

# Minutes of the Windham Town Council Regular Meeting

Windham Town Hall Bellingham Auditorium, 2nd Floor  
Tuesday, December 1, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.

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## 1. Call to Order.

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

Town Council members present: Mayor Ernest S. Eldridge, Charles Krich, Tony Fantoli, Nectalis Martinez, Lorraine McDevitt, Tom DeVivo, Michael Lessard, Dennis O'Brien, Lynne Ide and James Flores

Charlotte Patros 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 in support of Item 14a, George Hernandez's development proposal for the Tin Tsin Lot.

Jean de Smet, Willimantic, spoke in support of Richard Bloomer's appointment to the Energy Commission, the grant application for two additional electric vehicle charging stations and two additional electric vehicles and the proposal from George Hernandez.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, thanked those who participated in the Parade of Lights Festival. She also provided information about the Stuff a Fire Truck event on December 12<sup>th</sup> and the Toy Store event on December 19<sup>th</sup> at the Kramer Building. Ms. Niles asked for volunteers for both events.

Joe Comeau, Local Business Owner, spoke against the proposal from George Hernandez.

## 4. Town Council Comment.

James Flores addressed The Bottom Line and Republican Party members and spoke about the war against the Latino community.

Tony Fantoli noted the standing rules allow for 3 minutes for Town Council Comment. He also responded to comments made by Councilmember James Flores. In addition, Councilmember Fantoli noted a problem with the highlighted links in the agenda.

Lorraine McDevitt stated she is a member of The Bottom Line Party and noted she is unaware of what Councilmember Flores is speaking of.

Tom DeVivo commented on the Hop River Trail and encouraged Council members to visit the trail.

**5. Adoption of Town Council Minutes.**

**a. Study Session of November 10, 2015**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to approve the Town Council Study Session minutes of November 10, 2015. All were in favor except O'Brien, Ide and Martinez who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

**b. Regular Meeting of November 17, 2015**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to approve the Town Council Regular meeting of November 17, 2015 with a correction to the vote on Item #15d (v), Fantoli (and Lessard) voted against. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**6. Resignations.**

**a. Tom McNally from the WRTD**

Noted

**7. Appointments, Reappointments.**

**a. Reappoint Scott Lambeck as an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, with a term to expire December 28, 2019.**

**b. Reappoint Jean Chaine as a regular member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, with a term to expire December 28, 2019.**

**c. Reappoint James Boyle as a regular member of the Conservation, Open Space, and Agriculture Commission, with a term to expire January 1, 2020.**

**d. Reappoint Michael Westerfield as a regular member of the Conservation, Open Space, and Agriculture Commission, with a term to expire January 1, 2020.**

**e. Reappoint Victor Funderberk as a regular member of the Economic Development Commission, with a term to expire December 15, 2020.**

**f. Reappoint John McGrath, Jr., as a regular member of the Ethics Commission, with a term to expire December 15, 2018.**

**g. Reappoint Peter Hughes as a regular member of the Ethics Commission, with a term to expire December 15, 2018.**

**h. Reappoint Robin Dixon-Rouse as a regular member of the Ethics Commission, with a term to expire December 15, 2018.**

**i. Reappoint Delia Berlin as a regular member of the Willimantic Library Board of Directors, with a term to expire December 2, 2018.**

**j. Appoint Richard Bloomer as a regular member of the Windham Energy Commission, with a term to expire April 20, 2020.**

DeVivo MOVED, Krich seconded, to take Items #7a – 7j as one vote. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DeVivo MOVED, Krich seconded, to reappoint and appoint the individuals as listed above. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8. Presentations & Special Reports.**

- a. Hear a presentation from Bill Powers, Chair of the Wells Building Committee, explaining why the Wells Building Committee needs an additional appropriation of \$45,000 (\$17,000 for North Windham Elementary School; \$28,000 for Windham Center Elementary School) to complete this Project. Possible Council action appropriating the additional funds.**

Bill Powers, Chair of the Wells Building Committee and Wayne Donaldson, Board of Education Director of Facilities, reviewed the timeline of the Wells Building Committee and explained why there is a need for an additional appropriation. Mr. Powers thanked Town Manager Beets and Wayne Donaldson for their help in moving the project along. Mr. Donaldson also noted an email had been sent to each Council member inviting them to attend the Open House at Windham Center School to show the renovations that have been completed through Town funds.

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to approve an additional appropriation of \$17,000 for North Windham Elementary School and \$28,000 for Windham Center Elementary School for a total of 45,000 to be paid for from Town funds. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**9. Mayor's Report.**

Mayor Eldridge reported on the successful Parade of Lights event.

**10. Town Manager's Report.**

Town Manager Beets reported on the reimbursement of \$55,958.05 from FEMA. He thanked the Public Works Department and Emergency Management Director Mike Licata for applying for the grant.

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

A short discussion followed regarding the letter sent to the Housing Authority for the rehabilitation of public housing through CDBG funds.

