



Watertown Town Council
Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris
Council President

Stephen P. Corbett
Vice President

John A. Donohue
Councilor At Large

Susan G. Falkoff
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis
District A Councilor

Cecilia Lenk
District B Councilor

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.
District C Councilor

John J. Lawn, Jr.
District D Councilor

Town Council Meeting
Tuesday, December 7, 2010 at 7:15
Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber
Administration Building

MINUTES

1. **ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:15 pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Councilor Lawn arrived after the call of the roll. Vice President Corbett was absent.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** [November 9th](#) and [November 23, 2010](#). Councilor Piccirilli read a [statement](#) explaining the reason for a proposed amendment to the November 9th minutes offered by Councilor Falkoff. Councilor Falkoff moved the minutes of November 9th as amended, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative. Councilor Piccirilli moved the minutes of November 23rd as written, seconded by Councilor Falkoff and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.
4. **PUBLIC FORUM** – none noted.
5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS AND VOTES:**
 - a) On a [Proposed Amendment](#) to the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget. The Manager provided an overview of the proposed amendment. The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to the adopt the amendment to the FY 2012 Budget, seconded by Councilor Donohue and adopted by a roll call vote of 7 for, 0 against and 1 Present; with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative and Councilor Lawn voting Present.

- b) On a [Proposed Order](#) allocating the property tax levy among and between classes for Fiscal Year 2011. The Chair read a [letter](#) from the Watertown/Belmont Chamber of Commerce in favor of the recommended tax shift and residential exemption of 1.75% /20%. Mr. Frank Golden, Town Assessor provided an in-depth power point presentation. Following the presentation, the Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Kounelis inquired are there any other disadvantages in going to a 25% shift rather than the recommended 20% other than the burden being shifted to the non-owner occupied properties which are income revenue driven properties. Mr. Golden stated that the decision is one that the Council must make and not for him to say and whether or not you want to impact the rental community. Councilor Kounelis also inquired; if we want to, could we go back to the 20% shift. Mr. Golden stated, yes. Councilor Kounelis also stated that she didn't think the rental market could bear too much more of the increase and she stated that she thought the property owner would absorb the increase.

Councilor Falkoff asked Mr. Golden why the Chamber of Commerce would be in favor of the recommended shift. Mr. Golden stated that the percentage is down on the average and they are getting some relief.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the current and recommended tax shift of 1.75%-20%, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by a roll call vote of 7 for, 1 against and 0 present with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, John J. Lawn, Jr., Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative and Councilor Kounelis voting No.

- c) On a [Proposed Order](#) setting optional tax exemptions for Fiscal Year 2011. Councilor Kounelis stated that she will recuse herself from the vote and left the room. Mr. Golden provided a brief review of the tax exemptions with a recommended 100% maximum allowable increase above the statutory levels projected to be \$233,200 and paid from the Overlay account. The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed. Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the tax exemptions for Fiscal Year 2011, seconded by Councilor

Lawn and adopted by a unanimous vote of 7 in favor, 0 against with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative and Councilor Kounelis recusing herself.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a) Committee on Public Works [report](#) on the status of the Town's recycling program; permit fees and penalties and [report](#) and action on [appointments/re-appointments](#) to the Environment Energy Efficiency Committee – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair. Councilors Falkoff and Piccirilli read the two Committee reports. Councilor Kounelis moved to accept both reports, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

Councilor Falkoff moved the appointments of Ms. Hammerle, Ms. Fields, and Mr. Kahn to the Environment Energy Efficiency Committee, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

- b) Committee on Budget and Fiscal Oversight [report](#) on the development and recommendations on the FY 2012 Budget Policy Guidelines – Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Chair. Councilor Piccirilli read the report. He noted that the Committee unanimously voted to recommend the FY 2012 Budget Policy Guidelines and to adopt the single 2009 Audit Report.

Councilor Kounelis moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

Councilor Piccirilli highlighted the Budget Policy Guidelines as recommended by the Committee.

Councilor Kounelis moved the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Policy Guidelines, seconded by Councilor Lenk. The Chair thanked all who were involved in process of developing the guidelines. Councilor Kounelis concurred and thanked Councilor Piccirilli in particular.

