

MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008 AT 7:15 PM

RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

1. ROLL CALL: A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:15 pm in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors Stephen Corbett, Marilyn M. Petitto Devaney, Susan G. Falkoff, Jonathan Hecht, Angeline B. Kounelis, John J. Lawn, Jr., Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Vice President Mark S. Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. EXAMINATION OF MINUTES: December 14th and January 8th. Councilor Devaney moved both sets of minutes as amended, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Joseph Costa, 22 Falmouth Road and President of the Watertown Firefighters Union – stated that there is still a resolution in place to maintain the 19 minimum manning staffing levels and that the Town should comply with it.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS ON PETITIONS:

- A. Public hearing and vote on a petition by NSTAR requesting permission to install one new pole 5/73 on Arsenal Street and remove one existing pole in order to provide electric service to Cambridge Savings Bank at 54 Arsenal Street. The Manager provided a brief overview of the petition. Ms. Jackie Duffy, NSTAR representative was available to answer questions. The Chair

opened the hearing up to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed. Councilor Sideris moved the petition, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

- B. Public hearing and vote on a petition by NSTAR requesting permission to install one new pole 127/25A on School Street in order to provide overhead electric service to Bell Tower Condominiums at 248 School Street. The Manager provided an overview of the petition. The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed. Ms. Duffy, NSTAR representative was available to answer question.

It was noted that the new pole would be located across the street from the church at the corner.

Councilor Lawn moved the petition, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

6. COMMITTEE REPORT:

- A. Committee on Budget and Fiscal Oversight report on Fiscal Year 2009 budget rankings –

Jonathan Hecht, Acting Chair. Councilor Hecht read each budget ranking for the Fiscal Year 2009 as budget policy guidance to the Manager (see attached). He noted one clear priority ranking was that the Town should continue its efforts to control health insurance costs, looking at all options including joining the State's health insurance program. Another clear priority was to repair/improve sidewalks and street with a comprehensive tree program. Councilor Sideris moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

7. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS:

- A. Informational Presentation on the Environment & Energy Efficiency Committee's efforts to date – Kenneth W. Mirvis, Chair. Mr. Mirvis provided a power point presentation which included the Committee's 2007 Accomplishments highlighted by their assistance in planning of new police station, participation in Faire on the Square, public education efforts; 2007 Shortcomings included the unsuccessful development of a coherent energy plan for the Town. Also discussed were the Potential for Energy Saving & Environmental Protection 2008 and Beyond; 2008 List of Possibilities; 2008 Obstacles in the areas of: budget, authority, expertise and purchasing constraints; Committee Recommendations to hire a professional energy-environmental officer; Possible Roles to provide technical assistance and prioritize options and code changes and Logistics; Requests of the Council to help clarify their role in the Town's government and Goals to expand membership and responsibilities (see attached spread sheet).

Councilor Devaney thanked Mr. Mirvis and noted her attendance to a state sponsored energy efficiency presentation. She indicated her hope Mr. Mirvis becomes an official member of the police station building committee and to add an energy officer to the Planning Department.

Councilor Kounelis thanked Mr. Mirvis and noted that even old buildings can become more energy efficient by simply turning off the lights and computers when no one is there.

Councilor Lawn thanked Mr. Mirvis for his presentation and how the Town can look to incorporate an energy efficiency officer position in the government.

Councilor Falkoff asked the Manager to forward the Facilities Management Document be forwarded to the Energy Efficiency Committee.

Councilor Falkoff inquired about gymnasium lights. The Chair noted that the School is looking into that matter through an energy efficiency group.

- B. Informational Presentation on the Pleasant Street Corridor – Kathryn Madden, Sasaki Associates. The Chair recognized Ms. Madden who

summarized the report and recommendations regarding the Pleasant Street Corridor Study process and incorporating the framework for the implementation phase of the zoning aspects. Ms. Madden summarized the Goals, Analysis, Market/Economic and Fiscal Considerations; Concept Plan; and Implementation. It was noted that Mr. Watson is working on the zoning details (see attached report).

Councilor Corbett noted that the process has been very valuable to the Town over time. The real challenge, he noted, is how we keep the vision front and center over time as we move forward.

Councilor Lawn noted the challenge and real planning involved as to how we want to see this take shape.

Councilor Hecht indicated that the last two paragraphs in the report are what capture the excitement. He noted that the Town needs to maintain the focus and coordination between town bodies and stakeholders.

Councilor Devaney stated that she can identify with Pleasant Street, which is a truck route and business area and spoke in support of tweaking the blueprint, with particular emphasis on business.

Attorney Reich stated that the report is still in a draft form and it would be appropriate to refer it to committee at this point.

Councilor Lawn moved to refer the report to the Committee on Economic Development and Planning, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

- C. Presentation on Survey of Wells Avenue parking lot by outside contractor – Gerald S. Mee, Jr., Superintendent of Public Works. Mr. Mee stated that the Town does not have any ownership in the Wells Avenue.

Councilor Kounelis stated that her main concern is the survey and the fact that the Town does not own the parcel. She asked if the Town was aware that they did not own the parking lot.

