

MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2008 AT 6:00 PM

RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

1. ROLL CALL: A regular meeting of the Town Council was called at 6:00 pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors Stephen P. Corbett, Jonathan Hecht, Susan G. Falkoff, Vice President Mark Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger. Also present were the Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll and Council Clerk, Valerie Papas.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION – 6:00 PM

3. RECONVENE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING – 7:15 PM

All Councilors were present. Attorney Reich was present.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: June 10th. Tabled.

6. PUBLIC FORUM – none noted.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND VOTES:

A. Public hearing and vote on a Proposed Loan Order authorizing the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Town Manager to borrow and/or expend monies in the amount of \$313,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority for the costs of remodeling, reconstructing or making extraordinary repairs to various school buildings, including original equipment and landscaping, paving and other site improvements incidental or directly related to such remodeling, reconstruction or repair.

The Chair recognized the Town Manager who provided a brief overview of the proposed Loan Order, noting that Town will no longer be looking to borrow the monies but will be utilizing monies from the lease of the Coolidge School in the amount of \$300,000. Director of School Facilities, Jay Francione provided an in-depth presentation of the school's summer projects including energy efficiency lighting in the gymnasiums; roof repairs to all schools; air conditioning and window repairs at the Middle School, exterior painting to the Lowell Elementary School; and the reuse of windows formerly at the Browne School reinstalled at the Phillips School; as well as handicap access to the high school gymnasium and Cable Access Studio (complete list attached).

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Sideris moved the transfer, seconded by Falkoff and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

B. Public hearing and vote on a Proposed Loan Order authorizing the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Town Manager to borrow and/or expend monies in the amount of \$5,300,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority for the costs of construction and reconstruction of streets and sidewalks and underground duct/conduit.

The Chair recognized the Town Manager who provided a brief overview of the proposed loan order. Mr. Gerald S. Mee, Superintendent of Public Works provided an overview of the documents regarding the Pavement Management Program and Paving Index including a list of prioritized roadways in need of improvement, 23 streets with 11 in need of full depth reconstruction (attached). Mr. Mee also elaborated on conduit work for a fire alarm system from the current police station to the new Police Station. Mr. Mee stated that certain routes were chosen to minimize the effect of construction on residential streets. It was noted that the final phase will be completed by the Public Works crews.

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Falkoff thanked Mr. Mee for the documented lists and asked that the matter of clarifying the Town's policy and guidelines on street curbs and plantings be referred to the committee on Public Works, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli.

Councilor Hecht concurred and noted that the current policy is informal and has not been formally adopted by the Town Council and he hopes the committee addresses the issue prior to the full depth reconstruction of additional streets.

Adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Kounelis asked that weed strips along Mt. Auburn Street be addressed as well.

Councilor Devaney thanked Mr. Mee and the Manager for allocating monies for the project within the Town's operating budget.

Councilor Sideris moved the loan order, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

8. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS BY TOWN

OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES:

A. Informational Presentation on the Police Department's Deployment of Patrol Officers – Edward P. Deveau, Chief of Police. The Chair recognized Councilor Kounelis who read a statement into the record regarding the current dispatch plan and how the police is going to be responding to residents in the east end (attached).

The Chair recognized Police Chief Deveau who provided a presentation on police deployment of patrol officers. He noted that the current response time is approximately three minutes

and that future response times will not be adversely affected by the relocation of the police station. The Chief indicated that the plan calls for a patrol officer at the east end at all times even during roll call or shift change when the relocation takes place in 2010. The Chief also noted that future technology will allow officers to write their police reports in their vehicles instead of returning to the station, which is time consuming.

Councilor Devaney, in response to Chief Deveau's comments comparing the Fire Department's rescue located on Orchard Street to the Police Station being relocated to the Waltham border as having no validity –comparing apples to oranges. She stated when an East Watertown resident requires medical assistance firefighters from east Watertown's Station 2 respond assist and stabilize the individual until the rescue arrives. There is no such assistance for a resident living on Melendy Avenue who has a dire need for police services. With traffic backed up to the Brown School Main Street location, this will require Police responding to east Watertown to try to get through or speed down side streets. She noted our police pride themselves on their excellent response time and this puts more demands on them. She spoke of the Mall's demands and how many cruisers are required to respond.

Councilor Sideris thanked the Chief for the presentation, noting that this specific plan has been well thought out. He indicated that the Chief should be commended for this and that it's his belief that the community will continue to be safe now and in the future.

