



Tanya Lane
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
L101 – Lower Level
7:00 P.M.

January 24, 2017

Mayor Zartarian called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

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:

Tanya Lane, Town Manager
Jamie Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager – Administration
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Nagel moved to change the order of the agenda so the State Legislators would appear before Old Business. The motion was seconded by Councilor Anest and was passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

IV. AWARDS/PROCLAMATIONS

A. Newington Knights Football and Cheerleading

Mayor Zartarian moved the following:

WHEREAS, the Newington Knights Midget Football and Cheerleading league was established over 50 years ago to provide the youth of Newington an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of football and cheerleading; and

WHEREAS, the Knights teams have been successful thanks to the efforts of its board members, volunteers, coaches, families and community; and

WHEREAS, these young football players and cheerleaders are enthusiastic and dedicated athletes who practice several days per week; and

WHEREAS, the Knights Midget Football 8U team, consisting of seven and eight-year old players, won the 2016 SPCW Regional Championship and was subsequently invited to participate in the 2016 Division 3 National Championship tournament in Michigan City, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, the Knights Pee Wee Cheerleading team placed second in the 2016 New England Pop Warner Cheerleading Competition and was subsequently invited to participate in the 2016 National Championship tournament in Orlando, Florida; and

WHEREAS, the players, parents, coaches and community came together to successfully raise funds for both teams to participate in their respective tournaments, the first time since 2007 that Newington has sent two teams to the National Championships; and

WHEREAS, the Knights Midget Football team won the National Championship in Michigan City and the Knights Pee Wee Cheerleading team placed third in the National Championship in Orlando; and

WHEREAS, the Knights' achievements brought national attention to Newington and demonstrated a positive accomplishment by the youth of this community;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council, on behalf of the residents of the Town of Newington, hereby extends sincere congratulations to the Newington Knights Football and Cheerleading teams on their performance at the 2016 National Championships and for making Newington proud with their dedication and accomplishments

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

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (In Person/Via Telephone: 860-665-8736)

Scott Greczkowski, 46 Miami Avenue: He asked the Town Council to consider creating a building committee for the Anna Reynolds School, which was in need of renovation. He felt the Town should move forward to determine what the cost would be. Maintenance had been stopped at the school, and he felt the bathrooms at a minimum should be cleaned up and painted.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill: He agreed with Mr. Greczkowski about the school and the creation of a building committee. He had read about the Board of Educations in the State being required to make public the evaluation of the school superintendent and hoped the Town Council would support the idea. Mr. Bachand said the Newington superintendent's evaluation was hidden and thought it should be disclosed. He also congratulated the cheerleaders and football players and welcomed back the Mayor.

(inaudible), Goodale, 1741 Main Street: She spoke about the structural analysis of the Deming Farm and her concerns. She indicated the Farm took no money from the Town and had insurance on the house. She was worried what would happen if the analysis found major issues with the building.

John Slusarski, 40 Grandview Drive: He thanked the Council for their efforts and wanted them to know they were appreciated. He was concerned about the unfunded teacher and union pensions at the State level as well as the possibility of Hartford going bankrupt. He suggested the council plan for the possible loss of State funding.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She welcomed back the Mayor and looked forward to hearing from the State legislators.

Dave Goodale, 1741 Main Street: He congratulated Mr. Minor on his efforts on the grant for the Deming Farm. He disagreed with the Town staff regarding the structural analysis. The focus of the Foundation in the past was to repair the farmhouse and complete the handicap bathroom.

VI. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

VII. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken)

A. State Historic Preservation Grant: Deming-Young Farm

He gave an overview of the grant, the process he went through and that he was still searching for a grant that could be used at the Farm. There was a grant available through the CT Historical office and could be used for the structural analysis. The grant was done on a quarterly basis so there was no rush to approve it.

Councilor DelBuono said that if the analysis came back with major issues what would happen then since it could not be ignored. She still had questions that needed to be answered and was glad they did not have to act on it right away. Councilor Nagel was concerned that if problems existed, the Town did not want it to close but did not want to have an unfair burden placed on the Foundation. Councilor Manke agreed it should be kept open but had to be safe for the public. He would support a grant to determine what needed to be done but wondered how corrections would be made to the house. Councilor Nagel thought it was a good idea to determine in writing what the Foundation's responsibilities were and what were the Town's. Tanya Lane was asked to research the past paperwork on the Farm and get back to the Council on that.

B. 2017 Budget Meeting/Public Hearing Schedule

Councilor Anest moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council, pursuant to Section 805 of the Newington Town Charter, will hold two Public Hearings on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2017-2018. These Public Hearings will be held at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall (unless otherwise indicated) as follows:

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Town Manager's Proposed Budget

Tuesday, April 4, 2017

Town Council's Proposed Budget

Councilor DelBuono seconded the motion and it passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

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

A. Annual Visit with State Legislators

Representatives Paul Doyle, Gary Byron, Tony Guerrera and Rick Lopes attended the meeting and gave an overview of some of the bills being proposed in the legislature. The Mayor asked about State funding to towns in the upcoming budget and was told it would be a difficult year and they would try to preserve town money for those who needed it the most. On February 8 Gov. Malloy would be speaking to the legislature, and they would have a better idea at that time. He had stated that he wanted to help cities and the legislators were curious as to what the Governor would propose.

