

WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

WINDHAM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

Special Meeting

Tuesday, November 22, 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, Tony Fantoli, Tom DeVivo, Lorraine McDevitt, N. Joseph Underwood, Mark Doyle, Christel Donahue and Jerry Iazzetta

Town Council members excused: Kevin Donohue and Arnaldo Rivera

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

Lori Jeffers, Willimantic, noted Council members were missing from the 1st meeting of the new Council. She also believes the Council should meet weekly and eliminate the Sub-Committees. She would also like the Council to answer citizen's questions during citizens and delegations. She thanked the Council and wished them good luck.

Susan Johnson, State Representative, Willimantic, congratulated the Council and wished them well. She noted if anyone from the Council had ideas they would like to address the next legislative session is 2/8/2012. She asked that the Council use her as a resource.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, congratulated everyone and stated it was a really nice event tonight. She also noted the Festival of Lights would be Friday at 5:30 PM and Santa would be riding on the Willimantic Fire Truck this year. She stated 11 fire departments would be attending the parade which is being lead by Susan Johnson and would go from Memorial Park to the tree at Jillson Square. In addition, she mentioned nothing has occurred regarding the ambulance and she would like to see two ambulances running at all times.

Peter Quercia, 300 Walnut Street, Willimantic, noted a couple of anniversaries: President Kennedy's assassination 48 yrs ago and 4 years ago he had his accident. He also stated police were given subpoenas to people with regard to his pending cases and believes the Town is wasting taxpayer money to make an example out of him. He also stated he met

with Mr. Adamowski who told him the school will not provide him with the FOI documents he requested.

Doug Lary, 183 Summit Street, Willimantic, noted he is the Chair of the Ethics Commission and stated twice this year drafts have been submitted for changes to the Ethics Ordinance and no real discussion has taken place. He wants to remind the Administration and Finance Sub-Committee that there is business before them.

4. Mayor's Report

Mayor Eldridge welcomed the new members to the Council as well as all the others who were elected.

Mayor Eldridge reported on the following: signing of an MOA for the Central Corridor Railway, attending the Veterans Remembrance Assembly at North Windham School, Veterans Day at Memorial Park where he was the speaker, the Spelling Bee at the Theater Guild with John & Bunny Lescoe, the Awards Ceremony at Windham Middle School where proclamations were given to teachers and board members who were leaving, a breakfast at UCONN with a DOT representative to speak about our bridges and the railway service and the SAMA graduation.

5. Town Managers Report

Mr. Beets reported, General Cable, one of our larger employers in Town, held a job fair on 11/4 & 11/5. He noted the company had received 144 applicants for 15 positions. Mr. Beets stressed the need for living wage jobs in Town and is hopeful that other local business will be hiring and that we can expand the businesses already here and bring new businesses to Town. Mr. Beets stated one of the more important functions of the Council is working toward the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Community including our Economic Health. He reported the Economic Development Commission would be making a presentation to the Council with some action items for consideration.

Mr. Beets answered questions from the Council.

6. Discussion regarding the Town Council's Standing Rules of Procedure.

Mayor Eldridge stated the Council had received a binder with information and Mr. Beets explained the contents of the binder. The Council was asked to review the contents, especially the Charter, before the next meeting on 12/6.

Mr. Beets answered questions from the Council.

7. Discussion regarding joint meeting with the Board of Finance and Board of Education.

Mr. Beets proposed the Town meet with both the Town Finance department and the Board of Education finance department and begin with the FY 2010-2011 audit results were, which ended with a surplus. He stated they would then share with Council where we are in this FY and where they believe the State is. Mr. Beets also explained the

PILOT funding and hopes that as well as education cost sharing will remain level. He stated they would then share revenue projections for the next FY and estimates of where we stand with our bigger cost such as personnel and collective bargaining agreements. Mr. Beets stated this will give a foundation to help identify the big issues facing us and the Council can then determine where they would like to end up at the end of the budget process. Mr. Beets noted a few items that must be addressed were the Natchaug School roof, the Senior Center, the ambulance, Windham High School roof and track and the space needs of the Town and Board of Education. He also noted the Tri-Board can be tasked with some of these issues. He noted at the 12/6/2011 Council meeting would set the stage for the New Year.

Mr. Beets answered questions from the Council.

8. Future Agenda Items

- a. Approval of Town Council Standing Rules**
- b. Appointment of Town Council President**
- c. Appointment of Parliamentarian**
- d. Approve meeting schedule for the Year 2012**
- e. Council members to be appointed to Sub-Committees**
- f. Adoption of legislative agenda for State Representative Susan Johnson**

9. Citizens and Delegations

James Flores believes there is a need to diversify our work force and stated there are few African Americans and Latinos working for the Town. He feels this is due to nepotism.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, invited the Council to participate in the Festival of Light Parade and stated the Christmas Tree Lighting at the Windham Center Fire House will be Sunday at 5:30 PM with Santa and refreshments to follow. Ms. Niles also stated she was glad to hear the ambulance will be on the agenda however she was sad nothing was mentioned on the façade grant. With regards to the Senior Center, Ms. Niles noted with the help on Mayor Eldridge, Susan Johnson and Tom Devivo, on 1/13/2012 there will be a spaghetti dinner with a silent auction at the Elks to raise money for the Center. She hopes to raise \$4,000 to \$5,000.

Peter Quercia, 300 Walnut Street, Willimantic, expressed his feelings about the way taxpayer's money is squandered and the lack of information provided by the Town and Atty Cody. He also agrees with Mr. Flores and thinks a lawsuit should be filed for discrimination. He also agrees with Ms. Jeffers that the Council should meet weekly.

Lloyd Niles, North Windham, stated he has lived in Windham for 38 years and this was the first time ever our citizens had to go to Mansfield for a shelter. He would like the Council to address that.

Lori Jeffers, Willimantic, believes we should fix the Windham High School roof before it ends up like the Natchaug School roof. She also thinks we should decide what is going to

happen with Natchaug School and the Senior Center before we spend more money on them. Ms. Jeffers also believes Kramer is in deplorable condition and we could find a better use for the building. In addition, she would also like to buy 2 new ambulances as she feels it is a safety hazard.

Doug Lary, 183 Summit Street, Willimantic, congratulated the new members of the Council as well as all the other elected members. He reminded the Council there are 40+ seats open on different Boards and Commissions and stated it is hard to have a quorum. He asked if anyone knew of anyone who was interested to have them see Mayor Eldridge.

10. Adjournment

Iazzetta MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adjourn the Town of Windham Town Council meeting at 7:54 P.M. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Submitted by

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