kept the increase at 2.98%, under the 3% threshold that would require a referendum.

Motion: Councilor Zagurski moved to approve the budget as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sue Boilard and passed unanimously.

To allow the Board of Finance to set the Property Tax Mill Rate for FY 2026-2027

(See Board of Finance 4-21-2026 Minutes)

Adjournment: Mayor Sekorski concluded by acknowledging the year-long nature of budget work and the need for continued collaboration between all boards to address the town's infrastructure and building needs. He thanked all participants for their time and effort in adopting the budget.

Motion: Councilor Green moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Engle and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM with the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget adopted at \$48,600,702 with a mill rate of 28.73.

Linda Konopaske
Linda Konopaske
Recording Secretary