



Watertown Town Council

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President

Michael F. Dattoli,
Councilor At Large

Aaron P. Dushku,
Councilor At Large

Susan G. Falkoff,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

Kenneth M. Woodland,
District D Councilor

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2016 AT 7:15 P.M. RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL

Council President Sideris called to order a regular meeting of the Town Council at 7:15 p.m. in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Those present were Councilors Michael F. Dattoli, Aaron P. Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Lisa J. Feltner, Angeline B. Kounelis, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were Michael J. Driscoll, Town Manager, Mark Reich, Town Attorney, and Marilyn W. Pronovost, Town Council Clerk

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Mike Shepard – 108 Summer St. – Spoke about the need to finance the needs of the schools and offered an alternative solution.

Bruce Coltin – Marion Rd. – Spoke on the effects of the election and the effects of Government on taxpayers.

4. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

[Minutes of the October 25, 2016](#) Town Council Meeting

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the minutes of the October 25, 2016 meeting as corrected; Councilor Dattoli seconded it. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

5. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Sideris stated that 5,837 citizens of Watertown completed early voting. He requested a referral to the Committee on State, Federal, and Regional Government to assess the operation of early voting and to discuss how well it worked and what could be done better. Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer this matter to the Committee on State, Federal, and Regional Government; Councilor Dattoli seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Public Hearing and Vote on a Proposed Order Allocating the [Property Tax Levy Among or Between Property Classes](#) for Fiscal Year 2017

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the matter. He introduced Francis Golden, the Chairman of the Board of Assessors, who presented information regarding the Tax shift.

Mr. Golden presented information regarding the Tax Levy. He stated that in FY 16, the levy was \$90,873,906 and for FY 17, it will be \$95,783,184. The taxes are broken into two classes: Residential and Commercial Industrial Property (CIP). Under state law, the community may shift the tax burden up to 175% of the total levy to CIP property. The total value of property in the community is \$6,615,124,690. With the shift, the CIP rate is 25.34 and the residential is 13.70.

Watertown is 1 out of 13 communities that has elected to implement the residential exemption; currently it is a 20% discounted tax rate if the property is owner occupied. The exemption is funded by the non-owner occupied residential properties that are taxed at the full-assessed value without any credit.

The exemption benefits 62% of the community. The basic breakdown of the 62% is

- ~ 81% of single family homes
- ~ 60% of Condos
- ~ 52% of two-family homes
- ~ 33% of three family homes
- ~ 8.2% of Apartment units

Values increased by \$290 million for residential properties while it grew by \$44 million for CIP. It is anticipated that the CIP increase will grow in the next few years as more CIP is developed. The basic residential growth breakdown of value increase is

- ~ 6.2% for Single Family Homes
- ~ 7.4% for Condos
- ~ 3.44% for Two Family Homes
- ~ 3.75% for Three Family Homes

There are 356 Commercial properties within the community. Of these, 247 are worth less than \$1million and 109 are valued over \$1million.

Mr. Golden discussed varying exemption rates – 20%, 22%, 23%, and 25%. He suggested that the exemption rate should be the traditional 20% rate, but if an increase is elected, he felt 22% would be satisfactory. He informed the Council that of the 12 neighborhoods in Watertown, 8 appreciated.

Mr. Golden responded to several questions regarding projected commercial growth; the effect Proposition 2.5% has on the community; the types of growth in the community population; the need to increase the tax exemption to 25% so that longtime residents can afford to remain in the community; and the ways properties are assessed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the 2.5% tax levy increase with a 175% commercial shift and a 20% residential exemption; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion.

Councilor Dattoli moved to amend the motion so that the residential shift would be 22%; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion.

After a discussion on the 22% residential exemption, Councilor Dushku moved to amend the motion to a 25% residential exemption; Councilor Kounelis seconded the motion.

After discussion on the 25% residential exemption, President Sideris opened the hearing to the public; there being no speakers, the public hearing was closed.

The motion for a 25% residential exemption failed on a 2-7 roll call vote. Councilors Dushku and Kounelis voted in the affirmative; Councilors Dattoli, Falkoff, Feltner, Palomba, Piccirilli, Woodland, and President Sideris voted in the negative.

The motion to amend the residential exemption to 22% was adopted on a roll call vote of 7-2. Councilors Dattoli, Dushku, Falkoff, Feltner, Piccirilli, Woodland, and President Sideris voted in the affirmative; Councilors Kounelis and Palomba, voted in the negative.

A roll call vote was taken on the main motion as amended. The motion was adopted on a 7-2 roll call vote. Councilors Dattoli, Dushku, Falkoff, Feltner, Piccirilli, Woodland, and President Sideris voted in the affirmative; Councilors Kounelis and Palomba voted in the negative.

B. Public Hearing on a Proposed Order Setting [Optional Tax Exemptions](#) for Fiscal Year 2017

Councilor Kounelis recused herself from the discussion.

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the Tax Exemptions. President Sideris opened the hearing to the public; there being no speakers, the public hearing was closed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the Optional Tax Exemptions at 100% increase above the statutory limits; Councilor Dattoli seconded the motion. The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 8-0. Councilor Kounelis recused herself.

7. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDER, AND RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution Adopting a [Higher Maximum Qualifying Gross Receipts Amount](#) for Tax Deferred Applicants

Mr. Driscoll provided background and introduced Mr. DiVito, the Town Collector/Treasurer, who presented information regarding the resolution that would increase the maximum allowable gross receipts from \$40,000 to \$57,000 for tax-deferred applicants. Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the resolution increasing

the deferred rate to \$57,000; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

Mr. Divito informed the Council that he will conduct a workshop on this exemption at 10:00 am on December 21, 2016 at the Council on Aging office.

