

# WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Windham Town Hall, BELLINGHAM AUDITORIUM  
Tuesday, April 15, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.

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**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Eldridge called the Town of Windham Town Council regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Town Council members present: Mayor Ernest S. Eldridge, Charles Krich, Tom DeVivo, Lorraine McDevitt, Mark Doyle, Michael Lessard, James Flores, Charlotte Patros and Christel Donahue

Tony Fantoli and Joseph Underwood 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**

None

**4. Town Council Comment**

None

**5. Adoption of Minutes**

**a. Discuss and possibly move to adopt the minutes for the April 1, 2014, regular Town Council meeting.**

McDevitt MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to adopt the minutes for the April 1, 2014, regular Town Council meeting. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**6. Resignations.**

None

**7. Appointments.**

**a. Reappointing Mary Concklin to the Conservation, Open Space, and Agriculture Commission, with a term ending January 1, 2018.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to reappoint Mary Concklin to the Conservation, Open Space, and Agriculture Commission, with a term ending January 1, 2018. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.



**8. Presentations & Special Reports.**

**a. Presentation from a citizen's committee regarding ADA issues.**

Jeff Beadle, Executive Director of Windham Regional Community Council, introduced Jennifer Lortie who is the Program Director of the Eastern CT Assistive Technology Center and April Burke who is an intern at WRCC and also serves on the Board of Directors of the Access Agency. Mr. Beadle also thanked the Council for their continued support of the many programs overseen by WRCC including the Veterans Program, Youth Services Bureau, Juvenile Review Board and the Windham Heights Daycare Center.

Ms. Lortie and Ms. Burke explained what a disability is and how disabilities are determined. They also shared some of the challenges they both face as a person with a disability and made suggestions on how to improve certain areas to help better serve a person with a disability. They also answered questions from the Council.

**MOTION:** DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to move Item #15d up on the agenda to follow Item #8a. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**15. d. Discuss and possibly move to appoint Ron Lemire as a Deputy Fire Marshal for the Town of Windham.**

DeVivo MOVED, Doyle seconded, to appoint Ron Lemire as a Deputy Fire Marshal for the Town of Windham. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**9. Mayor's Report.**

Mayor Eldridge asked the Council to call their State Representatives, Senators and Congressmen to ask them to support the TIGER grant. He explained what the grant was and the benefits it could have for Windham.

Mayor Eldridge also reported he had attended the fundraiser for the Windham Textile Museum, the Chamber of Commerce event at UCONN where Congressman Joe Courtney spoke, and the Windham Center School career day.

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

**a. Energy Efficient Business Program.**

Town Manager Beets gave a brief update on the status of the Hurley building including the reason for the wood structure currently surrounding the building, the prospective buyers for the building and their plans for renovating the building.

Town Manager Beets also reported that Julia Gavin from the Library would address the issues of security at the Library during her presentation regarding the renovations at the Library.

Town Manager Beets reported students from Windham High School will be visiting the Town Hall for a Career Day on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 23<sup>rd</sup> where Department Heads and/or staff will be available to explain the functions of their jobs and the training/certifications needed to become employed by the Town. He noted the Police and Fire departments will have vehicles and apparatus on site and

the CERT (Community Emergency Relief Trailer) trailer will also be there for students to see.

In addition, Town Manager Beets reported on the Energy Efficient Business Program. He noted a brochure was included in their packet and he explained how the program worked and the benefits it could have for small businesses. He asked the Council for their support of the program and for their help in possibly accompanying CCAT representatives as they visit local businesses.

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

Mayor Eldridge noted the before and after school program students have been sending notes to the Mayor and Town thanking them for keeping the program open.

**12. Resolutions and Ordinances.**

**a. Discuss and possibly move to adopt a Resolution endorsing the Energy Efficient Businesses Program.**

Lessard read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

Lessard MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adopt Resolution #2633. All were in favor.

**A Resolution of the Windham Town Council  
Endorsing the Energy Efficient Businesses  
Program and Urging All Windham Businesses to  
Participate**

**WHEREAS**, the Windham Town Council realizes that small businesses need to pinch their operating costs to stay in business and make a profit; and

**WHEREAS**, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has created its Office of Energy Efficient Businesses Program and has contracted with CCAT, the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, to provide valuable and objective energy efficiency services to small businesses to help them reduce operating costs; and

**WHEREAS**, CCAT would like to partner with the Town of Windham, the Windham Chamber of Commerce, the Thread City Development Corporation, the Windham Economic Development Commission, the Windham Energy Commission, and any other group or person who wants advice and assistance to make their business more energy efficient;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Windham Town Council hereby resolves that it endorses the Energy Efficient Business Program and urges all Windham businesses to participate in this effort to help them cut their energy and operating costs.

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**b. Discuss and possibly move to adopt a Resolution regarding an Historic Documents Preservation Grant.**

Doyle read the Resolution and moved for its adoption.

