

WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

WINDHAM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

Tuesday, September 18, 2012 - 7:00 P.M.



1. **Call to Order**

Mayor Eldridge called the Town of Windham Council meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Town Council members present: Mayor Ernest S. Eldridge, Charles Krich, Tony Fantoli, Tom DeVivo, Lorraine McDevitt, N. Joseph Underwood, Kevin Donohue, Arnaldo Rivera, Mark Doyle, Christel Donahue and Jerry Iazzetta

Town Manager Neal Beets was also in attendance.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Eldridge led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment**

Peter Leeds, 9 Robin Road, Willimantic, requested an Ad Hoc Committee be put in place for Shetucket Park to re-motivate improvements at the park. He also questioned the status of the Noznick Property.

Donna Nicolino, 41 Summit Street, Willimantic, spoke with regards to a proposed Resolution by the People's Action Group of Willimantic which will help raise public awareness on the issues of Corporate Personhood and the regulation of political contributions.

Mike Sikoski, Acting Chair of the Ethics Commission, requested Item 14a be moved up on the agenda.

Kristen Fortier, 40 Bolivia Street, Willimantic, and member of the People's Action Group of Willimantic, agrees with Ms. Nicolino and supports passing a Town Resolution. She noted she would be happy to help draft the Resolution.

Dennis O'Brien, 120 Bolivia Street, Willimantic, supports the efforts of the People's Action Group of Willimantic and urged the Town to follow suit with other Town's on the Proposed Resolution. He also spoke on the Resolution transferring the property of the Senior Center and thanked Town Manager Beets and the Council for their work on this project.

Susan Johnson, State Representative, thanked The Council for their work with regards to the Senior Center. She also complimented the Economic Development Commission for their hard work on the MSIF grant. In addition, Ms. Johnson noted her support of the People's Action Group of Willimantic, stated she was glad to see the Legislative Agenda was going to be discussed and hoped a resolution on the Natchaug School Roof was forthcoming.

Bill Potvin, member of the People's Action Group of Willimantic, expressed his concerns on the direction of the Country. He too supports passing a Resolution on Corporate Citizenship and believes a Resolution will put Windham on the right side, "We the People" side.

4. Town Council Comment

Charles Krich, is glad to hear the presentation about citizens united. He noted he was not happy when the decision had come down and is glad people want to do something about it. He stated he would like to work with the group to put a Resolution together to bring to the Council and noted several other communities have also passed Resolutions.

Jerry Iazzetta, asked if there was an answer to Peter Leeds question.

Town Manager Beets, explained a playscape was on order and expected to be put in at Shetucket Park before winter. He also noted there was no active plan for the Noznick Property at this time.

Kevin Donohue, would like an agenda item placed on the next agenda for a review of the proposed Resolution from the People's Action Group of Willimantic.

Mark Doyle, believes it is important to come to some resolution on Natchaug School.

Lorraine McDevitt, commended the Board of Education on the smooth transition in moving the Natchaug School children to the Windham Middle School.

Tom DeVivo stated if anyone from the School Board was interested in coming back to the Magnet School Committee they would still take it up and work with the Town Engineer to review the plans and continue on that path.

5. Adoption of Minutes

a. Discussion and possible action to adopt the minutes for the September 4, 2012 Town Council Meeting.

Iazzetta MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adopt the minutes for the September 4, 2012 Town Council Meeting. All were in favor except Rivera who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

6. Resignations. Receive the resignation of:

a. None

7. Appointments. Discussion and possible action to appoint:

- a. Victor Rayhall, as a regular member of the Senior Center Advisory Board, with a two-year term.**

DeVivo MOVED, Iazzetta seconded, to amend Item 7a to read: to appoint Victor Rayhall, as a regular member of the Senior Center Advisory Board with a four year term. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

McDevitt MOVED, Rivera seconded, to appoint Victor Rayhall, as a regular member of the Senior Center Advisory Board with a four-year term pending a Town Attorney opinion. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION: Doyle MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to move Item 14a up on the agenda to follow Item 8b. All were in favor except Iazzetta who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

MOTION: DeVivo MOVED, K. Donohue seconded, to move Item 12a up on the agenda to follow Item 8a. All were in favor except Iazzetta who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

MOTION: Underwood MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to move Item 14b up on the agenda under Resolutions and Ordinances and to create an Item 12b. All were in favor except Iazzetta who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

8. Presentations & Special Reports

- a. Presentation from EDC Chair Bill Hettinger about the recommended EDC application that the Town should submit for the Main Street Investment Fund (MSIF) grant opportunity. (See Action item 12.a, below.)**

Bill Hettinger, Chair of the Economic Development Commission, gave a brief review of the Main Street Investment Fund grant and explained the process and criteria used for the project. He and Town Planner James Finger answered questions from the Council.

