

MINUTES OF THE WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Windham Town Hall Bellingham Auditorium, 2nd Floor
Tuesday, January 20, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.



1. Call to Order.

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

Town Council members present: Mayor Ernest S. Eldridge, Charles Krich (arrived at 7:11 PM), Tony Fantoli, Mark Doyle (arrived at 7:09 PM), Tom DeVivo, Joseph Underwood, Lorraine McDevitt, James Flores, Christel Donahue and Charlotte Patros (arrived at 7:03 PM)

Michael Lessard was excused

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.

Dennis Cronin, 247 North Street, Willimantic, spoke about the Tin Tsin lot and the possibility of selling it before turning it into a parking lot. He believes with a new Economic Development Director they may be able to market the lot.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, echoed the comments of Dennis Cronin and asked the Council to take a step back. She noted that turning the property into a parking lot does not follow the Town Plan and she suggested the Economic Development Director take a look at the property first. Ms. Niles also supports the purchasing of tablets for the Council.

Humberto Marquez, 191 Holbrook Avenue, Willimantic, questioned why the bathrooms at Rec Park were still not open for public use. He urged the Council to open them immediately before he takes them to Court.

Joe Marsalisi, Willimantic, stated until something better came along he suggested leaving the Tin Tsin lot as it is and believes it is working perfectly for the downtown merchants.

Susan Johnson, State Representative, stated the date for filing bills has passed and noted she was able to use the information from the joint meeting and other contacts to generate a couple of bills. She also thanked the clerk for the great job on the minutes. In addition



State Representative Johnson announced there is a Multi Cultural Recruiting Event on Saturday from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. at the Hilton in Hartford where 5,000 jobs are available.

James Flores supports the comments of his brother in law, Humberto Marquez and believes the issue of the bathrooms needs to be addressed.

Charlie Kratt, Monticello Street, Willimantic, spoke about the Bolivia Street property and doesn't understand why we are revisiting the issue.

Max Murphy, Chestnut Street, speaking on behalf of Andrew Gutt, read a statement from Mr. Gutt regarding the Tin Tsin lot. In his statement Mr. Gutt conveyed that he does not support a parking lot on the property.

4. Town Council Comment.

James Flores spoke against purchasing laptop computers for the Town Council and noted he will vote against it unless the money to purchase them is taken from the Town Council Members stipend.

Tom DeVivo spoke about the national discussions taking place regarding extending education beyond the 12th grade. He noted he was very discouraged by a comment made from a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission who wasn't in favor of families because they felt families didn't pay for education. DeVivo stressed that he believes community means families and that a long term plan should be budgeted for. He suggested possibly giving a four year Windham High School student an opportunity to earn an Associate's Degree at QVCC free of charge. Council Member DeVivo also thanked the Council, the Board of Finance and the Board of Education for all their support through the years and noted today was the anniversary of his wife's passing. In addition he thanked the community for standing by him and supporting him over the past eight years. He also expressed how grateful and thankful he is to be a part of this community.

Lorraine McDevitt agreed with the comments made by Tom DeVivo. She believes the children of the community should be supported in receiving higher education. She also stated our Town Officials and Board Members have to stand behind our students, teachers and Board of Education and should not be talking against what they are trying to do. Council Member McDevitt would like to see us all come together as a community to work together for the good of the community.

5. Adoption of Minutes.

None

6. Resignations.

None

7. Appointments, Reappointments.

None

8. Presentations & Special Reports.

a. Neida Rosado, Executive Administrator, about the Affirmative Action Program.

Neida Rosado, Executive Administrator, gave a short presentation on the Affirmative Action Program. She explained the information in the packet the Council received, reviewed the latest positions that were hired and provided the statistics on them. Ms. Rosado also answered questions from the Council.

Council Member Flores mentioned the Dispatch Center is paid through the Town and stated for the record “They have a white only policy”. He questioned why they do not have to comply with the law of the land. Neida Rosado, Executive Administrator explained that the Town has no jurisdiction over the Dispatch Center.

b. Demonstration of the use of tablets for official business by representatives from the Board of Education.