Doyle MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to adopt Resolution #2634. All were in favor.

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

Neal J. Beets, Town Manager, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the Connecticut State Library for an Historic Documents Preservation Grant.

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

**a. Administration, Finance, Economic Development, Health, and Human Service Committee**

DeVivo reported the Committee will be meeting next Monday. He noted they will be discussing the annual review of the Town Manager, the Housing Code Ordinance and several other items.

**b. Public Works, Public Safety, Environment, Recreation, and Culture Committee**

Krich reported the Committee will be meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**c. Building Committee for the High School Roof**

DeVivo reported the Committee had not met last week due to a conflict in posting however he noted they had gone out to bid for the project. He reported the project was split into 2 phases and is moving forward. DeVivo stated there was no report on the Magnet School.

**d. Capital Action Tri-Board**

No report

**14. Old Business.**

**a. Discuss and possibly move to adopt written comments to the Capital Action Tri-Board regarding their Report.**

**i. Presentation about the Library renovation. (Adult Librarian Julia Gavin.)**

Adult Librarian Julia Gavin gave a brief presentation on the proposed renovations to the Library and explained the need and benefits it will provide to the Town and the patrons.

Ms. Gavin also thanked the Council for providing a security guard at the Library and noted the positive changes it has made for the staff and patrons of the Library.

**ii. Presentation about the Noznick park development. (Recreation Director Tara Risley.)**

No Presentation.

**iii. Presentation about the Downtown Parking Garage. (Town Engineer Joe Gardner.)**

Town Engineer Joe Gardner gave a brief update on the status of the Downtown Parking Garage. He reviewed the steps that have been taken since 1999 when the parking study was initially recommended and he explained the estimated costs, the number of parking spaces and the approximate time for construction. Mr. Gardner also answered questions from the Council.

**iv. A presentation about the renovation and repurposing of Windham High School will be on Tuesday, May 6, when the BOE School Planning and Design Committee can be here.**

**b. Discuss and possibly move to approve a fuel contract with the WRTD as recommended by the Administration and Finance Committee, to authorize the Town Manager to sign that contract, and directing staff not to provide fuel to the WRTD after July 1, 2014, unless a Council-approved fuel contract with the WRTD is signed by the WRTD's authorized representative by June 1, 2014.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to approve the contracts as presented by the Town Manager for WRTD with the exception of the amount of time upon default for the past purchases to be changed from 30 days to 15 days in paragraph 3, for the Town to give notice to WRTD and for WRTD to make payment to the Town. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**15. New Business.**

**a. Discuss and possibly move to approve a letter to U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and U. S. Senator Chris Murphy urging their support for a federal TIGER grant to improve railroad tracks in Eastern Connecticut.**

McDevitt MOVED, Krich seconded, to approve a letter to U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and U. S. Senator Chris Murphy urging their support for a federal TIGER grant to improve railroad tracks in Eastern Connecticut. All were in favor except DeVivo who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

**b. Discuss and possibly move to approve a letter of support for the TIGER grant to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx.**

McDevitt MOVED, Krich seconded, to approve a letter of support for the TIGER grant to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx. All were in favor except DeVivo who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

**c. Discuss and possibly move to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 20, at 6:30 PM in the Town Hall Meeting Room to hear to hear public comment on Windham's 2014 Neighborhood Assistance Act applications.**

DeVivo MOVED, Doyle seconded, to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 20, at 6:30 PM in the Town Hall Meeting Room to hear to hear public comment on Windham's 2014 Neighborhood Assistance Act applications. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- d. Discuss and possibly move to appoint Ron Lemire as a Deputy Fire Marshall for the Town of Windham.**

Moved up on the agenda to follow Item #8a.

**16. Future Agenda Items**

None

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

Lorraine McDevitt stated she had attended the opening of the new home that ECSU has obtained for Community Engagement and noted they have invited everyone to visit. She noted the building was beautiful and they had done a phenomenal job with the renovations.

James Flore spoke about the role of the Town Controller concerning the invoices with WRTD and he questioned whether other agencies were in the same mess. He believes the problems were due to late invoices being sent through emails and asked why nobody pursued the Country Club for back taxes when they were not current.

Henry Crane, Windham Street, Willimantic, spoke about the issues the Library was facing regarding patrons sleeping and he thanked the Council for letting Julia act on it and for addressing the issues.

Tom DeVivo, 110 Bolivia Street, Willimantic, addressed the WRTD issues and does not agree with the comments made by Mr. Flores. He believes the Town staff did everything they were supposed to do with sending invoices and following through. He also would like the Council to address the appointments to the WRTD board and other boards as to the length of the terms for which a person can serve on one board.

**18. Adjournment**

McDevitt MOVED, Doyle seconded, to adjourn the Town of Windham Town Council regular meeting at 8:40 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Submitted By:**

Barbara J. McKinney

Clerk of the Town Council