

MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY, PUBLIC WORKS, CULTURE AND RECREATION
Wednesday February 27, 2013 at 7:00 PM
Windham Town Hall, Court Room
979 Main Street
Willimantic

1. Call to Order.

Town Engineer Joe Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Committee members present: Charles Krich, Lorraine McDevitt, Dawn Niles

Tom DeVivo arrived at 7:45 p.m.

Town Staff Present: Town Engineer Joe Gardner, Attorney Rich Cody

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizens and Delegations.

Phylis Pintal was upset regarding the euthanizing of two dogs. She requested statistics on how many dogs have been euthanized, the reason for euthanizing, who decides and whose responsibility it is to decide.

Lloyd Niles complained about condition of roads in the Windhams during the recent snow storm. He stated roads not getting plowed were hindering fire department operations. He also questioned why the Emergency Operations Center was not opened. Heidi Bardelli, owner of Pampered Pet, stated she takes dogs from the pound and adopts out. To her knowledge four dogs have been euthanized over the last two years. She said Town Manager Neal Beets made the decision to euthanize dogs based upon information he had. She tried multiple times to contact him; he did not respond. Dogs were not given temperament testing, nor was she asked to take them. Dogs in the shelter are not allowed bones, toys or blankets.

George Gillette stated if he kept his dogs in conditions equal to what the town does he would be arrested.

Pauline Bragg, a professional dog obedience trainer, read a four-page list of concerns and information regarding conditions at the animal shelter. Please see attached.

Sherry Mayor is upset with conditions at the shelter. The Town needs a separate entity to run the pound.

Janet Wallace of Gifford Avenue complained that when she had a problem with two pit bulls who had attacked her cat in her own yard, the dog officer arrived with arm in cast and said he would not remove them.

Andrew Carey said conditions are a disgrace. He is ashamed of the Town. Something needs to be done now.

4. Town Council Committee Member Comments.

Lorraine McDevitt said she only knew what was in newspaper. The building is deplorable, and she will speak with Town Manager. She was sorry this happened.

Dawn Niles said this was her first meeting back on the committee. She did not know things were this bad. The Animal Control Ordinance was supposed to be animal friendly. She said council members had received a proposal from the Town Manager to

close facility and regionalize with Hampton. She suggested reaching out to UCONN students in the veterinary program as the ordinance intended. She stated the conditions need to be fixed.

5. Election of a New Chair and Vice Chair

A motion was made by Lorraine McDevitt to elect Charles Krich as chair. The motion was seconded by Dawn Niles and passed two in favor with Krich abstaining. Arnaldo Rivera, the current Vice Chair, will remain Vice Chair.

6. Approval of Minutes from Meeting on January 23, 2013 and Special Meeting on February 6, 2013. Postponed until after Agenda Item 7.

A motion was made by Tom DeVivo to approve the minutes from January 23, 2013. The motion was seconded by Lorraine McDevitt and passed with two in favor and Dawn Niles and Charles Krich abstaining.

A motion was made by Tom DeVivo to approve the minutes from the Special Meeting on February 6, 2013. The motion was seconded by Charles Krich and passed with two in favor and Dawn Niles and Lorraine McDevitt abstaining.

7. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Contract Negotiations Between the Town of Windham and the Willimantic Fire Chiefs Switchboard Association.

Town Attorney Rich Cody and John Wylie and John Chapman of the Fire Chiefs Association sat with the Committee.

Krich stated Attorney Cody had submitted a revised ordinance taking into account comments from the previous meeting.

Atty. Cody reviewed changes which are highlighted on attached draft. He discussed that funds left over in a fiscal year could not be placed in a non-lapsing fund. This would require special state legislation.

Lorraine McDevitt asked about funds for an emergency. Rich explained as in any emergency you fix the problem then address the funding issue later through the Board of Finance.

Atty. Cody stated he left the description of the Dispatch Administrator skeletal on purpose. A job description will need to be developed.

Charles Krich asked if there were any questions.

John Chapman said he had just received the ordinance. The Chiefs will be having a meeting next week to review and finalize any comments.

Dawn Niles suggested changing Section A of ORGANIZATION that the commission be comprised of AT LEAST 7 members. She suggested adding in Charter and ordinance that membership will be on recommendation of membership by the Authority to the Mayor and Council for approval. She suggested a Charter change to allow membership of participating Towns. She suggested the Chair of the Public Safety Committee or designee be an ex officio member without a vote. She suggested eliminating Paragraph 5 of Section 2. On page 3, paragraph b she suggested changing submit to Public Safety Committee in lieu of the Council. On page 5, she suggested adding two members shall be involved with collective bargaining.

Tom DeVivo arrived during Dawn Niles's comments at 7:45 p.m.

The Switchboard Association will send any comments to Joe Gardner and he will forward to committee members, Town Attorney and Town Manager.

8. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Animal Control Shelter

Joanne Miles and Heidi Bardelli sat with the Committee. A fact sheet by Joanne Miles along with an email sent to the Town Manager and letters to the editor of the Chronicle were passed out. Please see attached.

Joanne stated the incident had been her fault. She had been given a key and was not supposed to be there alone. She reviewed material she had passed out.

Heidi Bardelli stated she called the Town Manager seven times with no response.

When he did not respond she went to his office to see him. He told her he did not want volunteers back based upon 911 call. She questioned what gives him the right to euthanize dogs. Joanne Miles stated the dogs were not vicious.

Heidi Bardelli asked what needed to be done to get volunteers reinstated.

A motion was made by Dawn Niles that a working group consisting of Lorraine McDevitt, Dawn Niles and Heidi Baldelli review the current animal control policies and make recommendations to the committee on possible revisions. The motion was seconded by Tom DeVivo and passed unanimously. Tom DeVivo suggested they finish within sixty days.

The Chair was requested to send an email to the Town Manager on this issue and request no animals be euthanized until the policies are updated.

9. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Survey Bids for Town Projects.

Town Engineer Joe Gardner reviewed bids with the Committee. A motion was made by Tom DeVivo to recommend to the Council the award to Juliano Associates in the amount of \$7,125.00. The motion was seconded by Lorraine McDevitt and passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Tom DeVivo to add item 9a, Future Agenda Items. The motion was seconded by Lorraine McDevitt and passed unanimously.

9a Future Agenda Items.

Tom DeVivo suggested an item regarding the Farmers Market and its relocation to the Garden on the Bridge. Recreation Director Tara Risley is to be requested to attend next meeting along with representatives from the Farmers Market.

10 Adjournment.

A motion was made by Lorraine McDevitt to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. The motion was seconded by Dawn Niles and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted
Joseph Gardner
Town Engineer