

## **MINUTES**

### **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27 , 2007 AT 6:30 PM\***

**RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER**

**ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

**1. ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 6:30 pm in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the call of the roll were Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Jonathan Hecht, John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Mark S. Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger. Councilors Romanelli, Corbett, Devaney arrived late.

#### **2. EXECUTIVE SESSION\* - 6:30 pm**

The Chair stated that the Manager has requested an executive session in order to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining. The Chair asked for a motion to go into executive session. Councilor Donohue made the motion and stated that the Council will return to open session following the adjournment of the executive session, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

**3. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 7:15 PM:** All councilors present.

#### **4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**5. EXAMINATION OF MINUTES:** **January 23<sup>rd</sup>, February 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.** Councilor Sideris moved the minutes of January 23<sup>rd</sup> as amended, and February 6<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by voice vote. The minutes of February 13<sup>th</sup> were Tabled.

**6. PUBLIC FORUM - none noted.**

**7. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A.** Budget & Fiscal Oversight Committee Report and action on Councilor's rankings of the FY08 Budget Policy Guidelines – Jonathan Hecht. Councilor Hecht read the Committee report and reviewed the rankings of Fiscal Year 08 Budget Policy guidelines as submitted by Councilors. It was noted that the guidelines were adopted on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Councilor Hecht requested that the guidelines be posted to the Town's website. Councilor Sideris moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Romanelli moved to place the rankings on the Town's website, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Devaney spoke in support of a training officer for the Fire Department and noted that the position would reduce overtime in the department. She noted that the position was not ranked by Councilors because of a timing issue and questioned whether the report can be amended to include the position.

The Chair stated that he has spoken to the Fire Chief who has indicated that the training officer position has been placed in very high regard by him.

Councilor Kounelis stated that the rankings submitted by Councilors do not pertain to department head budget submissions.

Councilor Devaney stated that if the report is final then she would use her Charter Privilege to Table the matter.

Councilor Hecht stated that the rankings were already adopted on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and that he wanted to make that perfectly clear.

Councilor Devaney stated that she may want to add another suggestion.

The Chair stated that the budget is not etched in stone.

## **8. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS:**

**A.** Brief Presentation on Watertown's City Sister – Alex Liazos. The Chair recognized Ms. Susan Clark who provided a brief update with respect to Watertown's Sister City, El Salvadore. It was noted that the project began in 1989 with Councilor Portz and Councilor Liazos. Ms. Clark reviewed a number of concerts and fund raising efforts which have taken place over the years with monies going toward the purchase of seeds, tools, houses, wells, and voting education. Ms. Clark indicated that moving forward, the main focus will be on educational matters.

Councilor Devaney thanked the members of the organization for their many years of service to Watertown's Sister City project.

Councilor Hecht suggested involving students in the relief effort. Ms. Clark indicated that she would like to explore that more.

**B.** Update on Munis and the Fiscal Year 06 Audit – Thomas Tracy, Town Auditor. The Chair recognized Mr. Tracy who reviewed a number of spreadsheets summarizing all town departments' expenditure budget, actual expenditures and encumbrances; spreadsheets outlining various divisions of Public Works department; MUNIS system year to date budget report for town departments; MUNIS year to date report for school department; revenue budgeted and received General Fund; and MUNIS system year to date report disclosing General Fund Revenue activity thru December 31, 2006.

Councilor Kounelis stated that she is aware of the modules with respect to payroll, accounts payable and inquired what some of the other modules are within MUNIS. Mr. Tracy stated that other modules include tax receivables from Assessors and Treasurers, utility bills, water and sewer and purchasing.

The Chair asked if any departments are encountering problems with MUNIS. Mr. Tracy indicated that he is not aware of any specific problems and that no employees have reported problems to him directly.

The Chair stated that people have reported problems to him and suggested that the town forward a survey to employees asking for their input on any potential problems with Munis.

Mr. Tracy indicated that the Department of Public Works encountered some problems recently with Water/Sewer bills.

With respect to the Fiscal Year 06 Audit, Mr. Tracy indicated that the audit firm was awaiting material from the Personnel Department with respect to employee sick time and that a draft will be ready for next month.

## **9. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

### **A. Acceptance of Proclamation recognizing March as Arts in Our Schools Month.**

Councilor Sideris read and moved the proclamation, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

### **B. First Reading on a proposed Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget. The town Manager provided a brief overview of the proposed Amendment and noted that the matter will be published in the local paper for a public hearing and vote on March 13<sup>th</sup>.**

### **C. First Reading on a proposed Order allocating property tax among or between property classes for Fiscal Year 2007. The Town Manager provided a brief overview of the proposed Order and noted that the matter will be placed in the local paper for a public hearing and vote on March 13<sup>th</sup>.**

Councilor Devaney provided an update on a public meeting in Waltham regarding the proposed Lowes project, attached.

Councilor Lawn stated that there will be an impact to Watertown's west end neighborhoods with respect to this project noting in particular truck traffic and stated that the Traffic Commission will hold a meeting on this heavy truck traffic impacting residential streets such as Evans and Rutland.

Councilor Romanelli thanked Councilor Lawn for bring the matter to the attention of the Traffic Commission, noting in particular the dangers of such truck traffic to children playing at the Bemis Park, located at the end of Evans Street.

Councilor Devaney noted that trucks should be using Howard Street, a designated truck route.

As a follow-up to conversations about an upcoming Traffic Commission meeting, Councilor Kounelis indicated she was unaware of agenda items because agendas are not forwarded to the council. She does receive Planning Board and Zoning agendas under separate cover, but not in council packets. The Council does receive some agendas, namely, Licensing Board and Library. On August 1<sup>st</sup> of 06 the Council asked for agendas and minutes of boards, commissions and that going forward provide them on an ongoing basis.

## **10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

A. Web filtering for minors/Library internet sites – referral to subcommittee. Councilor Donohue moved to request the Library Board of Trustees provide a presentation on the matter at the next Town Council meeting, seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

B. Public Works Department Sign of Good Government – providing salt for residents. The Chair thanked the public works department, fire department and police department for their assistance to residents during a recent ice storm. The Chair indicated that the public works department had salt/sand on hand for residents and were helped by police officers in getting the sand in buckets to be handed out free of charge. The Chair asked that a letter of appreciation be sent to these departments. Councilor Romanelli moved the request, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER**

The Town Manager noted that Municipal Benchmarking will be placed on the next agenda.

The Town Manager indicated that Governor Duval came to the Town Hall for a town hall meeting and thanked all involved in assisting in the event.

The Chair stated that he will be drafting a proclamation honoring the Governor in commemoration of Black History Month.

## **12. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

Councilor Kounelis stated that Governor Duval spoke to the issue of underperforming pensions coming under the jurisdiction of the State and asked that the matter be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **13. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilor Sideris announced that the Ad Hoc Charitable Committee will hold a public hearing on the new ground rules Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

Councilor Donohue announced that Councilor Sideris' daughter and niece were honored at Fanuiel Hall for their outstanding achievement in athletics.

Councilor Kounelis announced that tours of the east and north branch libraries will be held on Saturday 9am and 10am with work shop on Monday at 6:45 pm at the Main Library.

## **14. PUBLIC FORUM – none noted**

**15. ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Town Council, Councilor Romanelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm, seconded by Councilor Corbett and adopted by voice vote.

**I hereby certify that the above minutes for February 27, 2007 were adopted as amended on March 27, 2007 by voice vote with a quorum present.**

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**Clyde L. Younger**