



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Conference Room L-101 Lower Level – Town Hall
7:00 P.M.

December 8, 2015

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Anest
Councilor Budrejko
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor Manke
Councilor Marocchini- absent
Councilor Nagel
Councilor Serra
Mayor Zartarian

Staff Attendees:

John Salomone, Town Manager
Craig Minor, Town Planner
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Gary Bolles, 28 Burdon Lane: He read a letter to the Hartford Courant editor regarding the planned reconstruction of I84. The writer thought it would be a better idea to build a bypass around the city instead of attempting to bring all the traffic through Hartford. Mr. Bolles expressed concerned regarding the Cedar Street traffic and would be contacting the State about it because it was important to stay on top of the situation.

Ed Young, 485 Church Street: He stated he was still concerned about the condition of the soil at the Young Farm and had not heard from anyone from the Town regarding the possibility of taking soil samples at the property. He felt six test holes could be easily done and could then be examined by a soil scientist. The property was important to the Town and something had to be done for future generations he said.

John Slusarski, 40 Grandview Drive: He said one of the highest priorities of the Council should be the current underfunding of the pension fund. He noted the Council would be going into executive session to discuss the purchase of property on Cedar Mountain and hoped the Town would not overpay for it. The Town paid retail for the Young Farm, two times what the Marcap property was worth and should not pay \$100,000 an acre for Cedar Mountain.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She indicated she had come from a Parks and Rec meeting that was reviewing the proposed changes to Churchill Park and thought the price would be very high. She was concerned about the STEAP funding for Clem Lemire Field since the last time the Town accepted a grant of \$500,000 for turf. The project ended up costing \$1,215,448 and the additional money came out of CIP funds. Mrs. Lyons wanted to know what the Town would have to pay out of CIP to complete the project or if the STEAP grant would cover all costs. She asked what other grants were available to the Town, if the Town could only apply for one grant and who determined which grant was applied for. Mrs. Lyons wondered how the State had the money for a non-essential project when other funds were being cut to social services, which were more important.

Mayor Woods interrupted the meeting to present Mr. John Bachand with a certificate that was awarded to his company for being a Town business for more than 25 years.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: He had contacted John Salomone regarding the traffic situation near Cedar Mountain and thanked him for resolving the issue by installing a new turn sign. He was encouraged there would be discussion on purchasing the Balf portion of Cedar Mountain and was in favor of it. The property was unique and if the State deeded the Town part of the Cedar crest property, Newington would have a piece of property from Cedar Street to Balf quarry.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Canceling the December 22, 2015 Town Council Meeting

Councilor Nagel indicated that if the need arose, a special meeting could be scheduled to resolve any issues.

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby alters its meeting schedule by canceling its regular meeting scheduled for December 22, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Klett and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

B. Town Hall/Community Center Project Discussion

Mayor Zartarian stated it had been discussed to bring in outside expertise to review the structural integrity of Town Hall. Mr. Salomone indicated the Facilities Manager had a company give a comprehensive cost and thought it might require an RFP, unless the Council decided to waive it. The town could take the lowest responsible proposal as well. The information would probably be available at the next meeting.

Councilor Anest asked how long it would take for a company to have a report ready and Mr. Salomone stated it would probably take six weeks. Councilor Klett asked Mr. Salomone if the Council could get the RFP ahead of time to review and ask questions before a vote was taken. He indicated he would give it to the Council.

Councilor Budrejko asked Mr. Salomone about the partial studies that had been done and if some of the work could be used to reduce the RFP. Some of the information could be used he stated.

C. Young Farm Discussion

Attorney Chris Stone, MDC Project Manager Tom Robbins and Victor Serrambane, VMS construction attended the meeting and Mr. Stone gave an overview of what had been done at the Young Farm. In September small rocks and asphalt were removed, the area was raked and it was fertilized. He stated that it would take time for the area, once disturbed, to return to its original condition and that MDC and the contractor acted in good faith.

