



Watertown Town Council

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

MINUTES

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

Kenneth M. Woodland,
District D Councilor

Pursuant to the Call of the Council President and in accordance with Section 2.6 of the Rules and Procedures of the Watertown Town Council, the members of the Town Council of the City known as the Town of Watertown are hereby notified of a Special Meeting of the Town Council.

**SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2013 AT 6:00PM
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

1. Roll Call: A Special Town Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present was Town Attorney Mark Reich. Councilor Woodland, Town Manager Michael Driscoll and Council Clerk Valerie Papas were absent.



Mt Auburn
Presentation 2013-07

2. Informational Presentation on the Mt. Auburn Street Project.
The Chair recognized Acting Town Manager and Community Planning and Development Director, Steve Magoon who commented on the objective of what the Town was trying to accomplish with the project which included looking to encourage economic development with road design that is also compatible with the quality of life of residents in town and being in support of businesses along the border. He noted that this is in addition to enhancing safety and accommodating traffic.

The Chair recognized Jim Fitzgerald, WorldTech Engineering who provided an overview of the Mt. Auburn Street project.

Following the presentation, Mr. Gerald S. Mee, Jr., Superintendent of Public Works stated that the Town will not be funding the construction portion of the project but that the Town will need to fund the design portion in order to get in line for construction funding and to start the process.

Councilor Kounelis stated that this is not something new and noted that these concerns go back decades and stated that she made a commitment to bring Coolidge Square forward.

Mr. Mee concurred.

Councilor Kounelis asked what the Town can do to place itself on the top of the list.

Mr. Mee noting that keeping the project moving is important.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that the Town has been talking about the concept for a long time and noted that the road is 35 years old now and it is prudent to use state and federal money to do this type of project. Councilor Piccirilli stated that the road was designed in the 70's and is essentially a one lane road. He noted that the guidelines are different now and the Town needs to take ownership of the design of the project.

Councilor Lenk stated that this project is exciting long term as well as the early action items and in identifying the safety issues right away.

Councilor Falkoff asked where the \$500,000.00 will come from.

Mr. Mee stated that it can come out of a lot of different sources.

Councilor Palomba asked if the Town could move forward without making the kind of changes we are talking about.

Mr. Mee stated that the Town would be required to do certain improvements in order to receive stated and federal funds.

Mr. Mee noted that the workshops on the project will be very important for the public; for which there will be many.

The Chair stated that the public workshops are very intriguing and crucial to the project.

Councilor Falkoff moved to authorize the Manager to proceed with this project, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

The Chair called for a two minute recess.

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3. Discussion and Action on Snow Plowing on Private Ways. <http://www.watertown-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3170>

The Chair opened up for discussion the issue of snow plowing of private ways.

Councilor Lenk read a subcommittee [report](#) which was originally read and submitted on March 26th.

Attorney Reich stated that Chapter 40, Section 6C addresses plowing of private ways, and if placed on the town ballot and adopted by the citizens would allow the Town Council the opportunity to vote on whether or not to allow the snow plowing of private ways. Those which are designated for plowing would then be open to public use and noted that there is no public safety exception to this.

Councilor Falkoff asked if the Town decided to plow certain private ways; would it automatically open that street up to the parking ban restrictions.

Attorney Reich stated that it would be difficult to impose the overnight parking ban on some private ways and not others.

Councilor Lenk stated that criteria would need to be discussed regarding what constitutes a public way.

Attorney Reich noted that the Town would impose the parking ban regulations if the Town were to plow the private ways.

Attorney Reich also stated that this is not subject to public petition and would be initiated by the Town Council.

Vice President Corbett asked why snow plowing is treated differently if the private ways have town contracted trash pickup.

Attorney Reich stated that there are specific state laws that address snow plowing of private ways and not trash pickup on private ways.

Councilor Donohue asked if the Town can address this issue by voting without the ballot question.

Attorney Reich state, no, as the State has taken exception to that.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that if private ways have a dead-end posting and noted to be a private way only street, the Town still could not plow the street even if the ballot initiative passes.

Attorney Reich concurred.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that the Town is boxed in by state regulation and laws and is concerned about raising expectations to the public.

The Chair stated that the process seems ambiguous; regarding if the Council could impose a parking ban in order to plow the streets.

Attorney Reich stated that private property owners may not want to make their streets available to the public or parking bans and may not want their streets plowed as plowing may then take away their rights to a private way.

The Chair noted that it seems like we are taking something a way now; which puts the Council in a difficult position.

Attorney Reich stated that once something comes to light; the Town is then required to obey the statute.

Councilor Kounelis stated her concern noting that if these private ways aren't plowed and emergency crews cannot access the roads, then it is a serious public safety issue.

Councilor Donohue moved to place the matter on the town ballot, seconded by Councilor Palomba.

The Chair stated there are a number of people in the room that may not want their streets plowed and suggested that another public hearing take place at the next Town Council meeting.

Councilor Donohue reworded his motion as follows: the Council would hold a public hearing and vote on August 13th regarding placing the matter on a town ballot, seconded by Councilor Lenk.

Councilor Lenk concurred with the importance of another public hearing.

The Motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

4. Adjournment: there being no further business to come before the Town Council, Councilor Falkoff moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 pm, seconded by Councilor Palomba and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted on October 8, 2013 by unanimous voice vote.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President