12. Resolutions and Ordinances

- a. Discussion and possible action approving a Resolution relating to the Town's Main Street Reinvestment Fund (MSIF) application.**

K. Donohue read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

K. Donohue MOVED, Doyle seconded, to approve Resolution #2579 relating to the Town's Main Street Reinvestment Fund (MSIF) application. All were in favor.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council THAT

- (1) *Authorizes the Windham Economic Development Commission as the governing authority to submit the completed application for funding to the Office of Policy and Management for the 'Main Street Investment Fund' program as referenced in Section 78 & 79 of Public Act 11-1, to implement the Windham/Willimantic Town Center Commercial Revitalization Plan, and to administer the plan as a component of its powers and duties to write and monitor a community revitalization strategy as specified in the Town's Code of Ordinances under Sec. 10-47; and to*
- (2) *Identify and authorize Neal J. Beets, Windham Town Manager, as the individual authorized to sign the Main Street Investment fund application, and any other contractual document for the Town to administer the project. Such application and plan shall be attached to, and made a part of this record.*

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Presentation from the Ethics Commission about changes to the Town's Ethics Ordinance. (See Action item 14.a, below.)

Kessenia Gagnon, former Chair and member of the Ethics Commission, gave a brief presentation on the proposed changes to the Ethics Ordinance. Ms. Gagnon explained the process for handling complaints and expressed the concerns of the Commission. She also answered questions from the Council.

14. a. Discussion and possible action about an Ethics Ordinance. (Recommend referral to Council Committee.)

Krich MOVED, Rivera seconded, that the proposal from the Ethics Commission to make changes to the Town's Ethics Ordinance be referred to our Committee on Administration, Finance, Health, and Human Services Subcommittee. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Mayor's Report

Mayor Eldridge thanked Mr. DeVivo for delivering a proclamation to Willimantic Midget Football on the opening of their season. He also thanked Town Manager Beets for attending the River Alliance event.

Mayor Eldridge reported on his attendance at both the Firemen's Convention in North Haven and the reception with the former Governor of Puerto Rico at ECSU.

He also noted there is a Ballet at the Arts Magnet School this Friday at 7:00 PM and tickets are available at brownpaperticket.com and to enter CCBT if anyone is interested.

10. Town Manager's Report

a. Status of Town Auditor selection process.

Town Manager Beets noted an RFP had been issued for a Town Auditor and of the 6 responses received the panel has narrowed it down to 3. He explained the makeup of the panel and reported a recommendation was being presented to the Board of Finance at their meeting tomorrow night.

b. ECSU Performing Arts Center.

Town Manager Beets reported some houses were being demolished around ECSU as part of the University's master plan to build a new Performing Arts Center. He believes this will be an important asset to the campus as well as the community.

c. Windham Journal Quarterly.

Town Manager Beets reported the Windham Journal Quarterly was out and stated if you haven't received it to please let him know. He noted the Journal contains a great deal of information on Windham and as part of the Towns arrangement with the Williams Printing Group, they pay to send it out to 11,000 households in Windham. He also noted the Town is happy with the outreach to our community.

In addition, Town Manager Beets invited everyone to attend the Kickoff Breakfast at The Access Agency that is being hosted by CLICK on Friday. He explained the breakfast was a collaborated effort to receive State funding for a new community center that focuses on the needs of our Senior Citizens and a potential new Senior Center for the Town. Mr. Beets noted a tour of the facility would be given and there would be an opportunity to ask questions about the site.

Town Manager Beets also answered a question regarding the status of the Parking Garage.