Amendment 1: Councilor Falkoff stated that she will withdraw her previous suggestions except one; separate the DPW IV (a) program enhancements into two items starting with the words (examine staff instruction), seconded by Councilor Piccirilli.

Councilor Palomba stated that he had suggested that the Committee reduce the capital expenditures for next year for which the Committee responded that it was not fiscally prudent to set a goal that would not allow the town to maintain its infrastructure. He asked for an explanation for this reasoning and what is the figure that allows the town to maintain its infrastructure.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that the debt load is 7.5-8% of the operating budget and noted that the town's current long-term debt is 6.7% which is debt assumed with bond issuances that the Town is legally responsible to pay. He added that the Committee determined that it is not prudent to set a goal which we cannot pay our debt load as the Town would be automatically in non-compliance with our debt both in the long term and short term with no new capital programs including maintenance, road work, etc. for many years. He added that it has been a long held principle not to defer maintenance of infrastructure.

The Town Manager provided a further explanation regarding long term debt (permanent debt with no latitude) and planned debt (street and side walk) would equal 6.7% of the budget.

Councilor Palomba asked if the difference is between 8% and 6.77%.

The Manager answered that it is equal to 7.5% to 8%.

The Chair stated that Councilor Palomba is asking for clarity for the public.

Amendment 2: Councilor Falkoff asked to amend the guidelines to add the words "**including debt and**". Councilor Palomba and Lenk concurred with adding the language for clarity for the community at large.

Councilor Kounelis concurred and seconded the motion.

Councilor Palomba asked for additional language to IV (d) program enhancements branch libraries/former police building as it would be helpful to have a short survey asking department heads what their space needs are.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that it has been determined that there will be no municipal use of the two branch libraries. As for the former police station, the matter is being studied by the Economic Development Committee to examine the municipal use of the building and a report back to the Council. He noted that it goes without saying that there will be input by the Administration.

Amendment 3: Councilor Falkoff stated that she had asked to add the words “**options for and**”, seconded by Councilor Lenk.

The Manager stated that Mr. Magoon has been approached already by requests from department heads for municipal use of the former police station to address space needs.

Upon request, Councilor Falkoff re-read the 3 amendments. Following the reading:

- The Chair asked for a vote on the first amendment. The amendment was adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.
- The Chair asked for a vote on the second amendment. The amendment was adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.
- The Chair asked for a vote on the third amendment. The amendment was adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.
- Councilor Lenk moved to adopt the full document as amended, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the single [Audit Report for 2009](#), seconded by Councilor Palomba and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

7. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

- a) [First Reading](#) on an Ordinance related to the Prohibition of Illicit Discharges to the Storm Drainage System and Referral to Committee. The Chair provided a first reading of the matter and recognized the Manager who provided a brief overview of the proposed ordinance. The Chair referred the proposed Ordinance to a joint committee of Rules and Ordinances and Public Works for study and a report back. The referral was moved by Councilor Piccirilli, seconded by Councilor Lawn and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

8. NEW BUSINESS – none noted.

9. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

- a) Request for an Extension for the Charter Review Commission: The Chair requested a motion to extend the Charter Review Commission deadline for a report to be submitted beyond 2010 as the Chair noted the Commission needs additional time to continue their work into the 2011 calendar year. Councilor Donohue moved the request, seconded by Councilor Lawn and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.
- b) The Chair indicated that the School Committee is looking for public comments on a draft Bullying Policy mandated by the State. Resident may visit the School’s website for more information.
- c) The Chair encouraged Councilors to schedule any and all remaining committee items that are pending a meeting and/or report. He thanked Councilors for their continued diligence and noted the unprecedented level of referrals and work handled by the each of the committee chairs and their respective members.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER – none noted.

11. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – none noted.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Chair wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

13. PUBLIC FORUM – none noted.

14. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Town Council, Councilor Lawn moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm, seconded by Councilor Palomba and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors John A. Donohue, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

[Addendum.](#)

[Adopted Budget Policy Guidelines for 2012.](#)

A DVD of the meeting is available upon request.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted on January 25, 2011 by voice vote as amended.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President