

WOLCOTT TOWN COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Wolcott Town Hall, Council Chambers

7:30 P.M.

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MINUTES

Note: These are summary minutes; a tape recording of this meeting is on file in Commission Secretary's Office in Wolcott Town Hall.

Chairman Santogatta called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, and attendance was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Michael Santogatta, Vice-Chairman Steven Olmstead, Michael Bokon, David Valletta, Michael Perrone, Gale Mastrofrancesco, Francis Masi, Charles Marsella, and Rachel Wisler

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Dunn; Linda Bruce, Municipal Finance Officer; Brian Tynan, Town Attorney; Taxpayer: Cathe Sherman; et al.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

▪ Regular Meeting – February 15, 2011

Upon **MOTION** by Francis Masi, seconded by David Valletta, it was unanimously voted to **approve** the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 15, 2011.

TAXPAYERS' TIME: (Limited to Items on the Agenda)

1. **Cathe Sherman, of 416 Boundline Road**, came forward and stated that she would like to speak on the Planning & Zoning appointments that are on the agenda. Last year, Mayor Dunn asked Chris Edquist if he would step down from a regular member to an alternate member so that Mr. Steven Olmstead's son, Bill, could join the commission; Mr. Edquist acquiesced to the Mayor's request and was very understanding. She stated that she believes this evening that the Mayor will be recommending that Mr. Edquist be appointed back to regular member and she is hoping that the Council supports that.

CORRESPONDENCE (on file):

1. Finance Office Transfer, submitted by Linda Bruce
2. Letter dated February 24th from Mayor Dunn regarding his recommendations for appointments to the Planning & Zoning Commission
3. Letter dated February 24th from Linda Bruce regarding selection of Audit Firm (bid comparison attached)
4. 2011 Schedule of Budget Meetings with the Town Council and Various Town Departments and Commissions

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MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Dunn came forward and reported the following:

- Received a letter from the State of CT regarding the final plans for the traffic light at Route 69 & Woodtick Road; the project will begin in April;
- He will be putting together a road reconstruction plan again; he did this a few years ago, however, it did not pass; he will be holding informational meetings so that the public will understand the facts; they will not be going out to bond, but out for a BAN (Bond Anticipation Note), which will defer the payments out to three years;
- In addition, the high school is in great need of a waterline; the project will require a tank or a pump station; approximate cost is \$1.1 million dollars
- Neither road reconstruction or a waterline can be paid for with the Town's normal operating budget
- There was a leak at the Library yesterday; it was not coming through the roof; it is from the drain pipe; it was being repaired today;
- He has chosen Bill Barratt to be the Irish Mayor for the Day

A question and answer period followed, during which discussions were held regarding the following:

- Letter regarding access to Edgewood Cemetery; Council will be briefed by Attorney Tynan in Executive Session; it is a legal matter;
- Copies of new Charter will be distributed tomorrow and posted on website;
- Town Line Road and Tosun Road area; work will begin on Tosun Road this year; there is one million dollars available; specifics of project were detailed;
- Condition of the roads; very large potholes everywhere; specific roads were discussed;
- Issue of CO2 monitors in the schools; Mayor will follow up as to whether there are any in the Wolcott Schools;
- Dumping in Town Line Road and Nutmeg Valley Road areas; request for more patrols in the area at night

Chairman Santogatta noted that the Town's bond debt is going down and agreed that the roads cannot be repaired through the normal operating budget. He suggested that the Mayor also recommend a substantial amount of funds to be placed in the capital reserve account to help with some of the roads; if it is not in the budget request by April 1st, the Council cannot put it in. Discussion followed regarding the construction of the upcoming budget and the expenditures that the Town needs to make.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT/TRANSFERS:

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Mrs. Bruce came forward and reported the following:

- Finance Office personnel continue to work with the Mayor in regards to the FY 2011-2012 budget;
- Gasoline bid is due on March 7th at 11:00 a.m.;
- Electricity generation services bid is due March 16th at 2:00 p.m.;
- All of the bids are listed with the option to reject any and all bids;
- The way fuel is going right now, they may accept or put it out at a later date; they are watching the futures daily;
- The Medical Benefits Committee, which consists of the Mayor, MFO, Superintendent of Schools, and the Board of Education Business Manager, met; they are required to meet and review claims experience and decide as to the level of funding that will go into the medical internal service fund each fiscal year; they have agreed to the budgeted contribution; the General Gov't contribution remains level at \$1,237,000.00; the Board of Education contribution increased by \$40,000 for a total of \$4,216,986.00

Mrs. Bruce next advised that she has submitted the following transfer for approval:

Upon **MOTION** by Francis Masi, seconded by Michael Perrone, it was unanimously voted to **approve** the following transfer; Fire Dept. – 221, to 01-2-221-3-3991 In-Service Training \$7,000.00, from 01-2-221-4-4901 Insurance Supplement \$7,000.00.

With respect the above transfer, a lengthy discussion ensued with respect to the status of the respective line items. Mrs. Bruce advised that the training costs have increased per firefighter and that there is an increase in the number of firefighters. Also, the insurance costs came in lower than what the insurance agent of record recommended that they place in the budget. Mr. Marsella proceeded to give a detailed explanation of how the training has changed over the years; the requirements, state certifications, and training procedures today are much stricter and more costly. He added that they have also had a great influx of new firefighters this year; there are ten new members, normally they only have one or two.