Councilor DelBuono thanked Mr. Stone for his efforts but indicated that on a visit to the property that day, she took more pictures of rocks and asphalt still on the property. She was concerned that the area was in much different condition compared to other areas on the farm that had not been disturbed. Mr. Stone said that he believed both the contractor, Mrs. DelBuono and Mr. Young when they described what they saw at the Farm. He suggested that they meet at the farm together to try to resolve the situation as soon as possible.

Councilor Klett indicated it was not just Councilor DelBuono who was concerned with the property since others had also been out to look at the situation. A lot of time had been spent on the issue and it was up to the Town to get the necessary information to determine if a problem existed and to resolve it to the residents' satisfaction. She felt soil samples would be needed to make a final determination. Mayor Zartarian stated he thought an independent soil scientist should be hired to take samples of both the untouched and touched area to finally be able to resolve the issue.

Councilor Serra stated she had walked the entire area on Saturday and found asphalt, rocks and metal straps that she was unable to pull out of the ground. The straps were not there before the dirt was taken out, and she was concerned about what was really in the soil.

Councilor DelBuono wanted to walk the property again with MDC representatives and anyone from the Council or Town to resolve the issue. Mayor Zartarian asked Mr. Salomone to check with the Freedom of Information Commission about any restrictions on a site visit that would have to be complied with.

Victor Serrambane stated the company and business had been his life and he was second generation. He was concerned about the accusations made. It was possible to there were some stones or black top that might have gotten into the soil. The surface blemishes to the property were correctable and indicated rain could cause a certain amount of rock to push up to the top of the soil. The soil that was removed from the property was still on the property but in the process of moving it, could have gotten some rocks and asphalt mixed in it. He said it would take time for the property to grow grass and it would not be as thick right away. He thought they had done everything they were asked to do at the farm. He did not believe soil samples were necessary since it was the same soil that had been there.

Councilor DelBuono stated she had been careful not to be accusatory and was hearing from the public as well about concerns regarding the soil.

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

The Newington Town Council directs the Town Manager to hire an independent soil scientist or firm to take soil samples at the Young Farm both at the restored area and the undisturbed area at a depth of up to three (3) to four (4) feet for analysis at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel. The motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent) on a roll call vote.

Councilor Klett thought a weekend site visit would be most convenient and it was determined that Saturday, December 12, at 1 p.m. would be suitable, posted and open to the public.

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken by Waiving the Rules)

A. STEAP Grant Application for Lighting at Clem Lemire Ballfield

Craig Minor gave an overview of the process of getting the grant, which he was directed to do by Mr. Salomone. At the time no deadline had been posted but currently there is a deadline, which was approaching. If the ballfield was lit, it could be used more frequently. Councilor Budrejko asked 1) What was the cost of the transformer and 2) what would the energy costs be with the lights. Mr. Minor indicated the current transformer would handle the lights and would get information on the energy costs to the Council.

Councilor DelBuono asked if it had to go to the TPZ, and Mr. Minor said that the statute did not require their approval but would be a good idea to run it by them. Councilor Klett asked if there would be any impact on the neighbors in the area. Mr. Minor stated the Town was exempt from its zoning regulations so the TPZ did not have jurisdiction over the issue. The Mayor was concerned the lights would affect the houses in the area of Willard. It was explained the lights would not affect the houses and would be directed at just the ballfield. Mayor Zartarian wanted to know if there was any local fiscal obligation as a condition of the grant, and Mr. Minor indicated there was none.

Councilor Klett asked that the houses on Strawberry and New Britain Avenues be notified when this item went to the TPZ. Mr. Salomone indicated the deadline for the grant was January 15 so no decision had to be made until the January meeting of the Council.

B. Town Council 2016 Regular Meeting Schedule

Mayor Zartarian indicated a proposed 2016 meeting schedule had been distributed. Councilor Klett stated one meeting scheduled for October 11 was Yom Kipper and thought it needed to be rescheduled. It was decided to move the meeting to the 18th and the revision would be part of the next meeting's agenda.

