

Minutes of the Windham Town Council Regular Meeting

Windham Town Hall Bellingham Auditorium, 2nd Floor
Tuesday, August 16, 2016 - 7:00 P.M.



1. Call to Order.

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

Members Present: Mayor Eldridge, Charles Krich, Tony Fantoli, Nectalis Martinez, Mike Lessard, Dawn Niles, Dennis O'Brien, James Flores and Lynne Ide

Lorraine McDevitt and Tom DeVivo 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.

Gil Texeira, Willimantic, questioned the status of the traffic and speeding solutions for South Street.

Kevin Hoxie thanked Coach Crudden for the great job he has done with our students and wished him well. He also spoke about the Board of Education having no public comment at their meetings and the survey being done on the High School by the Board of Finance. In addition, Mr. Hoxie commended the teachers for their great work.

Virginia Fulton, Windham resident, spoke on behalf of 200 Windham residents and asked the Town Council to send a letter requesting the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation do a safety study on the effect of the increased truck traffic on Route 6 because of a proposed infusion station in Andover. She also noted this was not a State project.

Bev York, South Windham, requested the Town Council create an ordinance against panhandling. She also spoke about the outage of 15 street lights and her support of the Town Council writing a letter to request a traffic study on Route 6.

Murphy Sewall, Windham resident, spoke about an article in the paper regarding a vote by the Town Council to reduce the allocation to the health insurance fund by \$186,000.

Bernie D'Auteuil, 168 Walnut Street, Willimantic, spoke about the poor acoustics in the Auditorium, the lack of a crosswalk at the High School, the bus loading and unloading on Prospect Street and the infusion station on Route 6.

James Flores spoke in support of the Town Council sending a letter to the State regarding a safety study on Route 6.

Corey Krohn, member of the Energy Commission and Micro-Grid Committee, spoke in support of sending a letter to the State regarding a safety study on Route 6.

4. Town Council Comment.

Mike Lessard noted 2 solar powered signs had been approved in the budget. He also stated he had addressed the lack of crosswalks at the High School at the Public Safety, Public Works Committee meeting last week.

Dawn Niles responded to Mr. Sewall and noted the Town Council was assured by the Finance Department that there was a healthy fund balance in the account. She also reminded everyone about the 4th annual backpack event and provided the information about the event.

James Flores explained that the backpack activity was open to everyone.

5. Adoption of Town Council Minutes.

None

6. Resignations

None

7. Appointments, Reappointments, as recommended by the Nominating Commission.

None

8. Presentations & Special Reports.

a. Presentation and demonstration by Chinese Artist Wei Bin Chu, Secretary-General and Director of the Public Affairs Department at the International Chinese Institute.

Economic Development Director Jim Bellano introduced Sharon Chu who gave a brief overview of the presentation. She introduced Chinese Artist Wei Bin Chu Secretary-General and Director of the Public Affairs Department at the International Chinese Institute. Mr. Chu gave a power point presentation, translated by Sharon Chu, on the art of Chinese painting and the different techniques used in their paintings. Chinese Artist Wei Bin Chudemonstrated the art by creating a watercolor painting.

9. Mayor's Report.

Mayor Eldridge reported he had been on vacation. He stated he had attended a couple of meetings in Maine and spoke about how they compared to the meetings here.

10. Town Manager's Report.

Town Manager Beets reported on the following:

- August 22nd – bond rating from Moody's Rating Service
- Whitewater Partnership seeking approval from the State and the Army Corp of Engineers to remove the dam on Bridge Street

- Meeting with the Architect for the Senior Center tomorrow
- Agenda for the Board of Finance meeting tomorrow
- Youth Day at Lauter Park on August 18th

MOTION: Niles MOVED, Krich seconded, to move Item 15a up on the agenda to follow Item #10. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION: Niles MOVED, Flores seconded, to add Item 15b, Discussion and possible action regarding the request from Virginia Fulton. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

15. New Business.

a. Discuss and possibly approve a no-cost, interlocal purchasing agreement with H-GAC, as recommended by the Fire Chief.

O'Brien MOVED, Lessard seconded, to approve a no-cost, interlocal purchasing agreement with H-GAC, as recommended by the Fire Chief, contingent on the approval of the form by the Town Attorney. All were in favor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Discussion and possible action regarding the request from Virginia Fulton.

