

# WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

WINDHAM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

Tuesday, May 17, 2011 - 7:00 P.M.



## 1. Call to Order

Mayor Ernest S. Eldridge called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Town Council members present: Ernest S. Eldridge, N. Joseph Underwood, Erika Haynes, Arnaldo Rivera, Mike Lessard, Charles Krich, Kevin Donohue, Christel Donahue, Teresa Santucci and Jerry Iazzetta.

Town Council members excused: Lorraine McDevitt

Town Manager Neal J. Beets was also present.

## 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Eldridge led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## 3. Citizens and Delegations

Lori Jeffers, Willimantic, stated that in case the Town Council didn't know she filed a discrimination complaint against the Town due to medical conditions she has and is not able to hear the meeting because the members do not speak into the microphones. She mentioned several meetings where individuals complained they couldn't hear the meeting.

Jeffrey Veins, Columbia resident and Windham tax payer congratulated the Town Council for passing the Town's General and Service District budgets. He also mentioned that the Water and Sewer Department do a great job. He questioned the Council as to why the Housing Authority gets a break on sewage fees.

Joel Meyer, Willimantic, stated that he was happy to see all the Town Council members present so they can hear what he has to say. He spoke regarding the budgets and how the town keeps losing students. Mr. Meyers is hoping the ordinance does not pass until the Town and State of Connecticut budget passes.

Doug Lary, 183 Summit Street, said he was open minded to open his building for inspections. Mr. Lary mentioned that the town has hundreds of people who own 1 to 21 properties and they live miles away. He informed the Town Council that those property owners who live miles away are the ones that do not keep the properties up to code.

Heather Meehan asked the Town Council to look into the Code Enforcement Officers job descriptions and the system they have in place before they vote on the new fee ordinance. She mentioned that when the inspector schedules an inspection at a property he is not friendly or punctual because he always arrive late. She also stated that her tenants feel threatened.

John Walker, Shoe Smith and property owner, stated he is inspected to death and some of his tenants do not like to be inspected by government authority. He asked to look into the department and see the needs before it is enlarged. Mr. Walker informed the Town Council that the Code Enforcement Officials do a great job.

Pam Veins, tax payer, Columbia resident, stated that she has been in business for twenty years and by charging more fees it affects the landlords because they are a business. She requested that the Town Council look into the job descriptions before they add more personnel. She requested that the Town hold a meeting and speak to the landlords before they implement the ordinance.

Peter Quercia, 300 Walnut Street, Willimantic, stated that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Street Festival is only a couple of days away and the Town should promote it more. He also mentioned that the Town spends too much time prosecuting people.

Leo Santucci, 74 Windham Street, Willimantic, stated that we all agree that the housing stock has deteriorated over the years. Mr. Santucci mentioned that the good people get affected and the bad landlords are not here. He informed the Town Council that overcrowding is creating a safety issue and it leads to fires. He doesn't know what is the right way to implement rules like the fees.

Bernie, 168 Walnut Street, stated that he heard the stones that will be removed on Summit Street are not going back to the place where they were removed from. He suggested that the Town sell them. He also mentioned that the Board of Education is selective to what they tell the voters and asked the Town Council if they support or have faith in the Board of Education.

Charlie Kratt, Monticello Street, Willimantic, informed the Town Council that he has spoken to several landlords and they have stated that they will need to increase the rents. He also mentioned that the landlords were concerned that the tenants may not be able to afford an increase.

#### **4. Adoption of Minutes**

##### **a. Discussion and possible action to adopt the April 21, 2011 Town Council public hearing minutes.**

Santucci MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adopt the April 21, 2011 Town Council public hearing minutes. MOTION FAILED with all in favor except Rivera, Krich, Haynes, Iazzetta and Donahue who abstained.

**b. Discussion and possible action to adopt the May 3, 2011 Town Council public hearing minutes.**

Underwood MOVED, Santucci seconded, to adopt the May 3, 2011 Town Council public hearing minutes. MOTION FAILED with all in favor except Rivera, Krich, Haynes, Iazzetta and Donahue, Donohue who abstained.

**c. Discussion and possible action to adopt the May 3, 2011 Town Council regular meeting minutes.**

Donohue MOVED, Iazzetta seconded, to adopt the May 3, 2011 Town Council regular meeting minutes. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Haynes, Donahue, Lessard and Rivera who abstained.

**5. Resignations**

None.

**6. Appointments**

None.

**7. Presentations & Special Reports**

**a. Presentation by Jim Hooper, Water Department Superintendent regarding approved budget by the Water Commission for FY 11-12.**

Jim Hooper, Water Department Superintendent gave an update on the operational expenses and debt for Windham Water Works. He gave a brief update on the solar system project that he has been working on. He mentioned that they have not had a water rate increase since 2007. They are hoping to receive the award for the best tasting water this year.

**b. Presentation by David Garand, Sewer Department Superintendent regarding approved budget by the Water Pollution Control Authority for FY 11-12.**

David Garand, Sewer Department Superintendent informed the Town Council that he was happy to report that there will not be any sewer increases until July 2014. He gave an update on the facility upgrade project. He gave an update on the revenues and on the upcoming projects for this summer, which includes implementing the new grease trap regulation effective July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**8. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Eldridge reported that he participated in the National Day of Prayer and thanked Mr. Underwood for attending the graduation at SAMA. He mentioned that he had no challengers at the frog leg eating contest fundraising event for the No Freeze Shelter. Mr. Eldridge congratulated the Soup Kitchen for their 30 Year Anniversary celebration.