Mrs. Bruce next referenced the letters she submitted in the Council packets which explain her recommendation of awarding the audit bid to BlumShapiro instead of Seward & Monde; she also reviewed the bid comparison analysis (**see attached**).

Upon **MOTION**, by Michael Perrone, seconded by Rachel Wisler, it was unanimously voted to **move** New Business up on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS:

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1. Award Bid for Audit Services for FY 2010-2011

A **MOTION** was offered by Francis Masi, seconded by Gale Mastrofrancesco, to **award** the bid for Audit Services for FY 2010-2011 to BlumShapiro.

A brief question and answer period transpired regarding the differences in the two firms; discussion followed during which the Council agreed that BlumShapiro is the best choice for the Town.

Chairman Santogatta called for a vote on the above motion which **carried** unanimously.

SUB-COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS:

Chairman Santogatta advised that they will be getting an update from the Negotiations Committee in executive session.

Civilian Police Review Board: Mrs. Wisler reported that the Board met on February 3rd; they are seeking to establish bylaws and will be checking with other towns in the State that have such Boards.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Discussion Regarding Proposed Blight Ordinance

Attorney Tynan advised that he met with the Ordinance Committee and with two residents on Tuesday night. At that point, they made a few revisions, and since then he has received additional suggestions. They are very close to having this ready to be presented to the public and he requested that the Council set a Public Hearing before the next meeting in two weeks. He will submit the final version by the end of the week.

Upon **MOTION**, by David Valletta, seconded by Francis Masi, it was unanimously voted to **set** a Public Hearing on the proposed blight ordinance on **Tuesday, March 15, 2011, at 6:30 p.m.**, in the Council Chambers of the Wolcott Town Hall.

2. Discussion & Possible Action on Proposed Employment Agreement for Deputy Police Chief

Upon **MOTION** by Francis Masi, seconded by Gale Mastrofrancesco, it was unanimously voted to **accept** the proposed Employee Agreement for the Deputy Police Chief (**on file**).

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3. Appointment of Planning & Zoning Commissioners (as recommended by the Mayor)

A **MOTION** was offered by Michael Bokon, seconded by Francis Masi, to **approve the appointment** of Chris Edquist as a regular member to the Planning & Zoning Commission, as recommended by the Mayor.

Mrs. Mastrofrancesco stated that she is disappointed with the small amount of women that are on the Boards that the Mayor recommends with Council approval. She understands that Mr. Edquist stepped down to allow Mr. Olmstead's son to be placed on the Commission. She does not think it is intentional, but an oversight; they should be more aggressive in reaching out to women in the community. Right now they have an opportunity to place a woman, Vanessa Malena, who currently sits as an alternate on this Commission, as a regular member. She is requesting to return the Mayor's recommendation back to him for his review.

Mayor Dunn commented that he can only make recommendations based on what is submitted to him by both of the Town Committees and by letters that he receives from residents expressing interest.

Chairman Santogatta reminded the Council that they can only approve or deny recommendations that are submitted to them by the Mayor.

Discussion followed during which various comments were made with respect to the make-up of the Planning & Zoning Commission in the past, and the make up of various other Boards and Commissions; it was noted that many women have been, and are currently, involved. Mr. Marsella stated that the Mayor only gets a limited number of individuals that volunteer to serve on Boards and Commissions and that it is difficult for him to make recommendations without a lot of names in front of him. Debate continued regarding this matter.

Upon **MOTION** by Francis Masi, seconded by Michael Bokon, it was unanimously voted to **move** the question.

Chairman Santogatta called for a vote on the motion to approve the appointment of Chris Edquist which **carried** by a majority; Gale Mastrofrancesco opposed.

A **MOTION** was offered by Francis Masi, seconded by Michael Bokon, to **approve the appointment** of Tim Sullivan as an alternate member to the Planning & Zoning Commission, as recommended by the Mayor.

Mrs. Wisler questioned why a Republican alternate member is being replaced with an individual who is a Democrat, at which time Mayor Dunn replied that vacancies do not have to necessarily be replaced with the same party affiliation,

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as long as the make up of the Commission follows the Charter. He noted that two Republicans were just recently seated to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Chairman Santogatta called for a vote on the motion to approve the appointment of Tim Sullivan which **carried** by a majority; Gale Mastrofrancesco opposed.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:

- Discussion & Possible Action on Proposed Blight Ordinance
- Budget Building

Chairman Santogatta advised that if anyone has any items for the next agenda to contact himself or the Clerk.

TAXPAYERS' TIME:

No taxpayers came forward.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Upon **MOTION** by Michael Bokon, seconded by Rachel Wisler, it was unanimously voted to take a ten minute recess at 8:27 p.m. and then **enter** into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the following items: (1.) Negotiations Matter, (2.) Contractual Matter, and (3.) Other Legal Matters, inviting Mayor Dunn and Town Attorney Brian Tynan.

Chairman Santogatta called the regular session back to order at 9:32 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon **MOTION**, Charles Marsella, seconded by, Steven Olmstead, it was unanimously voted to **adjourn** the regular meeting at 9:33 p.m.

APPROVED:

Elizabeth Gaudiosi, Secretary
WOLCOTT TOWN COUNCIL

Michael J. Santogatta, Chairman
WOLCOTT TOWN COUNCIL