

WINDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Windham Town Hall, Meeting Room

Tuesday, July 1, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.



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, Tony Fantoli, Tom DeVivo, Lorraine McDevitt, Joseph Underwood, Mark Doyle, Michael Lessard, James Flores and Charlotte Patros

Christel Donahue was excused.

Town Manager Neal Beets was also in attendance.

Mayor Eldridge noted that Item 8a

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Eldridge led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment.

Peter Leeds, 9 Robin Road, Willimantic, spoke about the conditions of the Town parks and urged the Council to join him in a walk through them.

Tom Ford, Union Street, Willimantic, spoke about the homeless issue and a grant through Microsoft that is being used in other parts of the Country to help find a solution to homelessness.

Dawn Niles, North Windham, spoke about the \$10,000 grant agreement with WAIM for the Windham Homeless Intervention Fund and urged the Council to support it. Ms. Nile also noted her concern with the Town not following the Town Charter.

Henry Crane, Windham Street, Willimantic, noted his support of Items 8c & 15b.

Christopher Brecklin, Walnut Street, Willimantic, noted his work with organizations across the State regarding homelessness. He gave examples of other area Towns that are also working to address the issue of homelessness and suggested Windham look to them as a model.

Curtis Ehler, 376 Pleasant Street, Willimantic, spoke in support of Items 8c & 15b. He also had several questions about the administering of WHIF. Mr. Ehler would like to see the conversation continued through the Sub-Committee.



Charlie Kratt, Monticello Street, Willimantic, spoke about the budget and suggested other ways to fund the Fire Marshal's office and the Code Enforcement office. He also suggested funding soccer tournaments which would bring people into Town to help increase revenue.

4. Town Council Comment.

None

5. Adoption of Minutes.

a. Discuss and possibly move to adopt the minutes for the June 17, 2014, regular Town Council meeting.

DeVivo MOVED, Underwood seconded, to adopt the minutes for the June 17, 2014, regular Town Council meeting. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Resignations.

None

7. Appointments.

a. Discuss and possibly move to re-appoint Joe Marsalisi as a regular member of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission, with a term to expire on July 1, 2018.

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to re-appoint Joe Marsalisi as a regular member of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission, with a term to expire on July 1, 2018. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Discuss and possibly move to re-appoint John Naumec as a regular member of the Willimantic Housing Authority, with a term to expire on July 31, 2019.

Patros MOVED, DeVivo seconded, to re-appoint John Naumec as a regular member of the Willimantic Housing Authority, with a term to expire on July 31, 2019. All were in favor except McDevitt, Krich and Lessard who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

8. Presentations & Special Reports.

a. Presentation by Town Attorney Rich Cody and Code Enforcement Director Matt Vertefeulle about legal and other questions raised concerning the Housing Code.

No Presentation

b. Presentation by Mary DeMarco, Human Services Director, and Angela Fournier, Early Childhood Liaison, about the School Readiness Grant Program.

Mary DeMarco, Human Services Director, gave a brief background on the Early Childhood Program and provided statistics outlining the programs growth over the years. She also introduced Early Childhood Liaison, Angela Fournier.

Angela Fournier, Early Childhood Liaison, provided the Council with an outline of the Windham School Readiness Grant Program and gave a brief presentation

on the Program. Ms. Fournier explained what School Readiness was, how the program is funded, the role of the School Readiness Liaison and the accomplishments of the program for 2014. Ms. Fournier also noted the Centers that participate in the program and number of slots available in each Center.

Ms. Fournier answered questions from the Council.

c. Presentation by Jeff Beadle, Executive Director of the Windham Regional Community Center, about homelessness, the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, and the Windham Homeless Intervention Fund. (Action Item 15.b)

Jeff Beadle, Executive Director of the Windham Regional Community Center, provided the Council with the 2014 Windham Area Housing Report and gave a presentation on the homelessness, the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, and the Windham Homeless Intervention Fund. Mr. Beadle explained the basic demographic information, the needs of the community and the vision to end homelessness. Mr. Beadle also explained the different types of homelessness and the annual cost to the community. In addition, Mr. Beadle noted the accomplishments of the Windham Regional Community Center.

Lee Duffy, Director of the No-Freeze Shelter, spoke briefly on 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness and suggested the Town wait for the group to develop a plan before appropriating \$10,000 to WHIF.

Avery Lenhart addressed the issue that occurred in Mansfield which resulted in homeless people being evicted.

MOTION: DeVivo MOVED, Krich seconded, to postpone Item 15b. All were in favor except Flores who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

9. Mayor's Report.

Mayor Eldridge reported he and Councilmember Underwood had attended the Ladies Softball Awards Ceremony.

Mayor Eldridge also reported he and his wife attended the WINCOG Celebration at the new country club.

10. Town Manager's Report.

Town Manager Beets reported the first meeting of the Sweeney Elementary and Windham Middle School Micro-Grid Building Committee will be Thursday, July 10th at 7:00 PM at the Kramer Building. He noted this was the Committee the will be deciding how the \$800,000 grant will be spent. He also thanked the Council for creating and populating the Committee.

Town Manager Beets also reported the Town has been working with the State to develop a grant agreement for the \$1.35 million grant for the Senior Center Project. He also explained the steps that are needed to appropriate the funds. Mr. Beets also answered questions from the Council.

11. Discussion and Review of Communications.

Mayor Eldridge stated he was asked by Amy Vas Nunes to give her resume to the Council regarding her application to be appointed to the Ethics Commission. She also asked the Mayor what the appeals process was if someone was not appointed. Mayor Eldridge explained he wasn't comfortable with appointing Ms. Vas Nunes to the Ethics Commission however he stated if 3 members of the Council thought it should be brought forward that may be the appeals process.

