

# WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## WINDHAM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

### Special Council Meeting: Joint Meeting of the Town Council and the Willimantic Service District



**Tuesday, March 15, 2011 - 7:00 P.M.**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Eldridge called the special joint meeting of the Town of Windham Town Council and Willimantic Service District to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Eldridge led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Citizens and Delegations**

Bill Powers, Scotland Road, Windham Center, stated that he was concerned of what he read on the Chronicle regarding cuts to the Willimantic Police and Fire Departments. He thanked the Chiefs for standing up for their departments. Mr. Powers also raised his concerns regarding the timing of the ambulance to the Clark Street Fire. He spoke to Mr. Eldridge since it happened and got an answer yesterday.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, gave an update on the goodbye party for Hanna and Bruce Clements for March 27<sup>th</sup>. She also advocated for the McSweeney Regional Senior Center and requested that the Town Council consider their proposal. Ms. Niles stated that as a former chairman of the Board of Selectmen Public Safety Committee she urges the Town Council not to cut the Fire and Police Department.

Lorraine McDevitt informed the Town Council that the Windham High School Girls Basketball team is in the finals. She stated that they did a remarkable job and came back after losing at half time by 19 points and won. They are playing either Friday or Saturday at Mohegan Sun for the Class M Title. She urged the Town Council to send a letter of congratulations to the team.

Larry Kellog, Spring Street, Willimantic, stated that he can't emphasize enough taking any more from police and fire.

Charlie Kratt, Willimantic, stated that police and fire are important in this community and to punish them is not fair. The Town needs to see the true value of the departments and the Town Council should be careful of what type of ordinances they pass especially if they can't be enforced.

Lori Jeffers stated that as many times she has asked the Town Council to cut she has never asked them to cut police or fire. She asked the Town Council to restore the items cut to those departments and to stop hiding funding for renovation at the Town Hall and Kramer building. She mentioned briefly that she filed a FOI complaint and Town Manager Neal Beets refuse to mediate, therefore the Town will be spending money and paying Attorney Rich Cody to go to a hearing.

Peter Quercia spoke regarding the FOI hearing he attended along with Attorney Richard Cody and Don Muirhead all for a single piece of paper that he was requesting. He spoke

in favor of the police and fire departments budget.

Joe Marsalisi mentioned that almost everyone present is in favor of the police and fire departments, but in front of the Town Council there is a proposed cut to the dispatch center. He suggests that they ask both of the chiefs before making the cut to the dispatch. Mr. Marsalisi gave some information on the numbers of phone calls and people they serve in one day at the Police/Fire Complex.

Erika Haynes informed the Town Council that on Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup> the state legislature's appropriations committee will be hearing a bill on school funding. She mentioned that if we got enough people interested, ConnCAN will get a bus. Mrs. Haynes spoke regarding the budget process and stated she understood the hardship on families, but she stated that she was a single mother with four kids for one year and she is not in favor of cutting police and fire.

Nina Ricardez questioned the Town Council how are the homes in Windham increasing in value.

Leo Santucci spoke about the structural problems Connecticut is facing especially on pension liability. Mr. Santucci stated that the Town needs to put expenses and income in a balance and we need to look at the structural cost of our 5 to 6% increase in the Town's budget.

#### **4. Adoption of Minutes**

**a. Discussion and possible action to adopt the February 8, 2011 Willimantic Service District meeting minutes.**

Rivera MOVED, Haynes seconded, to adopt the February 8, 2011 Willimantic Service District meeting minutes with the following amendment: Under New Business second motion Santucci opposed. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Santucci who opposed and Krich and Underwood abstained.

**b. Discussion and possible action to adopt the February 24, 2011 special Town of Windham Town Council and Willimantic Service District special joint meeting minutes.**

Iazzetta MOVED, Haynes seconded, to adopt the February 24, 2011 special Town of Windham Town Council and Willimantic, Service District meeting minutes. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Krich and Rivera who abstained.

**c. Discussion and possible action to adopt the March 1, 2011 special Town of Windham Town Council and Willimantic Service meeting minutes.**

Iazzetta MOVED, Haynes seconded, to adopt the March 1, 2011 special Town of Windham Town Council and Willimantic Service District meeting minutes. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Krich and Rivera who abstained.

#### **5. Resignations**

None.

#### **6. Appointments**

**a. Discussion and possible action to appoint Mary Concklin to the Conservation and Open Space Commission as a full member with term ending January 1, 2014.**

Santucci MOVED, Haynes seconded, to appoint Mary Concklin to the Conservation and Open Space Commission as a full member with term ending January 1, 2014. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**b. Discussion and possible action to appoint Barbara E. Lacey to the Willimantic Public Library Board of Directors with term ending December 2, 2011.**

Santucci MOVED, Rivera seconded, to appoint Barbara E. Lacey to the Willimantic Public Library Board of Directors with term ending December 2, 2011. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**7. Presentations & Special Reports**

None.

**8. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Eldridge reported that he went to the Business with Pleasure sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and was informed that Town of Windham Department Heads should attend. Mr. Eldridge wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day. He also mentioned that the South Windham Volunteer Fire Department celebrated their 100 year anniversary.

**9. Town Manager's Report**

Town Manager Neal Beets reported that several questions were raised regarding the visit of Governor Malloy to the Town on Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. The town hall meeting has moved from the auditorium to Windham Middle School Auditorium. Mr. Beets informed the Council that he had the **honor** to represent the Town at the Special Olympics this past weekend along with Richard Blumenthal and Joe Courtney.