C. Extension of the Town's Insurance Program

John Salomone explained the proposal would extend the current Town's program through June 30, 2018, with a three percent (3%) increase per year. They have had a good experience with CIRMA and the increase was within the acceptable range of increases. Council Nagel agreed with Mr. Salomone that the proposal was an excellent one and hoped it would be approved by the Council.

The item would be placed on the next Town Council agenda in January.

D. Discussion: Setting dates for Town Council Goal Setting Sessions

Mayor Zartarian explained there would be two four hour sessions and Mr. Salomone explained that for the last seven years the Council met to review and discuss long and short term goals. If there were several new members on the Council, they did two day sessions. The extra time will allow the new members to get more information in the first session and the following week goals would be discussed.

Councilor Klett asked if the same individuals would be running the two sessions, and Mr. Salomone said he would ask them once a date had been set. She also asked that the location for both sessions be held in Newington in order to support local businesses and Mr. Salomone agreed. The Mayor said the meetings would tentatively be held on the morning of January 16, 2016 and the evening of January 20, 2016. The meetings would be public and invited residents to attend.

E. Liaison Appointment to Newington Emergency Medical Services (NEMS)

Councilor DelBuono moved the following for the Republican appointee and Councilor Anest for the Democrat appointee:

RESOLVED; that the Newington Town Council hereby appoints the following liaison Town Council members to the Newington Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) - (NVA):

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
NTC REP: Maureen Klett	104 Harold Drive	R	NTC Term	
NTC Rep Diana Serra	237 Reservoir Road	D	NTC Term	

The Republican motion was seconded by Councilor Manke and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent). The Democrat motion was seconded by Councilor Klett and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

VI. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken)

A. 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**

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Ben Ancona as a member of the Board of Ethics, in accordance with a communication dated November 16, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

6. Capitol Region Council of Governments

Councilor Manke moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Carol Anest as a member of the Capitol Region Council of Government representing the Town Planning & Zoning Commission, in accordance with a communication dated December 8, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Serra and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

- 7. Central Connecticut Health District Board of Directors**
- 8. Committee on Community Safety**
- 9. Conservation Commission**

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Tim Manke as an alternate member of the Conservation/Inland Wetlands Commission, in accordance with a communication dated November 9, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

- 10. Development Commission**
- 11. Downtown Revitalization Committee**
- 12. Employee Insurance & Pension Benefits Committee**

Councilor Klett moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Jay Slater as a member of the Alternate, Employee Insurance & Pension Benefits Committee, in accordance with a communication dated November 5, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Anest and passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

- 13. Environmental Quality Commission**
- 14. Board of Ethics**

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Ben Ancona as a member of the Board of Ethics, in accordance with a communication dated November 16, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

- 15. Fair Rent Commission**
- 16. Newington Housing Authority**
- 17. Human Rights Commission**

Councilor Klett moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Tim Manke as a member of the Human Rights Commission, in accordance with a communication dated November 12, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

- 18. Library Renovations/Addition Project Building Committee**
- 19. Newington School Career Technical Program Renovation Project Building Committee**
- 20. Open Space Committee**

Councilor Nagel moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Roy Zartarian as a member of the Open Space Committee, in accordance with a communication dated November 9, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Klett and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

- 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

Councilor Anest moved the following:

Greater Hartford Transit District

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
John M. Kelly	293 Maple Hill Ave.	D	12/8/15 – 6/30/19	Himself

33. Vehicle Appeals Board

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Alternate: Ellen L. Connery	225 Robbins Avenue	D	12/8/2015 – 11/30/2017	Herself
Donald Francis Woods	82 Ivy Lane	D	12/8/2015 – 11/30/2017	Judith Igielski

The motion was seconded by Councilor Klett and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

VII. TAX REFUNDS (Action Requested)

Councilor Nagel moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$2,334.01 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 Manke and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

VIII. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Action Requested)

Councilor Klett moved to accept the meeting minutes as written and was seconded by Councilor Nagel. The motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-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

Councilor Nagel and Councilor Anest attended the recent Senior and Disabled Center meeting. The Center would be having their annual holiday party on December 21 and residents could call the Center for details. The wiring continues to be upgraded to enable WIFI access to members. The access would be via a card number given to members. The general public would be unable to use the WIFI. He stated the Center continued their self-assessment process and were aware their budget would remain static for the upcoming budget session.