Mr. Flores questioned an email about a letter that had been sent out and signed by the Mayor, Town Manager and Police Chief regarding truck speeds and brake noise.

12. Resolutions and Ordinances.

None

13. Reports of Committees, Boards and Commissions.

a. Administration, Finance, Economic Development, Health, and Human Service Committee. (Councilmember DeVivo)

DeVivo noted he supported Item 15b.

DeVivo also reported the Committee will be meeting this month and will be discussing the Town Manager's evaluation.

b. Windham High School Roof Replacement Building Committee. (Councilmember DeVivo)

DeVivo reported the project was moving on schedule and would be meeting tomorrow at 10:00 A.M. to discuss the floors. He also noted they were having good luck with the asbestos abatement. Mr. DeVivo also stated if the Mayor had 2 more members to put on the Committee it would be helpful.

In addition, DeVivo noted there would be some natural gas trailers on the Windham High School property while the pump station on South Street was being rebuilt.

c. Public Works, Public Safety, Environment, Recreation, and Culture Committee. (Councilmember Krich)

Krich reported the Committee had met last Wednesday. He noted Scott Clairmont gave a presentation on the maintenance needs of the Town parks and the need to develop the Noznick property. Krich stated he and Councilmember McDevitt will speak at the Capital Action Tri-Board on behalf of the Committee if given the opportunity. He also noted Mr. Leeds spoke again regarding the playing fields as well. Krich stated he had been at Lauter Park over the weekend and was extremely pleased with how beautiful the park looks.

Krich reported that Lee Duffy and Jeff Beadle spoke to the Committee on the homeless situation in Town. He stated the Housing Intervention Fund is a great program and they will wait to hear what can be improved upon.

Krich also noted the award of paving for roads on tonight's agenda.

Krich asked Councilmember McDevitt to report on the Dispatch Center.

McDevitt reported the Dispatch Center was moving forward and was working on an exact list of what each group is responsible for. She noted once the list is reviewed by the Attorney's an agreement should be completed by the fall and then brought forward to the full Council.

14. Old Business.

- a. Discuss and possibly move to cancel the public hearing currently scheduled on Tuesday, August 5, 2014, regarding the amendments to the Housing Code, and to re-set this public hearing on Tuesday, September 2, 2014, at 6 PM in the Town Meeting Room.**

DeVivo MOVED, Underwood seconded, to cancel the public hearing currently scheduled on Tuesday, August 5, 2014, regarding the amendments to the Housing Code. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- b. Discuss and possibly move to re-set the public hearing on the Charter Revision Commission Report and Recommendations to Tuesday, July 8, 2014, at 7 PM in the Bellingham Auditorium.**

Doyle MOVED, Krich seconded, to re-set the public hearing on the Charter Revision Commission Report and Recommendations to Wednesday, July 9, 2014, at 7 PM in the Bellingham Auditorium followed by a Special Town Council meeting to discuss the Charter. All were in favor except Lessard who opposed. MOTION PASSED.

15. New Business.

- a. Discuss and possibly move to approve a road paving contract for \$767,505 with Hain Materials of Windham, CT, funded from the Road Bond and the Fee-in-lieu-of-Parking Fund, as recommended by the Public Works, Public Safety, Environment, Recreation, and Culture Committee.**

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to approve a road paving contract for \$767,505 with Hain Materials of Windham, CT, funded from the Road Bond and the Fee-in-lieu-of-Parking Fund, as recommended by the Public Works, Public Safety, Environment, Recreation, and Culture Committee. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- b. Discuss and possibly authorize a \$10,000 grant agreement for the Windham Area Interfaith Ministries for the Windham Homeless Intervention Fund, as recommended by the Public Works, Public Safety, Environment, Recreation, and Culture Committee, &/or take other action about homelessness.**

No Action Taken

- c. Discuss and possibly move to authorize a Small Cities, CDBG application for 2015 that seeks financial assistance to renovate Willimantic Housing Authority residential facilities, as recommended by the Administration, Finance, Economic Development, Health, and Human Service Committee.**

Underwood MOVED, Patros seconded, to authorize a Small Cities, CDBG application for 2015 that seeks financial assistance to renovate Willimantic

Housing Authority residential facilities, as recommended by the Administration, Finance, Economic Development, Health, and Human Service Committee. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

16. Future Agenda Items

None

17. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment.

Henry Crane, Windham Street, Willimantic, thanked the Mayor for his decision to bring the question of an appeals process to the Council regarding an appointment to a Board/Commission.

Curtis Ehler, 376 Pleasant Street, Willimantic, thanked the Council for the discussion on the homeless and suggested the Town create an Ad- Hoc Committee to study the issue.

Avery Lenhart thanked the Council for allowing her to make a presentation on the homeless at the last meeting and also thanked the Sub-Committee for their discussion on the issue. Ms. Lenhart also noted she is available to help in any way she can to help find a solution to homelessness.

Mary Lou DeVivo, Ash Street, Willimantic, stated she is confused and questioned what the Town is buying at the Access Agency, a Senior Center or a Community Center. She stated the seniors want a stand-alone Senior Center.

James Flores noted the Sub-Committee meeting was packed because people came to hear about the homeless solution. He stated he doesn't understand why now they have to wait for a 10 year plan when we have people living in tents who need help immediately.

18. Adjournment

DeVivo MOVED, McDevitt seconded, to adjourn the Town of Windham Town Council regular meeting at 9:07 P.M. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Submitted By:

Barbara J. McKinney
Clerk of the Town Council