

# WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## WINDHAM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

Tuesday, October 4, 2011 - 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 Mike Lessard Lorraine McDevitt, N. Joseph Underwood, Kevin Donohue, Arnaldo Rivera Teresa Santucci, Christel Donahue and Jerry Iazzetta

Charles Krich arrived at 7:04 P.M.

Town Council members excused: Erika Haynes

Town Manager Neal Beets was also in attendance.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

James DeVivo, from Troop 34, led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. Citizens and Delegations

Lori Jeffers, Willimantic, urged the Council to wait until after the November Election to discuss Charter Revision. Ms. Jeffers also noted the following allegations had been made regarding the Magnet School: Chairman DeVivo offered to buy property near the site and a citizen had been asked to get off a public road. She also questioned who would pay for certain things such as a fence being knocked down, sediment in wells, wet basements and problems in ponds. She also stated blasting was going on from 7:00-3:00 six days a week.

Mr. Ricardez, 47 Insalaco Drive, Windham, passed around a picture showing leaves on his property which he stated were put there by his neighbor. He noted he had tried speaking to his neighbor and has also contacted the State Police however he was told it was out of their jurisdiction. He stated the Town has a littering ordinance and he would like it to be enforced. He noted because of his neighbor putting litter in his yard it has clogged drains and also killed portions of his yard.

Jeff Viens, Columbia resident, Windham taxpayer, asked the Council to keep in mind the finances of the Town. He feels the Town is looking at a million dollar shortfall next year and Town Employees, Public Works, Police and Fire will be asking for raises. He stated re-val will also raise taxes and drop property values. He also believes Tom DeVivo and the Magnet School committee is doing a great job.

Leo Santucci, 74 Windham Street, Willimantic, stated he is here again to discuss the noise ordinance. He noted approximately 5 years ago a group of citizens came together to help the Chief reach her goals and to help, through Charter Revision, to find a Town Manager who can enforce our laws. He stated he has come to the conclusion that this administration and prior administrations are doing what's called "rope a dope". He gave an example of Muhammed Ali. He feels citizens have given their precious time and nothing comes out of it. He stated we still have party houses, cars with no mufflers, boom boxes and boom cars, and asked who the constituency was for noise. He stated the Town Manager was not doing his job.

Mary Lou DeVivo, Ash Street, Willimantic, suggested we think outside of the box and find a way to charge people who are not on the tax rolls an equitable fee for Police and Fire.

Pam Viens, Columbia resident, Windham taxpayer, believes there are many issues in Town other than noise. She stated there are drug issues and prostitute issues and the Police Department try to put their services to those. She noted there will always be 5 or 6 people complaining about party houses and she believes ECSU is doing a wonderful job trying to curtail that. She feels the police need to be where the drugs and guns are and thinks they are doing a great job. She also thinks ECSU is the best thing the Town has right now.

Charles Krich, Willimantic, read a letter from Shirley Mustard with respect to Windham Animal Control. (See Attachment A).

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

**a. Discussion and possible action to adopt the September 20, 2011 meeting minutes.**

Rivera MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adopt the September 20, 2011 Town Council meeting minutes. All were in favor except Iazzetta, C. Donahue and Krich who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

**5. Resignations**

The following resignation was received:

Dennis Cronin-Willimantic Public Library Board of Directors.

**6. Appointments**

NONE

**7. Presentations & Special Reports**

**a. Magnet School Update by Tom DeVivo**

Mr. DeVivo reported the ground breaking ceremony on September 17<sup>th</sup> was well attended and some tours of the site were given.

Mr. DeVivo also reported Phase 1 and Phase 2 are tracking on schedule and they are expected to be complete by the end of the month. He stated the blasting should also be complete by Halloween. He noted some work was scheduled for Saturday's however no blasting would be done. He did explain a blasting issue that had taken place last week. Mr. DeVivo also passed out a Phase 3 Construction Schedule and noted it was expected to begin by Thanksgiving.

In addition, Mr. DeVivo reported the committee has spent approximately \$3,862,000 and have a balance of \$36,137,000. He noted the State had already reimbursed them \$5,914,000 and it has not come out of taxpayer dollars.

Mr. DeVivo stated pictures of the school were on the website thanks to Brian, the Town's IT Manager who has been very helpful.

Mr. DeVivo also addressed a water issue that was affecting a neighboring property and explained the steps being taken to remedy the problem.

Mr. DeVivo answered questions from the Council.

## **8. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Eldridge reported the Naming of the Town Hall Auditorium for Bruce Bellingham was well attended. He also thanked those who attended as well as Joe Duval for putting up the placque of Bruce and Shirley Mustard for pushing the event forward.

Mayor Eldridge also reported pictures of Willimantic were up in the Auditorium as part of the Arts Fiesta. He noted opening day of the Fiesta was Saturday and it would run for six weeks. He stated several people including Charles Krich and Stan Kokoska had brought in pictures for the event. He also stated Louise Guarnaccia, John Lescoe and Jean deSmet had attended.

Mayor Eldridge explained the process for anyone who had problems such as littering and noted he and/or the Town Manager should be alerted so the problem could be addressed properly.

## **9. Town Manager's Report**

### **a. A process to study and make recommendations about space utilization.**

Mr. Beets reported at the last meeting he had been asked to do a comprehensive review of our Town buildings and our space needs. He noted he had drafted a plan and shared the plan with the Council. He then explained the plan and the steps he feels should to be taken to address those needs.

