

# MINUTES

## WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### SPECIAL MEETING

Windham Town Hall Bellingham Auditorium, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Tuesday, January 6, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.

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**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, Mark Doyle, Tom DeVivo, Joseph Underwood, Lorraine McDevitt, Michael Lessard and James Flores

Tony Fantoli, Christel Donahue and Charlotte Patros were 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.**

Dawn Niles, North Windham, reported on the Windham/Willimantic Cares event. She noted 540 children received toys and through a raffle 2 received bicycles and 1 received a large stuffed animal. Ms. Niles thanked James and Denise Flores for helping with the Spanish speaking families and she also thanked the community.

Kathy Dubay, Windham resident, spoke about 9 Bolivia Street regarding the rejection of a bid for the property and the spec sheet having no minimum bid. She asked the Town Council to reconsider their position on this property on behalf of the taxpayers.

Barbara McGrath stated she was at tonight's meeting representing the Willimantic Switchboard Fire Chief's Association. She noted she had not had a chance to speak with the Switchboard Association about the proposed changes to the contract suggested by Mr. Krich and stated there are a number of complicated issues. She encouraged the Council to authorize someone to sit with the Association and work with them to come to a resolution that benefits all parties.

Henry Crane, Windham Street, Willimantic, stated he was happy with the appointment of the Police Captain and he thanked the Council.

Charlie Kratt, Monticello Street, Willimantic, spoke about the Dispatch Center and believes the Center is well managed and noted he would like to see the Council move forward with it. He also spoke about the property on 9 Bolivia Street and shared his



concerns on how the issue is being handled. In addition, Mr. Kratt thanked James Flores for getting the issue on the agenda.

**4. Town Council Comment.**

Mike Lessard asked what the dates for the traffic study were. He also suggested Diane Rayhall, President of the Windham First Taxing District, be included in the executive session regarding Dispatch.

Mayor Eldridge disagreed with Councilman Lessard and stated if Ms. Rayhall was to be included in the executive session then all others involved should also be included.

Tom DeVivo agreed with Councilman Lessard.

Charles Krich called for a Point of Order.

**MOTION:** DeVivo MOVED, Doyle seconded, to move Item 15a up on the agenda to follow adoption of minutes. All were in favor. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Attorney Dennis O'Brien administered the Oath of Office to Probate Judge John McGrath.

Probate Judge John McGrath administered the Oath of Office to Chief Clerk Kelly Clairmont, Clerk of the Court Kim Charron, Assistant Clerk Mercedes Arroyo and Assistant Clerk Michelle Gunn.

**5. Adoption of Minutes. Discuss and possibly move to adopt the minutes for:**

**a. The December 11, 2014, special Council Meeting with our State Legislative Delegation, the BOE, and the BOF.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adopt the minutes for the December 11, 2014, special Council Meeting with our State Legislative Delegation, the BOE, and the BOF with the correction of Item 5j from CCOG to SCCOG. All were in favor except Underwood, Doyle and Krich who abstained. **MOTION PASSED.**

**b. The December 16, 2014, regular Council Meeting.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adopt the minutes for the December 16, 2014, regular Town Council Meeting. All were in favor. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**15. New Business.**

**a. Discuss and possibly approve a request from Willimantic Renaissance to use Jillson Green for the Thread City Hop Fest on Sunday, May 3, 2015, and to serve alcohol in accordance with state and town restrictions, including TIPS-certified servers, liability insurance, and police security, as set forth in Council policy.**

Underwood MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to approve a request from Willimantic Renaissance to use Jillson Green for the Thread City Hop Fest on Sunday, May 3, 2015, and to serve alcohol in accordance with state and town restrictions, including TIPS-certified servers, liability insurance, and police security, as set forth in Council policy. All were in favor. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. **Resignations.**  
a. **Chris Vials from the Energy Commission.**  
Noted

7. **Appointments, Reappointments.**  
None

8. **Presentations & Special Reports.**  
None

9. **Mayor's Report.**  
Mayor Eldridge reported on the fabulous turnout for the Three King's Day celebration. He thanked James Flores and Charlie Olbrias for being one of the King's along with himself and thanked those who participated in the event.

Mayor Eldridge also reported he and Tom DeVivo swore in some of the Police Officers being promoted today. He noted a comment had been made regarding the number of Councilmember's in attendance and he thanked them all for attending.

