



**Watertown Town Council**  
Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
Watertown, MA 02472  
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris  
Council President

Stephen P. Corbett  
Vice President

John A. Donohue  
Councilor At Large

Susan G. Falkoff  
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba  
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis  
District A Councilor

Cecilia Lenk  
District B Councilor

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.  
District C Councilor

John J. Lawn, Jr.  
District D Councilor

**Town Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 22, 2011 at 7:15 pm**  
**Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber**  
**Administration Building**

**MINUTES**

1. **ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:15 pm in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, Administration building. Present for the meeting were Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Councilor Palomba arrived shortly after the call of the roll. Councilor Falkoff was absent. Also present were the Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll, Town Attorney Mark Reich and Council Clerk Valerie Papas.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** [March 8, 2011](#) Councilor Piccirilli moved the minutes, seconded by Councilor Lawn and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.
4. **PUBLIC FORUM:**
  1. Ralph Filicchia, Bellevue Road – spoke against plans to reduce the lanes on Mt. Auburn Street from four lanes to two lanes.
  2. Jim Loughlin, Arsenal Apartments – stated that he is disturbed that the Public Works department did not consult the Tree Warden prior to removing a tree on Talcot Avenue.
5. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Submission Date: The Chair asked for a motion for a two week extension of the submission of the budget, as allowed under the Charter. Councilor Piccirilli moved to allow the budget to be submitted at the April 26<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A.

Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE:**

- a) [Public hearing](#) and vote on a proposed [Loan Order](#): that the sum of \$3,000,000 is appropriated to pay costs of designing, constructing and equipping a synthetic turf outdoor athletic field, including the payment of costs of making lighting, drainage and related seating improvements and for the payment of all other costs incidental or related thereto; and that to raise this appropriation the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Town Manager, is authorized to borrow \$3,000,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority; that the Town Manager is authorized to contract for, accept and expend any federal or state aid, grants, gifts and donations available for the project, provided that the amount of the authorized borrowing shall be reduced by the amount of such aid, grants, gifts and donations received prior to the issuance of bonds or notes under this order; and that the Town Manager is authorized to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out this project.

The Chair read the proposed Loan Order.

The Manager provided a brief overview and background of the project. He announced that Mr. Christopher Beech, member of the School Committee was in the audience tonight and that the School Committee had unanimously endorsed the proposed project.

Mr. Glenn Howard, Project Manager for Camp, Dresser & McKee, Inc., provided an in-depth [power point presentation](#). The presentation included the analysis of the old concrete spectator stands/storage structure; drainage analysis and approach; potential lighting improvements; proposed project elements; overall project; proposed budget summary and the project sequence and anticipated schedule with a start date of February 2011 and completion date of dearily fall 2011.

Mr. Michael Lahiff, Athletic Director – highlighted the importance of the proposed multipurpose field, which will encompass many boys and girls programs from both the school and town; stressing that the demand is there to bring the town together, coordinating recreation and town programs culminating in the best services for our youth. Mr. Lahiff stated that the proposed artificial turf will virtually eliminate the need for field maintenance; allow for more diverse uses and comply with Title 9 equity for girls' sports as well as make the community more attractive to participants within the Middlesex League.

Mr. Peter Centola, Recreation Director thanked the community for coming out tonight to attend the public hearing for the proposed project. He thanked former Recreation Director, Thomas Sullivan for his vision for Victory Field. Mr. Centola stated that Victory Field has served the town for over ninety years and has been and will always be the corner stone of recreational athletic, social and educational experiences for the community. He stated his passionate support for the proposed project, noting that the time has come to act. He reviewed the merits of the project including use, diversity of activities, greater open recreation time and participation; and equity in sports.

The Manager reviewed the financial aspects of the loan order including the debt service schedule with a principal dollar amount of \$3 million borrowed at 2% interest for a total of approximately \$60,000 per year in interest payments.

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public:

1. Bob Johnson, 120 Riverside Street – spoke in support of the proposed project noting the need and time for improvements.
2. Peter Brooks, 68 Pearl Street – spoke in support of the benefits of natural grass and the funding for the planting of trees.
3. John Bertrand – spoke against the proposed project noting the economic difficulties; and the need for jobs before artificial turf.
4. Jay Hughes – spoke in support of the proposed project noting that interest rates and construction costs are at historic lows making this the perfect time to take on this well needed and deserved project.
5. Will Twombly, Marion Road – suggest that the graffiti on the storage containers located between the track and tennis courts be removed and replaced with lasting student art work similar to those organized by Artist Josh Weiner.

There being no further comments, the Chair closed the public hearing.

Vice President Corbett moved to approve the Loan Order, seconded by Councilor Lenk.

