

Minutes of the Windham Town Council Administration, Finance, Development, Health, and Human Services Committee Regular Meeting



Windham Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Tuesday, February 9, 2016 - 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Charles Krich called the Windham Town Council Administration, Finance, Development, Health, and Human Services Committee Regular Meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

Town Council members present: Charles Krich, Tony Fantoli, Dennis O'Brien and Lynne Ide

Charlotte Patros was absent.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Krich led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment

James Flores thanked Chairman Krich for bringing the Resolution on the fiscal crisis in Puerto Rico forward and he shared his thoughts on the issue.

4. Committee Members Comment

None

5. Approve Minutes for January 12, 2016

O'Brien MOVED, Fantoli seconded, to approve the minutes for January 12, 2016. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Hear presentations from, ask questions about, discuss, and possibly make recommendations to the full Town Council regarding the amount of Town funds to be dedicated in the Town General Budget to the Outside Agency Grant Program, and about the specific non-profit agencies who should receive Town of Windham Outside Agency Grant Funds.

- a. the Windham Region Transit District (WRTD)
- b. the Windham Region Community Council (WRCC)
- c. the Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA)
- d. Little Angels
- e. Willimantic Little League
- f. Commercially Licensed Cooperative Kitchen (CLiCK)
- g. ACCESS Community Action Agency
- h. other agencies

Representatives from the above agencies/organizations addressed the Committee. They provided information and explained the needs of the agency/organization with regards to their funding requests made to the Town. They also answered questions from the Committee.

Krich MOVED, O'Brien seconded, to deny the funding request for the ACCESS Community Action Agency. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion took place regarding the requests for funding from the above agencies/organizations. Councilmember O'Brien refrained from commenting on the requests from Windham Region Transit District (WRTD) and Willimantic Little League due to his involvement with both groups.

The Committee requested additional information and clarification from Windham Region Transit District (WRTD), Windham Region Community Council (WRCC) and Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA).

The consensus of the Committee was to hold a Special Meeting on February 23, 2016 at 6:30 P.M. to further discuss their proposed recommendations to the full Town Council.

7. Discuss and possibly act on a Resolution Urging Congress and the President to Develop a Comprehensive Plan to Address the Humanitarian and Fiscal Crisis in Puerto Rico.

O'Brien read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

O'Brien MOVED, Ide seconded, to recommend to the full Town Council a Resolution Urging Congress and the President to Develop a Comprehensive Plan to Address the Humanitarian and Fiscal Crisis in Puerto Rico. All were in favor except Fantoli who abstained.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council THAT

WHEREAS, in June 2015 Puerto Rico's Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla declared the Commonwealth's \$72,000,000,000 debt "not payable", with the island effectively running out of cash for the government to continue operating; and

WHEREAS, this economic crisis has forced a second "Great Migration" much like after World War II, with more than 250,000 Puerto Ricans leaving the island since

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico has taken extraordinary measures to address the shortfall, including shuttering more than 100 public schools, delaying people's tax refunds, increasing the retirement age, borrowing from the workers' compensation fund, withholding holiday bonuses, and increasing the local sales tax to a national high of

WHEREAS, the U.S. government needs to take strong action to stabilize Puerto Rico and help restructure the debt by incorporating debt restructuring protections, by granting Puerto Rico the right to declare Chapter 9 bankruptcy, by providing health care equity by eliminating the annual Medicaid/ Mi Salud funding cap, and by instituting tax reform policies that foster economically diverse and living wage job creation, which will create sustainable growth on the island; and

WHEREAS, although the Earned Income Tax Credit is the nation's largest anti-poverty cash assistance program as it increases the ability of workers in low-paying jobs to support themselves and their families, it does not apply to Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, the Child Tax Credit provides substantial tax relief to families with children yet only applies in an unfairly limited fashion in Puerto Rico, where only families with three or more children are eligible for the credit refund; and

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico had the ability to file for bankruptcy Chapter 9 prior to 1985, which was later taken from the territory, which has since limited its ability to restructure the island's debt on its own; and

WHEREAS, we need to act now to extend equal treatment to Puerto Rico and its American citizens, 3.5 million of whom reside on the island and 5 million in the Diaspora in the United States and abroad. Connecticut has the 6th largest Puerto Rican population in the United States, after New York, New Jersey and Florida who are united in a call for action:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Windham, Connecticut call upon the United States Congress and the President to develop a comprehensive, balanced and just plan to address the humanitarian and fiscal crisis in Puerto Rico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Windham, Connecticut request that the State of Connecticut stand in unity with the national call to have the United States Congress and President Obama provide Puerto Rico with the tools to create a lasting pathway to economic recovery; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, and members of Connecticut's congressional delegation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives, the President of the Connecticut Senate, Senator Mae Flexer, Representative Susan Johnson and Representative Linda Orange.

MOTION PASSED

8. Future Agenda Items

- a. Tuesday, April 12, 2016:** Discussion on the process to be used for the Town Manager's evaluation.
- b. Senior Center/Community Center**
- c. CDBG Initiative**
- d. Report from Councilmember Ide regarding the Consolidation of the Finance Department. (Ad-Hoc Finance Consolidation Tri-Board).**

9. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment.

Michael Galipeau noted he has received services from many of the agencies that are requesting funding. He also spoke in support of Mr. Woodbury from the WRCC Veterans Advisory and the Access Agency with regards to the hour exchange program.

10. Adjournment

Ide MOVED, Fantoli seconded, to adjourn the Windham Town Council Administration, Finance, Development, Health, and Human Services Committee Regular Meeting at 9:13 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Submitted By:

Barbara J. McKinney
Clerk of the Town Council