**12. Discussion and Review of Agendas, Minutes, Reports of Town Boards, Committees, and Commissions.**

Discussion ensued about a motion in the minutes of WRTD regarding Fastrak, the Conflict of Interest portion of the Ethics Ordinance and appointed members of a committee reporting to the Town Council regularly.

**13. Resolutions and Ordinances.**

- a. Discuss and possibly approve a Resolution relating to a community garden grant at Lauter Park.**

DeVivo read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adopt Resolution #2671. All were in favor.

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

Neal J. Beets, of Town of Windham be and hereby is authorized to execute on behalf of the Town of Windham a Personal Services Agreement under the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program with the State of Connecticut for financial assistance authorized by Public Act 2005-228 Section 6 to acquire, reclaim or enhance open space for passive recreation. This project, Lauter Park Community Garden UGCG-22 2015, is to be managed as open space land pursuant to Section 7-131d of the Connecticut General Statutes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Neal J. Beets was APPOINTED, TOWN MANAGER. His term of office began on October 26, 2009 and will continue indefinitely. As the Town Manager, Neal J. Beets serves as the Chief Executive Officer for Town of Windham and on December 1, 2015 had both the authority and the office to sign on behalf of the Town of Windham a PERSONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT for financial assistance to improve the Community Gardens in the Town of Windham Lauter Park.

## **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **14. Old Business.**

- a. **Discuss and possibly act on the recommendations from the Economic Development Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding George Hernandez's development proposal for the Tin Tsin Lot.**
- **George Hernandez's original Proposal to purchase and develop the Tin Tsin lot (a/k/a Chapman Block) at 804-806 Main Street 2015.06.01**
  - **George Hernandez's Supplement to his Proposal, 2015-06-17**
  - **Staff Memorandum evaluating Mr. Hernandez's Proposal, 2015-06-17**
  - **George Hernandez's 9/15/15 Powerpoint Presentation and additional changes to his Proposal**
  - **Resolution from the Planning and Zoning Commission re Hernandez Proposal (may be forthcoming)**
  - **Minutes and Motion from the Economic Development Commission re Hernandez Proposal**

Krich MOVED, Lessard seconded, to postpone Item #14a. All were in favor except DeVivo, Ide and Flores who opposed and Martinez who abstained.  
MOTION PASSED.

- b. **Discuss and possibly reconsider the Town Council's policy respecting repayment of CDBG Small Cities loans to private persons.**
- **State of Connecticut CDBG Small Cities Loan Repayment Policy**
  - **Windham Town Council Resolution adopting the State of Connecticut CDBG Small Cities Loan Repayment Policy, among other state CDBG requirements**
  - **DRAFT Resolution for the Windham Town Council if they wish to ask the State for permission to modify the State of Connecticut CDBG Small Cities Loan Repayment Policy**

O'Brien MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to move Item #15b to the Work Study Session on December 8, 2015. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**15. New Business.**

- a. Discuss and possibly authorize a grant application to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and appropriate Town capital matching funds, contingent on receipt of DEEP grant funds, for two additional electric vehicle charging stations and two additional electric vehicles.**

DeVivo MOVED, Flores seconded, to authorize a grant application to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and appropriate Town capital matching funds, contingent on receipt of DEEP grant funds, for two additional electric vehicle charging stations and two additional electric vehicles. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- b. Discuss and possibly approve changes to the Windham Town Council's Standing Rules of Procedure.**

Krich MOVED, Ide seconded, to postpone Item #15b. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- c. Discuss and possibly make a motion to approve a 2016 Meeting Schedule for the Windham Town Council.**

No Action Taken. (Council had previously acted on Item #15c)

DeVivo MOVED, Ide seconded, to add to the agenda, Item #15d: Discussion and possible action to give the Town Manager direction concerning cleaning bus shelters in the Town of Windham. All were in favor except Eldridge who opposed and Flores and O'Brien who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

- d. Discussion and possible action to give the Town Manager direction concerning cleaning bus shelters in the Town of Windham.**

No Action Taken.

**16. Future Agenda Items**

- a. Tuesday, December 8, 2015: 7:00 pm Study Session. Bus Shelters,**
- b. Tuesday, December 8, 2015: 7:00 pm Study Session. Town Council's policy regarding repayment of CDBG Small Cities loans to private persons.**

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

Lorraine McDevitt noted as of January 1, 2016 the Town is no longer responsible for the Dispatch Center payroll.

James Flores responded to Councilmember Fantoli about playing politics, he apologized to George Hernandez for tonight's incidents, a comment made on facebook suggesting he hide and the need to clean the bus shelters.

Jean de Smet, Willimantic, commented on the need for trash cans in Town.

Bill Hettinger, Ballamahack Road and Chair of the Economic Development Commission, commented on the Tin Tsin lot and the need to give Mr. Hernandez an answer to his proposal.

George Hernandez spoke about the steps he has taken with regards to his proposal and his request to have better direction from the Town Council.

Mayor Eldridge shared his thoughts on the need for more information from Mr. Hernandez.

**18. Adjournment**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adjourn the Windham Town Council Regular meeting at 8:45 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Submitted By:**

Barbara J. McKinney  
Clerk of the Town Council