

A Special Meeting of the City Council was held in the Council Chambers with Councillor Eaniri presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:44pm with ten members being present. Councillor DeNapoli absent.

In City Council, December 7, 2015

The Council President asked for a moment of silence in memory of Pearl Harbor. He also asked for a moment of silence for the 14 lives lost in CA and the others that are injured.

### **SPECIAL MEETING**

**592** Call of the meeting

Accepted and placed on file

**593** Officer's return of meeting

Accepted and placed on file

### **HEARING**

**594** Ordered: That the City Council hereby determines the percentages of the local tax levy in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L., Ch. 40, Section 56, to be borne by each class of real property, as defined in Section 2A of Chapter 59, and personal property.

The hearing was opened at 6:48pm. Chris Cooney, the president of the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, was representing businesses around the city and communities. He requested that the taxes not be raised on the business properties. He would like to maintain the rate, or more towards 1.50. John O'Donnell gave a brief summary of the tax assessments. He also thanked his staff for their efforts.

CFO Jay Condon was present to answer any questions.

Councillor Stewart questioned Mr. O'Donnell regarding what personal property was. Mr. O'Donnell stated that it isn't always residents. Taxes are based on the budget. If the budget goes up, then taxes go up, whether the assessment of the property goes up or not.

Councillor Sullivan thanked Mr. O'Donnell. He questioned him what would be a good rate for the city? Mr. O'Donnell stated that the CFO could answer that better. Jay Condon stated that in the long run, residential property growth is going up, but commercial business hasn't gone up. In order to see growth in new businesses, you need to help existing businesses want to stay and new businesses want to come to Brockton. It is hard for businesses, because residents usually oppose new commercial businesses in their community. In the short run, every resident will have a higher tax bill. He recommended a rate not too far from 1.56. Councillor Sullivan stated that we offer TIFs for businesses. Councillor Rodrigues questioned Mr. O'Donnell on what the commercial rate of surrounding towns is. He stated that the commercial rates of surrounding towns is significantly lower than Brockton. Councillor Rodrigues wanted the average bill of commercial properties of surrounding towns. Councillor DuBois questioned exempt status, billions of dollars of exempt value. She stated that we are giving corporations great breaks. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the VA Hospital has the largest exemption, Brockton Hospital also. Councillor DuBois questioned the CFO what would next years tax look like if they went with 1.65. He stated it would depend. She asked how far could they go with the tax rate? He stated 1.75 is the maximum allowed. Councillor DuBois wondered why it wasn't included on their handouts. Councillor Monahan questioned Mr. O'Donnell about surrounding towns' tax

rates and he also wanted total tax bills of surrounding towns. Mr. O'Donnell stated that surrounding towns have a single tax rate. Mr. O'Donnell stated that other towns have no bearing on our tax rate.

Chris Cooney approached the council.

Councillor Barnes questioned Mr. O'Donnell on the handout. What the amount would be if they go with 1.65? Mr. O'Donnell stated that the information isn't there on the handout.

The Council President asked Mr. Cooney to step down from the council.

Councillor Stewart stated that since council wanted additional information regarding surrounding towns' rates.

Councillor Eaniri stated that the paper given to them at the meeting only clouded the issue. He realizes it is difficult to set the rates, but we don't have time to put it off. Every December the tax rate gets set and it has to be set per the DOR and if the councillors had any questions, they should've contacted Mr. O'Donnell or the CFO. The Assessor's packet was given to them in a timely manner.

Councillor Sullivan asked the CFO what are the ramifications of postponing the voting on this tonight?

The CFO explained that the tax bills wouldn't go out by the end of December. This would create a billing file. If it is too late in the month, you cannot send out the bill.

President Eaniri stated that this meeting is to set the tax rate. The packets were given out and that some are playing for the camera. If we postpone, it sets the city back.

Councillor Rodrigues stated that even at 1.75, \$71.94 is the residential value. Commercial will have a bigger increase.

Councillor Cruise stated that it hurts homeowners if we don't have businesses. If we try to stay without a large fluctuation, please try to look at the long run. It will send a bad message to commercial businesses.

Councillor Monahan asked is the maximum 1.75?

The CFO stated that it is and that most of the businesses in Brockton are small businesses, less than \$200,000 worth.

The hearing was closed at 7:02pm

A motion was made by Councillor Rodrigues to set the factor at 1.64 and was properly seconded by Councillor Sullivan. Failed adoption by a roll call vote taken by "yeas" and "nays"; ten members present with five voting in the affirmative. Councillors Barnes, Cruise, Monahan, Stewart and Studenski voting in the negative. Councillor DeNapoli absent.

A motion was made by Councillor Stewart to set the factor at 1.58 and was properly seconded by Councillor Barnes. Failed adoption by a roll call vote taken by "yeas" and "nays"; ten members present with five voting in the affirmative. Councillors Asack, DuBois, Eaniri, Rodrigues and Sullivan voting in the negative. Councillor DeNapoli absent.

A motion was made by Councillor Monahan to set the factor at 1.59 and was properly seconded by Councillor Cruise. Failed adoption by a roll call vote taken by “yeas” and “nays”; ten members present with five voting in the affirmative. Councillors Asack, Barnes, DuBois, Rodrigues and Sullivan voting in the negative. Councillor DeNapoli absent.

A motion was made by Councillor Sullivan to set the factor at 1.63 and was properly seconded by Councillor Rodrigues. Failed adoption by a roll call vote taken by “yeas” and “nays”; ten members present with five voting in the affirmative. Councillors Barnes, Cruise, Monahan, Stewart and Studenski voting in the negative. Councillor DeNapoli absent.

A motion was made by Councillor Barnes to set the factor at 1.57 and was properly seconded by Councillor Cruise. Adopted by a roll call vote taken by “yeas” and “nays”; ten members present with six voting in the affirmative. Councillors Asack, DuBois, Rodrigues and Sullivan voting in the negative. Councillor DeNapoli absent.

A two-minute recess was called at 7:45pm

Back in session.

Councillor DuBois absent.

Residential	67.4928
Commercial	22.8519
Industrial	3.9302
Personal Property	5.7251
The factor for such classification shall be	1.57

The order as a whole was adopted by a roll call vote taken by “yeas” and “nays”; nine members present with seven voting in the affirmative. Councillors Asack, Rodrigues and Sullivan voting in the negative. Councillor DeNapoli and DuBois absent.

Councillor Cruise motioned to file for reconsideration with the wish that it not prevail and was properly seconded. Reconsideration failed by a hand vote, nine members present with three voting in the affirmative. Councillors Barnes, Cruise, Eaniri, Monahan, Stewart and Studenski voting in the negative. Councillors Asack, Rodrigues and Sullivan voting in the affirmative. Councillors DeNapoli and DuBois absent.

Adjourned at 7:55pm