

MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2006 AT 6:00 PM

RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

1. ROLL CALL: A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 6:00 pm in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the roll call were Councilors Stephen Corbett, Marilyn Petitto Devaney, John A. Donohue, Jonathan Hecht, Angeline B. Kounelis, Stephen E. Romanelli, Vice President Mark S. Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger. Councilor Lawn was absent for the call of the roll.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION - 6:00 PM

3. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 7:15 PM: All Councilors were present.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Chair provided a synopsis of the life of Mr. Michael Barba, longtime resident and member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, who recently passed away.

5. EXAMINATION OF MINUTES: January 10, 2006: Councilor Romanelli moved the minutes as written, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

1. John DiMascio, Copeland Street – spoke in support of the establishment of a Budget and Finance Subcommittee of the Town Council.

Councilor Sideris moved to Suspend the Rules in order to move forward the President's Report, seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

The Chair recognized Mr. Robert Erickson, Veterans Agent – who spoke on behalf of Russell Buchanan who was celebrating his 106th birthday today. Mr. Erickson provided an overview of Mr. Buchanan life noting in particular his service to his Country in WWI and WWII.

The Chair along with Vice President Sideris presented a proclamation on behalf of the Town Council recognizing Mr. Buchanan on his 106th birthday. Mr. Buchanan thanked the Council for the honor.

The Proclamation was adopted by voice vote.

7. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS BY TOWN OFFICERS & EMPLOYEES:

A. Brief Informational Presentation on further discussion on the Fiscal Year 2007 Preliminary Budget Overview, related to issues and policy goals in accordance with Section 5-1 of the Home Rule Charter – 10 minutes. The Town Manager provided a brief presentation of the Fiscal Year 2007 Preliminary Budget Overview (see attached materials).

Following the presentation, Councilor Sideris moved to refer the closing of the branch libraries to the subcommittee committee on Human Services, seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Sideris moved to refer the establishment of a Health Insurance Task Force to the Committee on Personnel and Town Organization, seconded by seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

The Manager requested more discussion on health insurance at the February meeting of the Town Council.

B. Brief Informational Presentation update on the Proposed Coolidge School Reuse Project by Mitchell Properties – 10 minutes. Mr. Mitchell provided an update (see attached materials). Mr. Mitchell provided a progress report over the last eight weeks including completing a survey of the existing conditions of the building; a hazardous materials study; design work by architects which will include a ground level entrance; project financing; drafting of a long term lease; tenant selection issues; and zoning permits.

Councilor Devaney requested that Mr. Mitchell follow up on the issue of preference for housing to local residents and indicated that it is her belief that this cannot be legally done, although it is something we all want.

Councilor Kounelis spoke against the proposal noting that it is geared towards Smart Growth and does not represent a signed petition of resident requesting 65 and older housing for seniors. She also indicated that the neighborhood was shut out of the decision process and therefore she could not support the project.

Councilor Corbett spoke in support of the proposal and asked that more detailed information regarding the financial side of the project be forwarded to Councilors as soon as possible.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Committee on Rules and Ordinances Report on the Council Rules, Issuance of Proclamations, and codification of town's ordinances - Jonathan Hecht, Chair. Councilor Hecht provided an overview of the Committee Report (attached).

Mr. Hoover asked for clarification on the "signing in" process for the 1st public forum. An explanation was provided by the Chair. Councilor Devaney moved to accept the Report which recommended adoption of the signing in process for the 1st public forum, seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Sideris moved the "concept" of a budget and finance committee, seconded by Councilor Kounelis and adopted by voice vote. It noted that additional meetings of the Rules and Ordinances Committee will be scheduled to work out the details of the budget and finance committee as well as a rewording of a resolution regarding "Issuances of Proclamations".

B. Committee on Personnel and Town Organization Report on the Reorganization of the Town Auditor's Office – Angelina B. Kounelis, Chair. Councilor Kounelis provided an overview of the Committee Report (attached). It was noted that the Committee recommended that no changes in the organization of the Town Auditors Office take place at this time. Council President Younger indicated that he had forwarded the initial request for the reorganization and wanted to provide to the subcommittee in writing the thought process behind the request and asked that the matter be referred. Councilor Sideris moved the request, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by voice vote.

9. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A. Motion to Refer proposed zoning changes to the Subcommittee on Economic Development and Planning. Councilor Sideris moved to refer the proposed Zoning changes to Committee, seconded by Councilor Romanelli and adopted by voice vote.

B. Motion to Refer the matter of a Recycling Center to the joint subcommittee of Public Works and Economic Development and Planning. Councilor Sideris moved to refer the Recycling Center to a joint subcommittee, seconded by Councilor Hecht and adopted by voice vote.

10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – previously take up.

11. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

The Town Manager requested recognition of Police Chief, Edward P. Deveau. The Chair recognized Chief Deveau who provided information regarding a recent bank robbery at a Watertown Savings Bank branch whereupon an off duty police officer responded to the call and arrested the perpetrator.

The Chair requested that a letter of recognition be written to Officer Kelly, adopted by voice vote.

A. Request for Confirmation of Appointments to the Board of Health. Councilor Hecht moved to refer the appointments to the subcommittee of Human Services, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

B. Brief Update on Parking Study and 124 Riverside Street. The Manager and Planning Director provided a brief update of the Watertown Square Parking Study and the disposition of 124 Riverside Street. Mr. Watson noted that the Town undertook a recent study which looked into an additional 46-48 parking spaces. Councilor Sideris moved to re-referred the two items to the Committee on Economic Development and Planning for further study, seconded by Donohue and adopted by voice vote.

12. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Councilor Romanelli requested that the Town look into the legality of a building project located on Worchester Street.

Councilor Romanelli also requested that the Police Department look into the legality of contractors parking their equipment on the streets overnight. He asked for the policy on ticketing such vehicles.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS – none noted.

14. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Karl Neugenbauer, Irving Street gave kudoos to Bob Erickson for the town's website and requested that the links be updated.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Chair requested a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of strategy with respect to litigation and strategy with respect to non-union personnel. The Chair noted that the Town Council will not return to public session following the adjournment of the executive session.

Councilor Romanelli moved the request, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilor Romanelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 PM, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice 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 14, 2006 as written.

Clyde L. Younger, Council President