Tracy Lambert, Chair of the Board of Education and Brendon O’Neill, Information Technology Manager, gave a brief presentation on the use of tablets for official business. They explained the ease of use, the policy and the cost and savings for the Board of Education. In addition, Ms. Lambert and Mr. O’Neill answered questions from the Council.

9. Mayor’s Report.

Mayor Eldridge reported he had attended the retirement party for Police Captain Spinner as well as the Martin Luther King celebration. He noted he had a great time at both events.

10. Town Manager’s Report.

Town Manager Beets reported the Housing Authority will not be seeking the money allotted to them through the Town’s CDBG Small Cities grant to renovate some of their facilities. He noted the Housing Authority has been talking to State Officials at the Dept. of Housing and believe they have found other sources of funding to renovate and rehabilitate their facilities. Town Manager Beets noted the Housing Authority thanked the Council for their support and concern. Town Manager Beets also reported he has asked Mary DeMarco, Director of Human Services, to attend the Town Council Work Session on February 10th to speak about the CDBG Small Cities Program.

Town Manager Beets also reported on January 27th at 6:00 PM in the Bellingham Auditorium, there will be a meeting to discuss the Police and Fire pensions. He noted Mr. Forma and Actuary Rich Sych from Merrill Lynch as well as Town Attorney Rich Cody will be at the meeting to answer questions.

Town Manager Beets also answered questions from the Council including other possible options for the use of the CDBG grant and the status of the Senior Center.

11. Discussion and Review of Communications.

None

12. Resolutions and Ordinances.

- a. **Discuss and possibly adopt Resolutions approving minor land donations and other interests in land, and moving to a Town Meeting to approve these land transactions on February 17, 2015, at 6:30 PM in the Town Hall Bellingham Auditorium.**

Underwood read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

Underwood MOVED, Fantoli seconded, to adopt Resolution #2652 to move to a Town Meeting on February 17, 2015 at 6:30 PM to accept an easement from the State of Connecticut regarding a parcel of land at 210 Birch Street. All were in favor.

Resolution #2652

Be It Resolved by the Town Council That

the Town of Windham accept an easement for no consideration from the State of Connecticut whereby the State of Connecticut grants an easement to the Town of Windham for the right to install, maintain, operate, repair, and replace a subsurface water main on a parcel of land at 210 Birch Street as shown on a plan entitled "Limited Property/Boundary Survey, Easement Map, Land of State of Connecticut (Windham Connecticut Technical High School), Birch Street, Windham Connecticut", Scale 1" = 20'. Date 04/29/13. Said map by Juliano Associates LLC, 405 Main Street (Yalesville) Wallingford, Connecticut to be filed with the Windham Town Clerk.

To move to a Town meeting on February 17, 2015, at 6:30 pm

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

McDevitt read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

McDevitt MOVED, Doyle seconded, to adopt Resolution #2653 to move to a Town Meeting on February 17, 2015 at 6:30 PM to accept a parcel of land located at 259 Columbia Avenue Willimantic Ct. from 185 Recycling Way LLC Inc. All were in favor except DeVivo who abstained.

Resolution #2653

Be It Resolved by the Town Council That

the Town of Windham accept for no consideration a parcel of land located at 259 Columbia Avenue Willimantic Ct. from 185 Recycling Way LLC Inc. as shown on a plan prepared by Fuss & O'Neil entitled "Boundary Survey Depicting Land to be conveyed to the Town of Windham from Recycling Way LLC. 259 Columbia Avenue, Windham Connecticut". Said plan to be filed with the Windham Town Clerk.

To move to a Town meeting on February 17, 2015, at 6:30 pm

MOTION PASSED

McDevitt read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

McDevitt MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to adopt Resolution #2654 to move to a Town Meeting on February 17, 2015 at 6:30 PM to sell property located at 358 Jackson Street to Michael Connor. All were in favor.

Resolution #2654

Be It Resolved by the Town Council That

the Town Council recommends to the town meeting that the Town sell property located at 358 Jackson Street to Michael Connor for the consideration of \$21,000, under terms and conditions of the contract that has been prepared for the transaction by the Town Attorney, and to authorize the Town Manager to sign, execute and deliver such contracts, instruments and documents that are reasonably necessary to consummate the transaction.

