



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR STEPHEN WOODS

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL **Conference Room L-101 Lower Level – Town Hall** **8:00 p.m. or Immediately Following Public Hearing**

July 28, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Woods at 9 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Banach
Councilor Borjeson - absent
Councilor Castelle - absent
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor McDonald – absent
Councilor Marocchini
Councilor Nagel
Mayor Woods

Staff Attendees:

John Salomone, Town Manager
Steven Juda, Assessor
Peter Boorman, Town Attorney
Lisa Rydecki, Deputy Finance Director
Jaime Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager – Administration
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: He gave each councilor a copy of a letter he gave to the building committee and stated the committee should have a new name like building reconstruction since it was obvious most people wanted a new building.

Scott Greczkowski, 46 Miami Avenue: He stated he had received information from Councilor Klett that AMR owed the Town over \$100,000 that had not been collected. He felt this was a safety issue since the ambulance company was not properly staffed in Newington. If not properly staffed, there could be an issue when there is an emergency and a delay in AMR arriving.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken)
A. Discussion: Town Hall Renovations

John Salomone asked if the Council wanted him to get answers to questions asked at the meeting in time for the August 3 meeting and the Mayor indicated that would be a good idea. Councilor Klett asked the Town Manager to have handouts of the CIP table 7 he referenced during his presentation. The Mayor asked to have the architect renderings as handouts as well for the audience.

Councilor DelBuono was pleased with the public participation and how many people gave their opinions on the project. She stated the Council had a lot of homework to do before having a full discussion on it. She encouraged the committee to put together a plan to keep the same footprint since it was something several individuals had mentioned.

Councilor Klett was pleased with the turnout but noted that if people in Town were unhappy with the proposed plans, they would have filled the auditorium and that did not happen. She was glad they were having public hearings to get the input from the public. The Mayor agreed with her and was pleased everyone was respectful of others opinions. He was encouraged they got good feedback and direction from the public.

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken by Waiving the Rules)
A. Indian Hill Lease Update

Peter Boorman, Town Attorney, gave a presentation on the addendum to the proposed contract. Due to the decrease in the number of rounds of golf the facility had had a difficult time paying its bills; however, they were now current and paid on a timely basis. The course is important to Newington and felt it needed to be maintained. The course is of prime value to the Town and not the buildings. If not maintained properly, there would be severe consequences to the value of the course. The current model needs to be changed but will take time to review options. He suggested a study group be put together to discuss all options with IHCC included in the talks.

Mr. Juda, Assessor, stated in 2005 IHCC was assessed at \$4 million (real estate/personal property). That value held until the 2011 revaluation. In 2014 an analysis was prepared that indicated the value was in the vicinity of \$1.6-1.9 million. Mr. Juda indicated the value of \$4 million was high and that last year's figure of \$3.2 million was still so they reached a value of \$2.5 million. The value of golf courses declines each year and a recent sale in Bristol amounted to \$1.5 million. The 2015 assessment might be lowered once again. The contract ties the value of the property to the value of the course. When the value of the course is lower, the rental payments are lower.

Councilor Klett stated that in the 2001 contract the course had to be maintained and if not, the Town could take action. Mr. Boorman indicated maintenance required a different skill level than that available through the Park and Rec Department. Newington did not have the ability to do the maintenance. Mr. Juda stated he compiled sales throughout the region each year to develop where the value of the property would be. The value of the course is for the use and not market value available for development. Councilor Klett stated the independent report received indicated there had not been an audit done. Mr. Boorman stated that was the only document from Blum Shapiro since the experts suggested the Town accept exactly what was produced.

Councilor Banach asked what some of the enhancements were. Mr. Juda indicated the high school teams played there, fundraisers held that contributed back, opened playing time for Newington residents, established Newington Golf Days, residents had the ability to bring three non-residents to play and they started Newington leagues.

Councilor DelBuono asked about the page 7 section 6 and 7 of the contract and if quarterly statements as required had been received by the Town and if there had been a certified annual audit done. Mr. Juda stated he had quarterly statements for the past year and a half but were sketchy in the previous years. He

received annual statements in those years. Councilor DelBuono asked if a deposit had been maintained as stated in the contract and was told there was a \$10k deposit in an account.

Councilor Klett stated the value would be reduced by \$700,000 (real/personal property). She was concerned that the audit of viability was conducted in November 2013 and a year later, the Council was asked to agree to more changes to the lease based on something that was a few months old when the last changes were made in June 2015. She was not comfortable using an old audit to make the changes requested and thought an audit should be conducted by an accountant. Mr. Boorman indicated the Town could hire a professional company but the reason it was not done was because in 2013 they brought in a company that enabled Mr. Juda to do the work in house.

Councilor Nagel asked what the membership numbers were on a month to month basis and what fees were paid. Mr. Juda indicated IHCC broke even each year and would get the Councilors membership numbers. Mayor Woods indicated the only reason it was brought to the Council was because there were enhancements made to the original contract and if there were none, it would not have been brought up to the Council. In the lease it stated the yearly assessment could be challenged, which had been done two years ago.

The item will be placed on the next meeting agenda for further discussion and possible action.

B. New Ordinance Introduction – Student Technology Insurance Fund

Mr. Salomone indicated it was a recommendation from the Finance Director for the Board of Education to set up a special fund to pay for replacement of notebook computers as the program matures over the next several years. Money would accumulate to replace lost or damaged computers.