Councilor Budrejko attended the Economic Development Commission meeting and indicated Data-Mail had been awarded the Newington Business of the Year. They also recognized companies that had been in business more than 25 years.

Councilor Manke said the Parks and Rec tree lighting on Saturday was an great event and thanked the employees for their hard work.

Councilor DelBuono stated the Town Council Rules and Procedures Committee had met and began the process of updating the rules and procedures. A draft would be given to the Council to review. The committee would then meet again before presenting a final draft to the Council.

Councilor Klett asked if Mr. Salomone could give the Council information on the members of the Blight Committee from the Town who are assigned to it. She said Republican and Democrat members had to be appointed to the committee and wanted the committee to meet to discuss several issues that came up during the campaign.

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Ed Young, 485 Church Street: He wanted to rebut the lawyers comments about the Farm but also wanted to remind the Council the soil was taken from the farm to screen it and there should be no rocks in it and should have 1 ½ feet of topsoil.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She thought it would be a good idea for the Parks and Rec to change the time of their meeting so the discussions regarding Churchill Park could be heard by the members of the Council.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: He was disappointed the MDC representatives seemed to have little knowledge of the site. He volunteered to dig a small hole where the construction site was and also outside the construction site to get an unscientific visual look. He thought they might have to compromise on the foot and a half of topsoil at the site and didn't think it would be difficult to add some topsoil to enable grass to grow.

Beth Manke, 9 King Arthur Way, #11: She indicated the Parks and Rec Department meetings would be changed to the third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. It was important the residents could attend both Council and Parks and Rec meetings.

Patti Foley, 51 Crown Ridge: She asked for an update and status on Indian Hill Country Club. She was interested to know if the lights proposed at Clem Lemire would be LED since they would be less expensive in the long run. The lights should be directed at the field so they do not disturb the neighbors in the area. Mrs. Foley asked about the results of the previous year's goal setting and if the Council had achieved them.

Maddy Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: She suggested changing the white lights in town to colored lights on the tree in the center of Town, which she thought was more pleasing.

XII. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Klett thanked the Police Department for their Stuff a Cruiser event recently held in Town. They collected 3,527 items, \$362 in donations, and 145 gift carts. She said a special thanks to Walmart, Berlin Pizza, Public Market, the Boy Scouts, and NTV's current and past interns. The Councilor agreed with comments made at the last meeting about the size of the flag in the center of Town being too small and hoped a more appropriate flag could be raised. She thought it would be a good idea to have green lights for the military and blue lights for the police displayed.

Councilor DelBuono said that during the campaign both sides promised to work together and believed that effort was visible at the meeting. She mentioned that the Wreaths Across America event would be held Saturday at 12 p.m. at West Meadow Cemetery sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution. She urged people to attend the ceremony.

Councilor Anest asked if neighborhood block watches could be brought back due to the recent rash of break-ins in Town. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah and a good holiday season.

Councilor Budrejko wanted to congratulate the choirs who sang and Company #1 for their efforts at the recent Night of Lights.

Councilor Nagel wished everyone a happy and productive holiday no matter what they celebrated and looked forward to seeing everyone next year.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: Pending Contract & Pending Lease

Councilor Klett made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss Legal and Labor Issues and the sale or purchase of Cedar Mountain property with the Town Council, Town Manager and the Town Attorney at 8:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilor Anest and the motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson
Clerk of the Council

Cc: T. Lane, Town Clerk