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## Council trims budget expenses

By Erin Tiernan

The Town Council held a budget work session Monday night to review and discuss possible ways to cut spending on Town Administrator Bruce Keiser's proposed budget for the 2009/2010 fiscal year.

If passed as it stands, next year's combined town and school budget will have a 1.6-percent increase over the 2008/2009 fiscal year. The total budget is proposed at \$21,056,990 with \$12.6 million going to the school's total budget and just over \$8.3 million allotted to town expenditures.

"This is the lowest increase that Jamestown has seen in a number of years," said Keiser.

Due to the difficult economic times, he met several times with department heads and said the meetings were helpful in finding areas to cut spending for the upcoming fiscal year.

Keiser reviewed all expenditures and revenue sources in detail and justified decreases and increases.

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### What place am I?

Conor Kennedy, Jacob Maguire and Jackson Hawkins watch to see where their car finished in the Cub Scouts annual Pinewood Derby at the Jamestown Recreation Center on Saturday.

Photo by Caitlin Downing

## School Committee awaits federal stimulus numbers to finalize budget

By Eileen M. Daly

The Town Council and the School Committee met in another joint session on Tuesday evening and continued to hash out next year's budget.

Perhaps the most challenging issue for both the council and the school committee is the high number of unknown factors currently affecting the process. Budget items such as state aid, transpor-

tation collaboration and outstanding bids continue to be a cause for concern as no definite decisions have been made in these areas.

Superintendent Marcia Lukon addressed the current status of the federal stimulus funds and how they are being used by the state. After meeting with Rhode Island Department of Education officials, Lukon reported that the stimulus funds are divided into three parts.

The initial funds, according to Lukon, may be used in any way the governor chooses. "These funds can be used at the discretion of the governor and it is our understanding that the governor intends to use these funds to pay down state debt," Lukon said.

The second usage of the stimulus funds involves Individual Disability Education and Title I

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## RITBA must defend against class-action lawsuit

### Suit claims discriminatory toll setting practices

By Adrienne Downing

The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority announced Monday that it has been named the defendant in a class action lawsuit alleging the resident-rate tolls on the Claiborne Pell Newport Bridge are unconstitutional.

"A lawsuit was filed stating that the bridge and turnpike authority is discriminatory in its rate setting practices. The authority worked with attorneys setting the toll rate structure and we believe we are on sound legal footing. It would be inappropriate to make any further comments because of the filing," RITBA Executive Director Buddy Croft said.

RITBA Chairman David Darlington also stood firm regarding

the toll rates. "We strongly believe in the merits of our position, and we believe that Rhode Island residents are entitled to a discounted rate, and we intend to defend that position," Darlington said.

In a 22-page filing with the United States District Court in Rhode Island, attorneys for Isabel Cohen, a resident of Fairfield County in southwestern Connecti-

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### A sign of spring

The male and female osprey returned to the nest at Marsh Meadows on Monday within a few hours of each other. To view real time video of the nest, visit the Conanicut Island Raptor Project's website at [www.conanicutraptors.com](http://www.conanicutraptors.com) and click on Creek Nest webcam.

Photo by Chris Powell