

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE COUNCIL FOR THE WILLIMANTIC
SERVICE DISTRICT



AND

THE TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY, RECREATION
AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

WINDHAM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

Tuesday, August 6, 2013 - 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to order

Thomas DeVivo called the Special Meeting of the Willimantic Service District Council to order at 7:00 P.M.

Charles Krich called the Special Meeting of the Town Council Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee to order at 7:00 P.M.

Willimantic Service District Council and Town Council Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee members present: Thomas DeVivo, Charles Krich, Mark Doyle, N. Joseph Underwood, Christel Donahue, Dawn Niles and Lorraine McDevitt.

Arnaldo Rivera was excused.

Town Manager Neal Beets was also in attendance.

2. Citizens and Delegations

Neil Mesick, Grove Street, Willimantic, commended the Garden on the Bridge club, the Public Works Department and Lorraine McDevitt for their work and commitment. Mr. Mesick shared his concerns regarding the incident on the bridge however he noted the word on the street was there is more to the story than what was quoted in the newspaper. He is very concerned for the image of the city. In addition, he invited Keith (not James), one of the men that was involved in the incident to be a guest on Eye on Windham Monday night at 6:00 P.M.

3. Discussion, review of progress and possible action on a plan for safety in town parks as requested of the Town Manager or designee by the Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee of the Town Council.

Town Manager Beets and Town Engineer Joe Gardner addressed the Council and explained the proposed changes for the Garden on the Bridge. Chief Maruzo-Bolduc also briefly commented on the proposed plan. A lengthy discussion followed.

Niles MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to accept the recommendation from Town Manager Neal Beets to install a driveway apron off Main Street, widen the sidewalk under the railroad bridges as far as Windham Road (Route 32) and install cameras not to exceed \$110,000 and if possible look to do it in other parks with cameras. Niles and McDevitt were in favor and DeVivo and Krich opposed. MOTION FAILED. (Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee members).

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, that the Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee recommend that the Town Council approve the Town Manager's recommendation that a driveway apron be installed off Main Street to allow police cars access to the Garden on the Bridge, and that lighting be enhanced and cameras be installed on the Garden on the Bridge as soon as possible and that the Town Manager submit a plan to the Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee to extend cameras and lighting to other Town parks in the future. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee members).

4. Citizens and Delegations

Arthur Rich, one of the men attacked, is in favor of the proposed recommendation. He believes homeless people deserve to be safe.

Joe Marsalisi, Willimantic, explained how the current monitoring system works and its capacity.

Henry Crane, Windham Street, Willimantic, spoke in favor of the recommendation and is happy with the outcome of tonight's meeting.

Charles Kratt, Monticello Street, Willimantic, stated he was okay with lights and cameras but this was one incident and police and government can't protect everyone all the time. He thinks people should use their judgement and if they feel an area is unsafe they should stay away from it.

Annie Clark, Willimantic, stated we all have the right to be safe anywhere in Town and nobody should avoid any place in Town. She believes living in fear is unacceptable.

5. Adjournment

McDevitt MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Willimantic Service District Council meeting at 8:30 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

McDevitt MOVED, Niles seconded, to adjourn the Town Council Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Committee at 8:30 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Submitted By:

Barbara J. McKinney
Clerk of the Council