In addition, Mayor Eldridge reported on the great success of the toy event and credited Dawn Niles and Karen Gilbransen for their idea and their work to organize the event.

10. **Town Manager's Report.**  
Town Manager Beets responded to Councilmember Lessard and noted no dates have been set by the State DOT on the traffic study. He stated the request had been made approximately 3 weeks ago and noted he will follow up with them.

Town Manager Beets reported he had sent a letter to the State DOT regarding the four bus shelters on State property in North Windham asking them to clean them. He noted he had also spoken to the Housing Authority regarding the bus shelter on Valley Street and he gave a brief history about the shelter. Town Manager Beets stated the Housing Authority will be working on the shelter in the spring and he shared some safety concerns with regards to a location for the bus shelter.

Town Manager Beets also reported on the status of the Bellingham Auditorium. He explained the improvements that are being made to the Auditorium and how they were being funded.

**MOTION:** Flores MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to move Item 14c up on the agenda to follow Item 11. All were in favor. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**11. Discussion and Review of Communications.**

**a. Copies of minutes from various, boards, commissions, committees, per Council's request.**

DeVivo asked about the WRTD schedule. He also mentioned the Micro-Grid Committee and noted the full name of the Committee should be listed on the minutes so as not to have a problem when requesting funds from the State. DeVivo also questioned the status of Franklin Farms. In addition, DeVivo questioned the water rate increase and requested the Water Commission report to the Town Council regarding the increase. He noted he is not in favor of an increase.

**14 c. Discuss and possibly reconsider the restrictions on the sale of the 9 Bolivia Street property that the Town owns. (Councilmember Flores request.)**

DeVivo MOVED, Lessard seconded, to remove the restrictions placed on the sale of 9 Bolivia Street. Flores was in favor and all others were opposed. MOTION FAILED.

**12. Resolutions and Ordinances.**

None

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

None

**14. Old Business.**

**a. Discuss and possibly move to convene an executive session with the Town Attorney and the Town Manager to discuss legal issues and negotiation regarding a contract for dispatch services, and potential property acquisition.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to convene an executive session at 7:52 PM with the Town Attorney and the Town Manager to discuss legal issues and negotiation regarding a contract for dispatch services, and potential property acquisition. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DeVivo MOVED, Underwood seconded, to come out of executive session at 8:45 PM. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**b. As a result of the executive session, discuss and possibly take action on a dispatch contract or potential property acquisition.**

DeVivo MOVED, Underwood seconded, to designate Councilman Charles Krich as a designated liason to work with the Town Manager and the Town Attorney on the negotiations for the Willimantic Fire Chief's Switchboard Association.

Underwood MOVED the question, Doyle seconded. All were in favor except Krich who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

A vote was taken on the original motion. All were in favor except Krich who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

- c. **Discuss and possibly reconsider the restrictions on the sale of the 9 Bolivia Street property that the Town owns. (Councilmember Flores request.)**  
Moved up on the agenda to follow Item 11.

**15. New Business.**

- a. **Discuss and possibly approve a request from Willimantic Renaissance to use Jillson Green for the Thread City Hop Fest on Sunday, May 3, 2015, and to serve alcohol in accordance with state and town restrictions, including TIPS-certified servers, liability insurance, and police security, as set forth in Council policy.**  
Moved up on the agenda to follow Adoption of Minutes (5a & 5b)

**16. Future Agenda Items**  
None

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

Kathy Dubay, Windham resident, expressed her disappointment with tonight's meeting regarding 9 Bolivia Street.

James Flores believes a mistake was made with regards to 9 Bolivia Street. He noted in the wording of the original motion it stated "only" and the wording used in the advertizing of the sale stated "preference". He requested the mistake be corrected and asked that the Council do the right thing.

Charlie Kratt, Monticello Street, Willimantic, believes the Town is wasting his tax dollars and doesn't understand the problem with someone trying to get the property at 9 Bolivia Street back on the tax rolls. He noted James Flores is trying to negotiate a peaceful decision and meet his role as a Councilman.

**18. Adjournment**

Underwood MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to adjourn the Windham Town Council Special meeting at 9:00 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Submitted By:**

Barbara J. McKinney  
Clerk of the Town Council