Councilor Lenk noted her appreciation for the turn out this evening and the diversity of opinions. She stated that she remains committed to the project and outlined her reasons which included the importance of participation in team sports. She indicated that

students deserve the facilities of Victory Field which address gender equity issues in team sports.

Vice President Corbett outlined the construction of a number of new facilities that the town administration and residents have supported over the years including a Senior Center, Fire Station, state of the art Library, Police and Public Works buildings with a great deal of money going to improve school buildings and infrastructure. Not all the facilities are used by all residents, he noted, but they all contribute to the overall quality of life and must be supported. He applauded the fund raising efforts which are extremely important.

Councilor Palomba – noted the strong support for the project. He indicated that he still has a number of questions and concerns and asked what are the specific non-league activities planned with the new facility that are not already being addressed. Mr. Centola indicated that the town will get very creative by offering new town programs including but not limited to frisbee, volleyball, adult sports and programs, passive sports and programs. Mr. Centola stated that he will continue to solicit suggestions from the public.

Councilor Palomba asked what is being played on the field currently. Mr. Centola indicated that the field is restricted to football and baseball.

Councilor Palomba noted that he wants to be clear that there is a direct relationship between the capital budget and the operating budget and asked if this is a good time to do this project.

The Manager spoke in support of the project and the financing. He reviewed the debt schedule and fund raising efforts and indicated that the town will proceed with short term borrowing only.

The Chair called for a five minute recess.

Councilor Kounelis indicated that she has received many phone calls regarding the financial aspects of the project. She noted the many serious budget issues including teacher salaries and low staffing levels at the fire department. She stated that there is a need for the project and eventually it has to be address and therefore she will be voting in support of the loan order.

Councilor Lawn spoke in support of the project indicating the importance of thinking outside the box with respect to fundraising efforts that are currently being undertaken and will continue to be a big part of the project. He noted that Watertown is not the

trailblazer of artificial turf, and in fact, is one of the last densely populated communities to go to an artificial playing field. He indicated that the time has come to improve Victory Field and therefore he fully supports the proposed project.

Councilor Piccirilli spoke in support of the proposed Victory Field project noting the 10-1 feedback he has received in favor of the plan. He indicated that he has worked on this project for four years now examining every technical and financial aspect and definitively answered three important questions: should this project be done; is it feasible and is artificial turf safe. He noted that all questions were answered favorably. A twenty six page report was presented at the last meeting regarding capital projects by the Budget and Fiscal Oversight Committee and he stated that this project is indeed financially feasible with interest rates and construction costs never being lower than they are currently.

The Chair stated that he knows of many couples who still bought homes, years ago when the prevailing interest rate was at eighteen percent. As well as those during tough times who have maintained their homes in order to protect their investment. He stressed that the administration and the Council takes very seriously the way money is spent and the town has done their due diligence with respect to this project and therefore he fully supports the loan order proposed tonight.

Upon a roll call vote, the loan order was adopted by unanimous 8-0 vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

7. **MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

[Resolution](#) authorizing a transfer of \$711,402 from various Fiscal Year 2011 Accounts to various Fiscal Year 2011 Snow and Ice Removal Accounts in order to fund the Snow and Ice Removal Deficit. The Town Manager reviewed the transfer. Councilor Piccirilli moved the resolution, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by unanimous 8-0 roll call vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

8. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Committee on Public Works [report](#) on Mt. Auburn Street project – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair. Vice President Corbett read the Committee report. There being no questions or comments, Councilor Donohue moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Palomba and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

9. **NEW BUSINESS:**

The Chair asked for a motion to refer jointly to the subcommittee of Education and School System Matters and Budget and Fiscal Oversight Committee the school budget. The matter was moved by Councilor Lenk, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

Councilor Lenk moved to refer to subcommittee of Public Works a matter regarding Nstar application for tree pruning as well as Mr. Hayward's plan regarding the subject matter, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by unanimous roll call vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

10. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER:**

a) The Manager presented his [Request for Confirmation](#) – Reappointment to the Planning Board which was referred to the subcommittee of Economic Development and Planning.

11. **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:**

Councilor Kounelis noted her [request](#) to the School Committee for a listing of teacher salary ranges.

12. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Councilor Donohue announced Trivia Night, this Wednesday at the Sons of Italy from 6-9 pm with Councilors joining in the educational event. Spectators are welcome.

Councilor Kounelis announced that on March 31<sup>st</sup> a meeting regarding the Grove Street Corridor will take place at 7pm in the Council Chamber.

The Chair reminded residents of Earth Hour, Saturday evening and urged all to participate in the turning off of lights.

13. **PUBLIC FORUM** – none noted.
14. **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Council, Councilor Donohue moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 pm, seconded by Councilor Lawn and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Anthony Palomba, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris in the affirmative.

**Addendum to Minutes.**

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by voice vote on April 13, 2011.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President