Mr. Mee stated that the Town had a license agreement for \$1.00 going back to the 1960s. The current owners have no intention of asking us to leave as the Town is within their right to the licensed agreement. The license agreement is subject to renegotiation if the parcel is resold.

Councilor Devaney moved to have a joint meeting of DPW Committee and Rules Committee, seconded by Councilor Kounelis.

Councilor Sideris suggested that this matter is strictly under the purview of the DPW Committee, and not the Rules Committee.

Councilor Devaney withdrew her motion.

Councilor Sideris moved to refer the Wells Avenue and related matters to the Public Works Committee for review, seconded by Councilor Kounelis and adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Sideris asked to have Attorney Reich review the license agreement.

The Chair noted that the subcommittee can also review that as part of their meeting.

Mr. Mee stated that he will speak with Attorney Reich to make sure that the information is forwarded to the Committee.

Regarding energy efficiency, the Manager introduced Brian _____ who brought forward a matter pending with the School Committee for solar panels at the high school or middle school. He indicated that Mass Technology Collaborative is offering the Town a solar electric system program and reviewed the guidelines. It was noted that the solar panels will save the Town more than \$1,000 annually in electricity costs.

Councilor Lawn spoke in support of the program.

Councilor Hecht indicated that there is an educational component to the program and the panels are restricted to school buildings. Brian concurred and stated that the educational component is the important part of the program along with the process of trying solar panels at no cost to the Town. He further noted that this initiative will be spearheaded by a citizen group.

The Manager stated that from a policy standpoint, the Council can endorse this program which is subject to School Committee action.

Councilor Sideris moved to support said initiative and authorize the Manager to negotiate with the School in order to move forward, seconded by Councilor Falkoff and adopted by voice vote.

D. Update on Departmental Audits – Town Auditor, Thomas Tracy.

Councilor Kounelis moved to Table the update to February 26th, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

8. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A. Resolution authorizing the transfer of \$6,563.00 to fund a local matching grant requirement

for the Assistance to Firefighters Program. The Manager provided an overview of the transfer. Councilor Falkoff moved the transfer, seconded by Councilor Kounelis and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

B. Resolution authorizing the Approval of Gift of Expenditure in the amount of \$1,000.00 to

purchase equipment for the Town's new ambulance. The Manager provided an overview of the transfer. Councilor Devaney moved the matter, seconded by Councilor Corbett and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

9. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. The Chair read the Committee Assignments for 2008.

B. The Chair provided a verbal report of the January 16th Special Town Council meeting regarding minimum manning levels for the Fire Department. He stated that the existing resolution mandating the 19 minimum manning level is still in effect. He reviewed the adopted motion to have the Fire Chief and the Manager meet on the matter and return to the Town Council by February 26th as to where they may acquire the funds needed to support the 19 minimum manning level.

The Chair stated that the Manager's evaluation will be placed on the agenda under President's Report for the February 26th Town Council meeting.

The Chair stated that the Martin Luther King Breakfast event held on Sunday, was well attended and ranks among the best they have had since World of Watertown began the annual event.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

A. Request for Confirmation of Appointments/Reappointments to various boards and

commissions as follows: Board of Public Health, Conservation Commission, Licensing

Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals. The appointments/reappointments were referred to various committees by voice vote.

The Manager asked that the dirt parking area along Main and Bacon Street be referred to DPW Committee for study. Councilor Sideris moved the matter to Public Works Committee, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by voice vote.

With respect to the Presidential Primary, the Manager stated that the Town has sought formal training of all the election officers, to be held Monday at 10am. Polls will be open from 7am to 8pm for the upcoming Primary.

The Manager indicated that the Mr. Bart Mitchell is looking to close on their financing, a formal report will be forthcoming in a weeks time.

11. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Councilor Devaney requested a report on overtime for the police department due to a combination of high turnover rates and or police academy training. She also requested a report on the delay on the engineering position which has been vacant for nearly two years.

Councilor Kounelis requested an update on contracts for the fire and superior police officers. She stated her concern with how the cap program is being phased in for those who have not reached an agreement.

Councilor Kounelis requested a written document as to what parcels of property the Town owns.

Councilor Falkoff asked what directions are given to subcontractors who plow in Watertown, she stated concerns voiced by residents regarding plows throwing snow over sidewalks or plowing bare streets.

Councilor Falkoff, with respect to new Recycling rules, asked what the expected increase for tonnage and savings will be yielded from changes.

Councilor Falkoff asked to receive comments made by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs that were referenced in the recent update from the Planning Department to the Council.

The Chair asked with respect to the Police Overtime Account, what was the date that the transfer by made by the Council on those monies. The Manager noted that the transfer in question, was an interdepartmental transfer.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Sideris announced that on Monday at 6pm, the Charitable Ad Hoc Committee will hold its first meeting to discuss guidelines.

13. PUBLIC FORUM – none noted.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION Councilor Sideris moved to go into executive session to discuss real property and to discuss security devices and not return to open session, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted on February 12, 2008 as amended by voice vote.

Clyde L. Younger, Council President