Niles MOVED, Flores seconded, that the Town Manager, on behalf on the Town Council, write a letter to our State Delegation to ask them to request DOT to make a safety study regarding the effect of increased traffic on Route 6 because of the possible operation of an infusion station in Andover. All were in favor except O'Brien who abstained. MOTION PASSED.

11. Discussion and Review of Communications to Council.

a. Virginia Fulton request regarding state Route 6.
Noted

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

None

13. Resolutions and Ordinances.

None

14. Old Business.

a. Report from the Chairman of the Town Council's Committee on Administration, Finance, Development, Health, and Human Services regarding the Committee's meeting on August 9, 2016, discussions, and actions. Possible Town Council discussion and action.

i. Discuss and possibly authorize the Town Manager to contact the State Comptroller to get a quote as to the cost to join the state's municipal health plan and to request that the Board of Education be invited to join.

Krich noted there was one action item on tonight's agenda.

Krich reported that the Committee set a date of August 22nd to hold a Special Meeting for the Town Manager's evaluation.

Krich also reported a naming request had been submitted from Councilmember McDevitt, Lloyd Niles and others regarding the renaming of the Willimantic Public Library. The Committee will hold a Public Hearing on September 13th at 6:30 P.M. and a recommendation will be brought back to the full Town Council.

In addition, Krich reported that the action item on tonight's agenda was to ask the Town Manager, or his designee to contact the State Comptroller to get a quote as to the cost to join the State's Municipal Health Plan and to request the Board of Education be invited to join.

MOTION: Ide MOVED, Lessard seconded, to authorize the Town Manager to contact the State Comptroller to get a quote as to the cost to join the state's municipal health plan and to request that the Board of Education be invited to join. All were in favor. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Report from the Chairman of the Town Council's Committee on Public Safety, Public Works, Environment, Culture, and Recreation regarding the Committee's meeting on August 9, 2016, discussions, and actions. Possible Town Council discussion and action.

Lessard reported the Committee had a site walk of the Noznick Property. He explained the 2 phases of the project and noted the Committee has to speak to Douglas Manor regarding a possible entrance to the property.

Mayor Eldridge requested the members of the Town Council insert captions under pictures they post on social media to allow people to know what they are doing.

c. Discuss and possibly act on approving the wording of a Charter Referendum question and setting the Charter Referendum date for a proposed Council change to the Town Charter regarding the date of the annual budget town meeting and the annual budget voter referendum.

O'Brien prepared two proposed resolutions for the Charter Referendum question.

O'Brien read Resolution #2686 and moved for its adoption.

O'Brien MOVED, Niles seconded, to adopt Resolution #2687. All were in favor.

RESOLVED that the Report of the Charter Revision Commission approved by the Town Council on August 2, 2016 be submitted to the electors of the Town for determination at the regular election to be held on November 8, 2016.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

O'Brien read Resolution #2687 and moved for its adoption.
O'Brien MOVED, Niles seconded, to adopt Resolution #2688. All were in favor.

RESOLVED that the question submitted to the electors on November 8, 2016, be:

“Shall Section X-7 of the Town Charter be revised to provide that the Board of Finance may change the dates for the annual budget meeting and voter referendum based on the General Assembly’s progress with approving the State Budget?”

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

15. New Business.

a. Discuss and possibly approve a no-cost, interlocal purchasing agreement with H-GAC, as recommended by the Fire Chief.

Moved up on the agenda to follow Item #10.

b. Discussion and possible action regarding the request from Virginia Fulton.

Moved up on the agenda to follow Item #15a

16. Future Agenda Items

a. Tuesday, September 13, 2016: Public Hearing on renaming the Willimantic Public Library, or some portion of the Library, after Mary Lou DeVivo.

17. Citizens and Delegations: Public Comment.

Doug Lary, 183 Summit Street, Willimantic, thanked the Town Council for moving quickly on the letter regarding the safety study on Route 6 and for listening to the taxpayers. He also spoke about the sound system in the Auditorium.

Dennis O'Brien explained why he abstained from the vote on the letter regarding the safety study on Route 6.

James Flores responded to the Mayor's request for captions on pictures on social media and noted he is not responsible for the posting of others.

Bernie D'Auteuil, 168 Walnut Street, Willimantic, spoke about the Town Council going into executive session and suggested a Committee be created to decide what should be heard in executive session.

18. Adjournment

Martinez MOVED, Niles seconded, to adjourn the Windham Town Council Regular Meeting at 8:32 P.M. All were in favor. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Submitted by

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