**10. Discussion and Review, Possible Action regarding Communications**

**a. Letter from McSweeney Regional Senior Center**

Underwood MOVED, Krich seconded, to refer this item to the Town Council Administration and Finance, Health and Human Services Sub Committee. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**11. Resolutions and Ordinances**

**a. Discussion and possible action to adopt a resolution to authorize the Town Manager to file an application to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.**

Krich MOVED, Underwood seconded to adopt resolution # 2530.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council THAT

Whereas: The Town of Windham seeks the revitalization of Downtown Willimantic to promote the economic potential and vibrancy of the Town's central place for Arts and Entertainment, and

Whereas: the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation is offering a grant to promote Vibrant Communities through an initiative for urban/Town & Village Center Visioning and Revitalization, and

Whereas: The Town of Windham qualifies for this program as outlined in the grant guidelines.

Now, therefore, be it hereby RESOLVED by the Town Council, that the Town submit an application for the maximum amount of \$50,000, and that they Town will commit to providing in-kind support through staff, meeting space, and office resources to facilitate said grant.

Further, that the Town Manager shall be authorized and directed to file an application on forms prescribed by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation for financial assistance for the Vibrant Communities Initiative program as outlined in their grant guidelines. Further, upon approval of said grant request, the Town Manager, or in his absence of the Town Controller shall be authorized to enter into and execute a Grant Contract as may be necessary or required with the CT Trust for such financial assistance on behalf of the Town of Windham.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

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

Chairman K. Donohue reported that they met and discussed the ATV Ordinance and they are moving forward for a license or certificate program. The committee is also looking into space at Town Hall and at issues for charter revision.

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

Chairman Iazzetta reported that they will be meeting next Wednesday and apparently they are going to have a full agenda. They are going to talk about Kramer, energy and skateboard park.

**13. Old Business**

**a. Discuss and possibly approve an operating budget for Fiscal Year 2011-12 for the Willimantic Service District. [Willimantic Service District Council members]**

Krich MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adopt the budget as presented by Town Manager with the following reductions: 50802-103 \$15,000; 50805-403 \$30,000; 50903-103 \$10,000; 50905-103 \$10,000; 50907-402 \$32,000; 50900-207 \$25,000 and 50804-203 \$25,000 for a total reduction of \$147,000. MOTION FAILED with all in favor except McDevitt, Haynes, Eldridge and Santucci who opposed. (Please note only Willimantic Service District Councilmen voted.)

Santucci MOVED, McDevitt seconded, that we accept the Willimantic Service District budget as presented by Town Manager originally. MOTION FAILED with all in favor except Rivera, C. Donahue, Underwood and Krich who opposed. (Please note only Willimantic Service District Councilmen voted.)

The Town Council took a 10 minutes recess at 8:40 p.m.

Mayor Eldridge called the meeting back to order at 8:56 p.m.

Krich MOVED, Haynes seconded, to adopt the Town Manager's recommendations with the following reductions: 50900-207 \$25,000; 50804-203 \$15,000; 50805-403 \$30,000; 50907-402 \$32,000; 50806-112 \$5,000 and 50908-112 \$ 5,000 for a total reduction of \$112,000. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Santucci and McDevitt who opposed. (Please note only Willimantic Service District Councilmen voted.)

**b. Discuss and possibly approve a capital budget for Fiscal Year 2011-12 for the Town of Windham. [Town Council]**

Iazzetta MOVED, to remove painting of the cemetery fence from FY 2012 and place it on FY ending 2013. No one seconded.

Iazzetta MOVED, Santucci seconded, to move town energy renovation from RCIP to year 2013. MOTION FAILED with all in favor except McDevitt, Eldridge, K. Donohue, Underwood and Haynes who opposed.

Donohue MOVED, Haynes seconded, to move CIP as presented. MOTON PASSED with all in favor except Santucci and Iazzetta who opposed.

**14. New Business**

**a. Discuss and possibly approve the Natchaug River Basin Conservation Compact as recommended by the Town of Windham Water Commission.**

McDevitt MOVED, K. Donohue seconded, to approve the Natchaug River Basin Conservation Compact as recommended by the Town of Windham Water Commission. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

The following should be placed on the April 5, 2011 agenda: SIFT Interim Report, Magnet School Update and Granicus contract.

**16. Citizens and Delegations**

Jerry Iazzetta, South Windham reminded everyone to turn off all cell phones during the meeting.

Chief Lisa Maruzo-Bolduc thanked the Town Council for hearing them out. She mentioned that she heard a comment and wanted the Council to know that she has never told one of her officers not to enforce, or to enforce it when they want to, when it comes to the Noise Ordinance. She also stated that they constantly get criticized for traffic enforcement but the council eliminated that.

Ilona Stone stated that Mr. Beets budget presentation was interesting. She mentioned that the Town Council are not addressing a major concern and that both the police and fire departments get stripped more and more every year. Mrs. Stone asked the Council to take steps necessary to address the issues.

Lori Jeffers spoke regarding her Freedom of Information complaint against the Tom DeVivo. She questioned the Town Council if they approach the unions to pay more into insurance. Ms. Jeffers mentioned that people are not happy with Mr. Beets or Mr. Eldridge and would like to see the Town Council replaced with the old form of government.

Elizabeth Espitia, Willimantic, stated that she was sitting at home watching the meeting on television and ran to town hall because she heard the Town Council talking about cuts to the Police Department. She mentioned that she is thankful for the way the Police work with the kids at Windham Middle School and they are doing the best for our community. Mrs. Espitia said we are taking from them and the morale of the officers that work so hard will go down. She also informed the Council that the Fire Department saved her life and her home.

**17. Adjournment**

**Santucci MOVED, McDevitt seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m.**

**Submitted By:**

**Neida I. Rosado**

**Clerk of the Town Council**