### **b. Council Meeting Schedule and Swearing In Ceremony.**

Mr. Beets reviewed the remaining meeting schedule noting the next Council meeting would be October 18<sup>th</sup> and the following meeting would be November 1<sup>st</sup>. He noted November 8<sup>th</sup> was Election Day. He also noted there is a regular

scheduled meeting for November 15<sup>th</sup> however that meeting may be cancelled depending on whether there are any action items pending. Mr. Beets also noted November 22<sup>nd</sup> would be the swearing in ceremony for the new Council and other elected officials. He stated the newly elected Council may have a special meeting that night to go over standing rules, parliamentary rules and meeting schedules.

**c. LEAP: Leadership in Energy Assurance Planning.**

Mr. Beets reported in light of Hurricane Irene the Town was in the middle of a grant study called **LEAP**. He noted the study is a combined effort of five Towns with Windham being the lead Town. He stated the other Towns participating were West Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport and Ansonia. He noted the grant was from the Federal Government Department of Energy and each Town receives approximately \$40,000 each and the consultant receives approximately \$87,000. He stated the purpose of the grant is to identify mission critical facilities within each Town such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools, police and fire departments, to see what type of backup systems they have in place if the power is disrupted and to start looking at other ways to keep power up in the event of another disaster.

**10. Discussion and Review of Communications**

NONE

**11. Resolutions and Ordinances**

**a. Discussion and possible action to adopt a Resolution authorizing the sale of Metropolitan Life common stock.**

Lessard read the Resolution and MOVED for its adoption, K. Donohue seconded, to adopt Resolution #2547 authorizing the sale of Metropolitan Life common stock. All were in favor except Underwood, McDevitt and Krich who opposed.

**BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council THAT**

The Town of Windham Controllor, Thomas Pesce, the Town of Windham Plan Administrator is directed to effect the sale of 24,458 shares of MetLife stock under the Plan Investor ID # 806226958811 over a period not the exceed 6 months.

MOTION PASSED.

**b. Discussion and possible action to adopt a Resolution extending the Ad-Hoc Skateboard Park Building Committee.**

K. Donohue read the Resolution and MOVED for its adoption, McDevitt seconded, to adopt Resolution #2548 extending the Ad-Hoc Skateboard Park Building Committee. All were in favor except Santucci who opposed.

## **BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council THAT**

That the Ad-Hoc Skateboard Park Building Committee that was established on September 1, 2009 by Resolution # 2450 be extended until May 2012.

MOTION PASSED.

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

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

No report. The Sub Committee will not meet in October.

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

Mr. Iazzetta reported there was no meeting in September. He also asked that the Town Manager, with the help of the Town Engineer, possibly re-estimate the three options presented by the Magnet School Engineers. He stated the Sub Committee would be meeting in October.

#### **c. Tri-Board**

No Report.

### **13. Old Business**

#### **a. Discussion and possible action regarding the recommendations of the Town Council's Subcommittee on Administration, Finance, Health, and Human Services about Town Charter Review.**

Postponed until a later date.

### **14. New Business**

NONE

### **15. Future Agenda Items**

NONE

### **16. Citizens and Delegations**

Jeff Viens, Columbia resident, Windham taxpayer, stated he liked the draft plan that Mr. Beets presented and he offered his ideas on relocating certain town offices and services.

Lori Jeffers, Willimantic, stated the problem with Great West and Met Life were discussed at the Board of Finance at length. She also suggested eliminating the Board of Finance and the Sub Committees and thinks the Town Council should meet weekly.

Henry Crane, Windham Street, Willimantic, feels if parents were more involved all three budgets would have pass.

Doug Lary, 183 Summit Street, Willimantic, encouraged the inclusion of alternates to Boards and Commission as well as adding language for some sort of regional options. He

also thanked Mr. Beets for beginning the inventory and utilization review of the Towns buildings and he thanked the Council for putting out an RFP for legal services.

**17. Adjournment**

K. Donohue MOVED, Rivera seconded, to adjourn the Town of Windham Town Council meeting at 8:23 P.M. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Submitted By:**

**Barbara J. McKinney  
Clerk of the Council**

# "Attachment A"

Neal Beets, Town Manager  
979 Main Street  
Willimantic, CT 06226

September 27, 2011

Dear Mr. Beets,

We have recently seen and heard the Windham Animal Control officers being unfairly maligned publicly. We wish to let you know that we have had ongoing, positive experiences with all three, especially during the past four years. Where we have had any differences, they stemmed from state and local impediments to enforcement.

Mark, Joan, and Michelle have always responded promptly and courteously even when they had every reason to be tired of receiving our calls. When they were not available, our calls were always returned. They even came out on weekends to catch loose or lost animals. On a few occasions, they arrived almost immediately.

These officers have a difficult job to perform under less than perfect conditions. Their devotion to animals has prompted them, on occasion, to spend their own funds to ensure the health and well being of their charges (and by the way, we have a pay and neuter ordinance for felines. Why not for canines?).

Often people do not express their appreciation for a job well done. We do not choose to be counted among that group. From Mark, who had the scary task of appearing in a courtroom for the very first time, to Joan and Michelle, who work hard to adopt pets to loving, suitable homes. We owe them our thanks for having the safety of animals and job performance their priorities.

Sincerely,

cc: Mayor Ernest Eldridge  
Lt. Mary Beth Curtis  
Mark Peters  
Joan Lamont  
Michelle Kellogg

Charlie,  
This was signed  
by Cathy Kendrick  
Grace + Marty Kevin  
Shirley Mustard  
Dean Williams