The Chair thanked the Chief for alleviating concerns over response time and coverage.

Councilor Lawn requested that his statement in response to a request for information made at the last meeting culminating in the presentation made tonight be included in the record of the minutes (attached).

Councilor Hecht stated that it would be useful to have a standard response time and inquired if there is one.

The Chief stated that the current response time is under four minutes and that the goal is to have the response time under three minutes, but indicated there is no formal standard.

The Chair recognized:

William Patterson, retired police officer and resident of the east end – stated that the Chief has addressed his concerns with east end coverage and the relocation of the police station to his satisfaction and thanked the Chief.

James Bean, Pine Street – stated that the police and fire departments have saved his life twice once at his home and once at the middle school and that it makes no difference where the police station is located in Watertown.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Committee on Economic Development and Planning update on the Pleasant

Street Corridor Zoning District – Jonathan Hecht, Chair. The Chair recognized Councilor Hecht who read the committee report (attached) and announced an additional meeting on Thursday, June 26th at 12:30 pm regarding the matter. Councilor Sideris moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

Ad Hoc Charitable Committee report and action on the proposed disbursement of Charitable Funds – Mark S. Sideris, Chair. The Chair recognized Councilor Sideris who presented the proposed list of disbursements of charitable funds to various non profit organizations. He noted that the checks will be handed out to each organization during a ceremony on July 8th at 6:00 pm, if the list is adopted.

Councilor Sideris moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote. Councilor Sideris moved the committee's recommendations, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

10. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A. Acceptance of Proclamations honoring retiring school teachers – Marilyn M. Petitto Devaney. The Chair recognized Councilor Devaney who read a proclamation honoring several retiring teachers (as attached). Councilor Sideris moved to accept the proclamations, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

B. Resolution authorizing a transfer of funds pursuant to the adoption of Ordinance #2008-54 regarding the compensation of the Town Manager. The Chair recognized the Town Manager who provided a brief overview of the transfer. Councilor Falkoff moved the resolution, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by a roll call vote of 8 for and 1 against, with Councilor Devaney voting no.

11. REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

The Chair announced a meeting will be held on July 1st at 6:00 pm to discuss the filling of the library board of trustee vacancy.

The Chair announced that he will be calling an executive session to discuss whether the manager intimidated a Boston Globe reporter.

12. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

The Manager provided an update on Purchase of Natural Gas Supply & Related Services contract.

The Manager announced Mass Highway announced a July bid date for construction beginning in the fall. Keyspan will realign 1900 linear feet of gas main. He further noted that the financing streets and sidewalks within the confines of proposition 2 ½ should be commended.

Regarding the cost and financing of the new police station, the Manager stated that he had discussions with a Boston Globe reporter regarding a recent article that was written, as his right to do that. The headline and related information were misleading based on quotes from an estimator within the article on the cost of the new police station. The Police Building Committee should be commended as the estimated cost was brought in on budget and on time and all done within the confines of proposition 2 ½.

The Chair stated that no greater compliment that one can give to the building committee than the action of the Town Council to move forward with the construction on a new police station.

The Manager announced that the Red Sox Trophy will be on display at the police station.

The Manager announced that Summer Concert series begin this Thursday.

The Manager announced that the Town Hall will close on Thursday at 2:00 pm, July 3rd due to the 4th of July holiday.

13. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Councilor Falkoff stated her second request on the status of Whitney Hill.

Councilor Devaney stated that she is still waiting for a response regarding a legal opinion on flyers being placed on vehicles parked at the town hall and utilization of the library regarding a controversial film shown there regarding 9/11.

Councilor Devaney stated that she is still waiting on the status of the still vacant town engineer position.

Councilor Devaney asked that the Chair require a written report from all subcommittees, including the Rules Committee for a traffic commission related matter.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS – none noted.

Councilor Devaney read an announcement regarding firearms and related training requirements.

15. PUBLIC FORUM

Candy Allenbauch, Puritan Road – stated that she is compelled to say that she read the Boston Globe article on the construction of the new police station and takes high exception to it. She noted that the Town had a right to object to it.

Pat Gold, Duff Street – commended Mr. Mee and the Council for the street and sidewalk improvement plan presented tonight and for re-striping a section of Common Street at Bellevue Road as she had a recent car accident there.

16. ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before the Council, Councilor Sideris moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 pm, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by unanimous vote.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION – cancelled.

I hereby certify that the minutes of June 24, 2008 were adopted by voice vote on July 8, 2008.

Clyde L. Younger, Council President