Jamie Trevethan stated it could only be introduced at this meeting, the next meeting a public hearing date could be set and after the public hearing, action could be taken on it.

Councilor Marocchini moved the following:

INTRODUCTION:

I hereby introduce for the Town Council’s consideration a proposed ordinance entitled “The Student Technology Insurance Fund,” a copy of which has been filed with the Clerk of the Council.

Introduced by:_____

The motion was seconded by Councilor Klett and the motion passed 6 – 0 (Councilors Borjeson, Castelle, McDonald – absent).

C. Consideration of Cancelling the August 25, 2015 Town Council Meeting

There were no objections to the cancelling of the meeting but Councilor Nagel wanted to ensure that if there was a need to have a meeting, a special meeting could be called.

VI. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken)

- A. Board of Ethics**
 - 1. Accept the Resignation of Rose Sarubbi-Lyons (Alternate)
 - 2. Appoint a Replacement
- B. Appointments to Boards and Commissions**
 - 1. Affordable Housing Monitoring Agency
 - 2. Commission on Aging and Disabled
 - 3. Balf-Town Committee
 - 4. Board of Education Roof Replacement Project Building Committee
 - 5. Board of Ethics
 - 6. Capitol Region Council of Governments
 - 7. Central Connecticut Health District Board of Directors
 - 8. Committee on Community Safety
 - 9. Conservation Commission
 - 10. Development Commission
 - 11. Downtown Revitalization Committee
 - 12. Employee Insurance & Pension Benefits Committee
 - 13. Environmental Quality Commission
 - 14. Board of Ethics
 - 15. Fair Rent Commission
 - 16. Newington Housing Authority
 - 17. Human Rights Commission
 - 18. Library Renovations/Addition Project Building Committee
 - 19. Newington School Career Technical Program Renovation Project Building Committee
 - 20. Open Space Committee
 - 21. Board of Parks and Recreation
 - 22. School Improvements Project Building Committee
 - 23. STEM Academy PBC
 - 24. Senior & Disabled Center Roof Replacement Project Building Committee
 - 25. Standing Insurance Committee
 - 26. Town Hall Renovations Project Building Committee
 - 27. Town Plan & Zoning Commission
 - 28. Tri-Town Community Cable Access
 - 29. Vehicle Appeals Board
 - 30. West Meadow Cemetery Expansion Project Building Committee
 - 31. Zoning Board of Appeals

VII. TAX REFUNDS (Action Requested)

Councilor Marocchini moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$ 220.82 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the “Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes,” certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Banach and the motion passed 6 – 0 (Councilors Borjeson, Castelle, McDonald – absent)

VIII. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A. Regular Meeting, July 14, 2015

Councilor Nagel moved to accept the meeting minutes of July 14, 2015 and was seconded by Councilor Banach. The motion passed 6 – 0 (Councilors Borjeson, Castelle, McDonald – absent).

IX. WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC

None

X. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She asked if the Marcap property would be renamed in the future since the Town owned it. She asked for an update on the Lowry Place grant money and what money had been received. Mrs. Lyons mentioned that the sign behind Newington Bicycle Shop stated the sign indicated the entrance to Constitution Square and on the opposite side of the driveway was a no left hand turn sign. She thought it should be blocked off.

Patty Foley, 51 Crown Ridge: She stated the ambulance service fines indicated a level of service that might compromise someone who called for service. She felt the fines should be enforced. Mrs. Foley said viability was important and the Town should concentrate on the top number and on raising revenue since the Town could continue to lower the viability each year at IHCC until the value was zero. The model they should use would be to ensure that all tee times were full.

Carol Anest, 30 Harding Avenue: She suggested that all FAQ's regarding the renovations at Town Hall be placed on the website so there would be no confusion or hearsay.

XII. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Klett reminded the residents the Library needed renovations and there were other projects that needed to be done in Town. She urged everyone to keep those projects in mind when talking about the Town Hall renovation. She also indicated that the service provided by AMR was not in question and there was a system in place if someone was displeased with the service they received. Councilor Klett said the extension allowed the parties to negotiate how the fines were calculated. Mr. Salomone indicated the fines were not forgiven and were in negotiations with AMR. The renewal allowed the discussions with AMR between now and November 1 and if not resolved, non-binding arbitration would be the next step. Fines continued to accrue during the discussions.

Councilor Nagel asked if there were lessening of the fines, who had the power to grant the discount. Mr. Salomone would go back to the Council for further discussion if that happened. He congratulated the Parks and Rec Department on an excellent job during the Extravaganza, which was well attended. He also indicated that the Library Expansion Committee had met and work had begun.

Councilor DelBuono indicated that in the last meeting she expressed concern at a woman waiting for a Dial-A-Ride ride for over an hour and wanted to clarify that after further inquiry, she found that it was not the Newington Dial-A-Ride but another organization. She apologized for any confusion.

Councilor Marocchini thanked the residents who attended the meeting and for their ideas and suggestions on the Town Hall. He said the Library was undergoing an in house needs assessment and once completed, another meeting would be held.

Mayor Woods said the Library had not been pushed off but the Council had kicked started the committee. A feasibility study was to be done and there were funds set aside for an architect.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor DelBuono moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor Marocchini. The motion passed 6 – 0 (Councilors Borjeson, Castelle, McDonald – absent).

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson
Clerk of the Council

Cc: T. Lane, Town Clerk