The Governor wanted a lean budget and that might affect town money and aid. They stated revenues were up, which was a bright spot for the State.

Councilor Klett asked 1) would there be a hiring freeze at the State level similar to the freeze instituted by the President 2) what could be done about the empty busway buses and how could money be saved 3) towns were frustrated with the idea of bailing out Hartford. The legislators explained there had been layoffs and that savings had been achieved. The busway was being looked at for possible savings and the situation in Hartford might involve more funding of the PILOT program that would help Hartford but not other towns. There had to be a level playing field. It was felt that Hartford needed to develop a plan before money could be appropriated.

Councilor Budrejko stated there was a heavy tax burden on the residents already and asked would there be another increase this year. The legislators said there was no big increase planned but small fees on items might go up. More businesses needed to be attracted to Connecticut, which was something the leadership had to do. To improve the traffic in Hartford, a big dig proposal by Representative Larson had been proposed which would open up Hartford to new business and the Riverfront could then be expanded for tourists and events.

Another proposal to be considered was tolls to help pay for infrastructure improvements since the gas tax was not bringing in the needed revenue and would continue to go down due to gas consumption and hybrid vehicles. It was felt the gas tax would have to go up if tolls were not instituted.

Councilor Budrejko indicated the way overtime calculations were made should be changed as well as calculations for pensions of State employees. Councilor DelBuono asked about mandates and whether they would change the voting to a majority to a 2/3 majority and it was explained that did have bi-partisan support in the legislature. She also wanted to know if there was some way of cutting the costs of public notices and if some curbs could be established on special need students and the way the money was spent since there was no requirement on how the money should be used. Money was used for rent instead of counseling, etc. They indicated these were items that could all be looked at. In the past newspapers argued against allowing public notices to be electronic since a change would impact their revenue.

Councilor Nagel asked about 1) if grants would be available in the coming year 2) would the responsibility of teacher pensions be the future responsibility of each town and 3) the possibility of removing unfunded mandates. The legislators said grants have been diminished in the past years, the teachers pensions were a State mandate and would not be changed, and they needed to know from the towns which unfunded mandates should be removed. It was explained that each mandate had a lobby group behind it, and it was not easy to delete a mandate.

Councilor Klett asked about curtailing the abuse of handicapped stickers and was told the legislature was working on a solution but it was not an easy one.

Mayor Zartarian asked about regionalism and what proposals had been made and if there were incentives offered to towns to participate. They explained the topic would be brought up again since everything was on the table. The State could save money and so could towns in some cases.

Councilor Anest suggested the legislators meet with the Board of Ed as well since unfunded mandates affected them a great deal. They had met in the past with the Superintendent but not the whole board.

IX. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken) - none

X. TAX REFUNDS (Action Requested)

Councilor Budrejko moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$686.51 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 Nagel and passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

XI. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A. Regular Meeting, January 10, 2017

Councilor Manke moved to accept the above minutes and was seconded by Councilor Serra. The motion passed 6 – 0 (Councilor DelBuono/Mayor Zartarian-abstained).

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

Tanya Lane read a memo from the Town Planner regarding the progress at Alumni Road. There would be a presentation on the project February 13 and would be used for a basis for a public hearing.

XIII. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Nagel reported the Fire Commission held a thank you ceremony for those who contributed to the 9/11 Memorial. Plaques were given to the individuals for their many hours of service. He attended a CRCOG meeting and stated there was discussion about State and Town pension funding. A letter was to be given to the newspapers from CRCOG regarding various ideas, etc. A resolution was passed in favor of helping those towns impacted by residents crumbling foundations.

Councilor DelBuono indicated there had been a meeting of the Standing Insurance Committee but there was no quorum but did enable the members to introduce themselves and to discuss the goals of the committee. She said there were more scheduled CIP committee meetings (1/26/17, 2/2/17 and 2/9/17 at 6 p.m.). They were in the process of getting requests from department heads.

Councilor Anest said the Open Space Committee would have a presentation on Wednesday for creating an open space zone regulation and to designate the Town’s parks as open space.

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (In Person/Via Telephone: 860-665-8736)

None

XV. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Nagel said the Library’s Wine and Cheese event went well and congratulated everyone involved.

He congratulated the Mayor on his return to the Town Council.

Mayor Zartarian thanked everyone for the support he received from all in the Town while he was recuperating and thanked the Council members for the flowers they sent to him.

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: REAL ESTATE

Councilor DelBuono moved to go into Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor Manke. The motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Marocchini-absent).

Councilor Manke moved to adjourn from Executive Session at 9:46 p.m. Motion seconded by Councilor DelBuono. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor Marocchini absent).

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Anest moved to adjourn at 9:46 p.m. Motion seconded by Councilor DelBuono. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor Marocchini absent).

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson
Clerk of the Council