



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

Kenneth M. Woodland
District D Councilor

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2013 @6:45 PM RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING MINUTES

1. **ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 6:45 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., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, and Council President Mark Sideris. Councilors Falkoff and Corbett arrived after the call of the roll. Also present were Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll, Town Attorney Mark Reich, and Council Clerk Valerie Papas.

2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** 6:45 pm - To conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel – Michael J. Driscoll, Town Manager. Councilor Woodland moved to go into executive session for the above stated purpose, seconded by Councilor Lenk. It was noted that the Town Council will return to open session following the adjournment of this executive session. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Angeline B. Kounelis, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative. Councilors Falkoff and Corbett arrived shortly after the call of the roll.

3. **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 7:15 pm**

4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

5. **EXAMINATION OF MINUTES:** [November 12th](#). Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

6. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

Councilor-elect Aaron Dushku spoke in favor of a proposed tax break for small business owners who live and operate their business in Watertown; with assets less than a set amount and to be funded by those business owners with assets above a set amount.

7. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

The Chair stated that the Town Council met in executive session earlier this evening and voted to negotiate a successor contract for the Town Manager. The matter will be sent to

the Committee on Personnel and Town Organization after the first of the year for discussion and recommendation.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a) [Consideration and Action](#) on a proposed Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget. The Manager reviewed the revised amendment. The Chair noted that the matter had a public hearing on November 12th but was delayed a vote until tonight pending certification of new growth numbers. Councilor Piccirilli moved the amendment, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous roll call vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND VOTES:

a) [Public hearing](#) and vote on a petition by Comcast to install 54 feet of 3 inch PVC in the roadway from pole # 139/18 Waltham Street continuing East in the sidewalk area to the private property's back entrance (12 Bridge Street) in the vicinity of 114-118 Waltham Street. The Chair recognized Ed Davis, Comcast representative who provided a brief overview of the petition. The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved the petition which called for all the work to be done within the sidewalk, seconded by Councilor Woodland and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

b) Public hearing and vote on a proposed Order allocating the property tax levy among or between property classes for Fiscal Year 2014. Mr. Frank Golden, Town Assessor, provided a comprehensive [power point presentation on the tax levy](#). Following the presentation the Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Kounelis spoke in support of the 25% shift stating that residents are going through hard times and are looking for relief.

There was a discussion on raising the shift from the current and proposed 20% to 25%. It was noted that the shift would place the additional tax burden on absentee landlords and those residents whose properties are valued over \$700,000. It was further noted that the shift could have the unintended consequence of raising rents as landlords would pass the increase on to their tenants.

Vice President Corbett moved the current and proposed 20% shift, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by a roll call vote of 8 for and 1 against with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and

Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative and Councilor Angeline B. Kounelis voting no.

c) [Public hearing](#) and vote on a proposed Order setting optional tax exemptions for Fiscal Year 2014. Councilor Kounelis recused herself and left the Council Chamber.

The Manager provided an overview of the optional tax exemptions. The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed. Councilor Piccirilli moved the Order, seconded by Councilor Woodland and adopted by unanimous roll call vote with 8 for, 0 against and 0 present with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

10. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

a) [First reading](#) and referral to the Planning Board of a proposed Zoning Text Amendment regarding hotels. The Chair provided a first reading. Councilor Donohue moved the referral, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a) Joint Committee on Public Works and Personnel and Town Organization [report](#) on Public Works Staffing and Organizational Assessment – Cecilia Lenk/Susan Falkoff Chairs. Councilor Lenk read the committee report. Councilor Woodland moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Falkoff and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

Councilor Piccirilli moved for the full Town Council to endorse all the recommendations in the report, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

12. NEW BUSINESS – none noted.

13. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER:

1. Town Hall closed on Friday; in observance of Thanksgiving holiday.

2. On street parking ban starts on December 2nd.
3. Last curbside pickup Friday, December 6th.
4. Commanders' Mansion holiday open house on December 3rd; 10am – 6pm with refreshments.
5. Tree Lighting ceremony on December 6th at the Delta; 5:15 pm.
6. The Manager read the following [statement](#) regarding collective bargaining.

14. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION:

Councilor Kounelis noted two items remaining on the punch list for improvements on Mt Auburn Street lighting and thanked Mr. Mee and DPW for their assistance.

Councilor Falkoff inquired about a proposed dog park.

Councilor Falkoff inquired about a referred item regarding the addition of a member to the Planning Board.

Councilor Falkoff requested information on where there have been revaluation adjustments.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilor Lenk announced overview of draft Charles River Basin Study on December 3rd at the Community Rowing Boat House from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm.

Councilor Palomba announced a Metrowest ribbon cutting ceremony – affordable units, Thursday at 4pm at Rosary Drive.

Councilor Palomba announced a Watertown Community Foundation annual meeting; Thursday December 12th – 617-926-1500 for more information.

Councilor Palomba announced the new Watertown Family Network resource guide; Brigham House Holiday party on Saturday; 9:30am – 11:30 – 617-926-1661 for more information.

Councilor Kounelis announced a subcommittee meeting on December 2nd at 7pm in the Philip Pane lower hearing room to discuss airplane noise.

The Chair announced Small Business Day on Saturday; please patronize local small businesses.

The Chair announced Donohue's annual Turkey Trot; 8:00 am - proceeds to benefit the Watertown Boys and Girls Club.

The Chair announced the high school football game – 10:15 am on Thanksgiving Day.

16. PUBLIC FORUM – none.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Councilor Woodland moved to go into executive session at 9:00 pm in order to discuss strategy with respect to litigation. It was noted that the Town Council will not return to open session following the adjournment of the executive session, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous roll call vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark Sideris voting in the affirmative.

Addendum

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

Mark S. Sideris, Council President