Underwood gave a brief update on the Magnet School. He updated on the bids for blasting and clearing the property as approved by the State of Connecticut.

**9. Town Manager's Report**

Town Manager Neal J. Beets reminded everyone that the next budget referendum for the Board of Education budget is on June 7<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that if the budget passes the Board of Finance will set the mill rate and if it fails the Town Council will need to hold a special meeting and set the mill rate. Mr. Beets gave a brief update on the guard rails that will be placed on several town roads. He also informed the Town Council that the town has been served with a lawsuit on the Zoning Board of Appeals decision for a variance on the Hurley building proposed project.

**10. Discussion and Review of Communications**

None.

**11. Resolutions and Ordinances**

**a. Discussion to consider adopting a resolution forming a Tri-Board consisting of Board of Education, Town Council and Board of Finance members.**

Donohue MOVED, Underwood seconded to adopt resolution # 2536. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (Attachment A)

**b. Discussion and possible action to adopt the proposed Town of Windham Fee Ordinance.**

Donohue MOVED, Underwood seconded, to waive the reading. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Krich MOVED, Rivera seconded to adopt ordinance # 2537. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Underwood and Krich who abstained and Iazzetta opposed. (Attachment B)

**12. Reports of Committees, Boards and Commissions**

**a. Administration & Finance, Health and Human Services Sub Committee**

Donohue reported that they are meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

**b. Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Sub Committee**

Iazzetta stated that they have not met since the last time he gave a report.

**13. Old Business**

None.

**14. New Business**

**a. Discussion and possible action to hold a public hearing on June 21, 2011 at 6:45 p.m. regarding the Neighborhood Assistance Act for fiscal year 2011-2012.**

Iazzetta MOVED, Haynes seconded, to hold a public hearing on June 21, 2011 at 6:45 p.m. regarding the Neighborhood Assistance Act for fiscal year 2011-2012. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**b. Discussion and possible action that the Town Council together with Personnel Director Don Muirhead, Public Works Superintendent Brad**

**Wojick and any other appropriate personnel needed, go into executive session to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining.**

Iazzetta MOVED, Rivera seconded, that the Town Council together with Personnel Director Don Muirhead, Public Works Superintendent Brad Wojick and any other appropriate personnel needed, go into executive session to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining at 9:02 p.m. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Iazzetta MOVED, Santucci seconded, to adjourn the executive session at 9:20 p.m. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- c. **Discussion and possible action to approve the request for funds necessary to implement the written proposal between the Town of Windham and the Teamster Local 493 Highway and Public Works Employees**

Iazzetta MOVED, Rivera seconded, to approve the request for funds necessary to implement the written proposal between the Town of Windham and the Teamster Local 493 Highway and Public Works Employees. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- d. **Discussion and possible action to authorize Town Manager Neal Beets to sign the contracts for the Skate Board Park, Splash Park drainage and the HVAC Maintenance of Town buildings once approved by the Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Sub Committee.**

Underwood MOVED, Rivera seconded, to authorize Town Manager Neal Beets to sign the contracts for the Skate Board Park, Splash Park drainage and the HVAC maintenance of Town buildings once approved by the Public Safety, Recreation and Public Works Sub Committee. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Haynes who opposed.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

Magnet School Update

**16. Citizens and Delegations**

John Walker, property owner, informed the Town Council that he owns a property in one of the biggest intersections in town and would like them to consider placing a sidewalk on that section. The section he is referring to is the intersection of Jackson and Ash Street.

Jeffrey Veins, applauds the Mayor for taking charge of this tri-board. Mr. Veins stated that Arnaldo doesn't have a clue of what goes on in the neighborhoods. He wanted to make it clear to Erika that the fire on Clark Street was due to a pizza box not because of the landlord.

Pam Veins spoke regarding the problem that they are facing with taking the property down on Carey Hill which burned a few months ago. She has a problem with a town employee who continues to approach her husband to purchase the property instead of directing the owner to take it down. Mrs. Veins stated that the Town is not taking responsibility and making the owner be responsible.

Lori Jeffers informed Jerry Iazzetta that she had submitted an FOI request regarding meeting minutes on the Magnet School and the committee still fails to properly post meetings.

Bernard Dauteuil, 168 Walnut Street, spoke regarding the Census and how there was talk of getting pilot for vehicles. He believes big corporations need to start paying for fees. Mr. Dauteuil also mentioned that our surrounding towns don't take care of their people and they come to Windham for services.

Kevin Hoxie, Ridgewood Road, Willimantic, informed the Town Council that there have been two more homes in his area purchased for college students. He spoke regarding the Board of Education and being lied to by them when they report. Mr. Hoxie also stated that he was concerned with the number of single family homes turning into multifamily homes.

**17. Adjournment**

Santucci MOVED, Donohue seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Submitted By:**

**Neida I. Rosado  
Clerk of the Town Council**