11. Discussion and Review of Communications

Letter requesting a Resolution from the People's Action Group of Willimantic

12. Resolutions and Ordinances

a. Discussion and possible action approving a Resolution relating to the Town's Main Street Reinvestment Fund (MSIF) application.

Moved up on the Agenda to follow Item 8a.

b. Discussion and possible action approving an Agreement with the Regional Senior Center non-profit corporation under which the Regional Senior Center conveys the real property at 47 Crescent Street to the Town effective October 1, 2012, and the Regional Senior Center leases the personal property on those premises to the Town until December 31, 2012.

DeVivo read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

DeVivo MOVED, Rivera seconded, to adopt Resolution #2580 approving an Agreement with the Regional Senior Center non-profit corporation under which

the Regional Senior Center conveys the real property at 47 Crescent Street to the Town effective October 1, 2012, and the Regional Senior Center leases the personal property on those premises to the Town until December 31, 2012. All were in favor.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council THAT

To facilitate a center for the Town's senior citizens, the Town enter into an agreement with the Windham Regional Federated Services for Older Americans, Inc., to acquire from it, on or about October 1, 2012, the peaceful reversion of the Town's interest in the property at 47 Crescent Street; and further to loan to the same company a sum not to exceed \$16,000, for three months, taking an interest in the company's personal property to secure repayment. If the loan is not paid by December 31, 2012, the company will convey the personal property to the Town in satisfaction of the debt. The terms of the agreements shall be satisfactory to the Town Manager and Town Attorney.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

13. Reports of Committees, Boards and Commissions

a. Administration, Finance, Health, and Human Services Subcommittee

Mr. Donohue reported the Committee had met and had received a report from the Magnet School on matters relating to the status of the costs.

He also noted there may be a possibility of additional costs relating to the changes in the STEM program. He stated the Committee would like Dr. Adamowski to give a presentation to the full Town Council on the educational needs regarding the changes.

Mr. Donohue also reported the Committee had discussed at length the need to have an independent evaluation of the Finance Department. He noted there has been difficulty with the audit over the last 2 years and believes a third party evaluation is essential and will also fit in with the goals and objectives for the Town Manager. Mr. Donohue also stated he would be asking the Council for permission for the Administration, Finance, Health, and Human Services Subcommittee to identify a contract and come back with a proposal for this.

b. Public Safety, Public Works, Culture, and Recreation Subcommittee

Mr. Iazzetta reported the Committee would be meeting next Wednesday and noted he was hoping to receive more information on the Dispatch Center.

c. Willimantic Service District

Mr. DeVivo reported the Willimantic Service District had met and came up with a list of concepts that the Town Manager will be working on for the Committee to bring recommendations to the Charter Review Commission. The Committee

discussed the following: the Pension Committee and the inconsistencies with the Ordinance and the Charter, the Committee's unanimous support of the expansion of the Willimantic Police Department to the Windham Police Department and the Role of the Mayor.

14. Old Business

- a. **Discussion and possible action about an Ethics Ordinance. (Recommend referral to Council Committee.)**
Moved up on the Agenda to follow Item 8b.
- b. **Discussion and possible action approving an Agreement with the Regional Senior Center non-profit corporation under which the Regional Senior Center conveys the real property at 47 Crescent Street to the Town effective October 1, 2012, and the Regional Senior Center leases the personal property on those premises to the Town until December 31, 2012.**
Moved up on the Agenda to create Item 12b which will follow Item 12a.

15. New Business

- a. **Discussion and possible action about a process to develop a 2013 Legislative Agenda for the Town of Windham.**
No Action Taken.
- b. **Discussion and possible action to contract with a third party to evaluate the finance function at the Town.**
Doyle MOVED, DeVivo seconded, that the Town Council authorize the Administration, Finance, Health, and Human Services Subcommittee to develop an RFP with a budget to have an outside group evaluate the Town Finance Department, its operation and staffing. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

16. Future Agenda Items

- Status of the Natchaug School Roof
- Report from Dr. Adamowski regarding appropriations for the new STEM Program
- Resolution on Corporate Citizenship
- Resolution to extend the Ad-Hoc Sister City Committee

17. Adjournment

Underwood MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adjourn the Town of Windham Town Council Meeting at 8:39 P.M. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Submitted By:

Barbara J. McKinney
Clerk of the Town Council