To move to a Town meeting on February 17, 2015, at 6:30 pm

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Fantoli read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

Fantoli MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to adopt Resolution #2655 to move to a Town Meeting on February 17, 2015 at 6:30 PM to accept a parcel of land located at 32 Type Road, South Windham Ct. from Fredrick C. Kervin & Mildred R. Kervin. All were in favor.

Resolution #2655

Be It Resolved by the Town Council That

the Town of Windham accept for no consideration a parcel of land located at 32 Type Road, South Windham Ct. from Fredrick C. Kervin & Mildred R. Kervin as shown on a plan prepared by Healey & Associates entitled "Town of Windham land to be acquired from Fredrick C. Kervin & Mildred R. Kervin, Windham Connecticut". Said plan to be filed with the Windham Town Clerk.

To move to a Town meeting on February 17, 2015, at 6:30 pm

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

13. Reports of Committees, Boards and Commissions.

None

14. Old Business.

- a. Discuss and possibly give the Town Manager direction about whether Town Council meeting packets should continue to be copied and delivered to Council members or instead scanned and emailed, and whether the Town Council wants the Town to purchase tablets or laptop computers for Town Council members.**

DeVivo MOVED, Underwood seconded, for the Town Council to move forward with the purchase of tablets or laptops for Town Council members followed by direction on cost and policy regarding the use of the laptops or tablets. All were in favor except Flores and Krich who opposed and Eldridge who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

15. New Business.

a. Discuss and possibly give the Town Manager direction about the use or disposition of the Tin Tsin Lot, a/k/a Chapman Block, 804-806 Main Street.

Flores MOVED, Krich seconded, to put out an RFP, subject to Town Council approval, for the sale of 804-806 Main Street for a period of six months. All were in favor except Doyle and Fantoli who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

MOTION: DeVivo MOVED, Krich seconded, to move Item 17 up on the agenda to follow Item 15a. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

17. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment.

Jim Preston, resident of South Windham, local firefighter and business owner noted he is confused that the discussion has changed on the Tin Tsin lot and stated there has to be access to the back of the building if there is to be a building built on the Tin Tsin lot. He also expressed his disgust to see a Council Member reading a newspaper when someone was giving a presentation.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, supports putting a building on the Tin Tsin lot however would like to wait until the Economic Development Director is hired. She also is concerned that no review panel was established to review the Affirmative Action Plan and she explained why. In addition, Ms. Niles stated the name calling of different groups must stop. She believes everyone is trying their hardest to do the best they can and they do not deserve to be called corrupt or anything else. She stated the Board should not allow this to keep occurring.

Humberto Marquez, supports trying to sell the Tin Tsin lot and believes we need to bring more businesses to Town. He stated the Council works for us and they will be out at the next election if they don't. He also stated he does not want his money spent on a parking garage.

Cheryl Preston, owner of A Cupcake for Later, noted there were seven empty buildings on Main Street for a business to occupy. She also spoke about the access behind the Tin Tsin lot and the need for parking to keep businesses on Main Street.

James Flores stated he was the only member of the Council to do his homework. He explained why he used the word corrupt in reference to Morgan Stanley and noted reports published on the company verify his statements.

Tom DeVivo noted there will be a Willimantic Service District meeting next Tuesday. He stated he will email the agenda to the members and asked if anyone had items to be placed on the agenda to contact him or Town Manager Beets.

- 15. b. Discuss and possibly move to convene an executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations with the Town's Personnel Director and Town Manager.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to convene an executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations with the Town's Personnel Director and Town Manager. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Underwood MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to come out of executive session at 9:25 PM. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 16. Future Agenda Items**

None

- 17. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment.**

Moved up on the agenda to follow Item 15a.

- 18. Adjournment**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adjourn the Windham Town Council Special meeting at 9:25 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Submitted By:

Barbara J. McKinney

Clerk of the Town Council