- B. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$60,000 from the Fiscal Year 2017 IT Part-time Salaries Account and the Fiscal Year 2017 Town Council Reserve Account to the Fiscal Year 2017 IT Contracted Services Account in order to Move Forward with the [Redesign of the Town's Website](#).

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the transfer. He introduced Mr. Mahoney, the IT Director, and presented consultants from CivicPlus, who is redesigning the Town's website. The consultants provided a demonstration of the redesign.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to transfer \$60,000 for the redesign of the town's website; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- C. Resolution Approving the Acceptance and Expenditure of a Gift of Funds in the Amount of \$200 from the Watertown Mall which will be Used to Purchase [Refreshments and Supplies](#) for Programs at the Senior Center.

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the resolution and requested a favorable consideration of it. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept and expend the gift of funds; Councilor Dattoli seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

- D. Resolution Approving the Acceptance of Gifts of Tangible Personal Property of [Daily Subscriptions of The Boston Globe and The Watertown Tab](#) to the Senior Center from Watertown Savings Bank.

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the resolution and requested a favorable consideration of it. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the gift of tangible personal property; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- A. Committee on Economic Development and Planning Report on [Medical Marijuana Clinics](#) – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair

ACTION ITEMS (For Consideration at the November 22, 2016 Town Council Meeting):

1. Recommendation that the Town Council Not Set a Cap but Consider Proposals for Letter of Support or Non-Opposition for Each Registered Marijuana Dispensaries (RMD) on a Case-by-Case Basis.
2. Recommendation to Require a Petitioner to Address Home Delivery in Any Proposal to be Considered by the Town Council for a Letter of Support or Non-Opposition.
3. Recommendation to Have the Special Permit Granting Authority to Set Conditions on Hours of Operation and not the Town Council

4. Recommendation to Have Mr. Magoon and the Town Attorney Investigate Potential Wording for a Zoning Amendment, or a Potential Regulation, Including the Possibility of Requiring a Minimum Distance Between RMDs, and Report Back to the Committee with a Recommendation.
5. Recommend a Petitioner Include a Proposed Host Agreement in any Proposal to be Considered by the Town Council for a Letter of Support or Non-Opposition

Prior to the reading of the report, President Sideris informed the public that the Action Items would be considered at the next meeting due to the sensitivity of the issue. Councilor Woodland read the report of the Committee. Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the report; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The report was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

- B. Committee on Public Works Report on the [2017 Roads Program](#) and other Related Public Works Matters – Aaron P. Dushku, Chair
ACTION ITEM: Request the Town Council to Approve the List of Streets to be Included in the 2017 Road Program

Councilor Dushku read the report of the Committee. Councilor Woodland moved to adopt the report; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The report was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

Councilor Dushku moved that the Town Council approve the list of streets to be included in the 2017 road program; Councilor Dattoli seconded the motion. After a brief discussion, the motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

- C. Committee on Rules and Ordinances Report on [Links in Agenda and Committee Referrals](#) – Kenneth M. Woodland, Chair

Councilor Woodland read the Committee report. Councilor Woodland moved to adopt the report; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The report was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Dattoli moved that an Informational Presentation be brought to the Town Council regarding an evaluation of OPEB prefunding or paying as you go options. After a short discussion, the motion was defeated on a 2-7 roll call vote. Councilors Dattoli and Palomba voted in the affirmative; Councilors Dushku, Falkoff, Feltner, Kounelis, Piccirilli, Woodland, and President Sideris voted in the negative.

Councilor Dushku moved that the Council consider implementing the Small Business Tax Exemption. It was stated that this matter is before the Committee on Economic Development and Planning; Councilor Dushku withdrew his motion.

Councilor Dushku moved to refer to the Committee on Economic Development and Planning the matter of discussing a Home Rule petition for a local option of completing a 185% tax shift to Commercial Industrial Properties; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Driscoll announced that there would be a Salute to Veterans concert held at the Middle School on Thursday, November 10, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. He further mentioned that there would be a ceremony and breakfast on Friday, November 11, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Marine Corporation League, 215 Mt. Auburn St.

He reminded the public that Town offices would be closed on Friday.

11. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION /REVIEW OF LIST OF PENDING MATTERS

Councilor Dattoli requested information regarding the financial benefits of funding OPEB by prepayment or pay as you go.

Councilor Feltner requested an update of the sidewalks repairs and if sandwich boards were ordered for the September primary.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Kounelis announced that on Monday, November 14, 2016 from 6:00-8:00 p.m., an informational presentation would be provided at the Shady Hill School, Cambridge regarding the Mt. Auburn Corridor study, specifically, the intersection at Mt. Auburn at Huron St. and Fresh Pond Parkway.

Councilor Palomba announced that on Thursday, November 17, 2016 a program entitled "Together We Can Erase the Stigma" will be held at the Watertown Middle School from 7:30 – 9:00. The keynote speaker will be U.S. Representative Katherine Clark.

Councilor Dushku announced that on November 29, 2016, there is a Planning Board meeting regarding the Arsenal Project's Transportation issues.

He also announced that on December 8, 2016, there will be a meeting at 6:00 pm at the Library regarding the Mt. Auburn Street plan as it relates to Watertown, especially as it affects Patten Street to School Street.

13. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers for the forum.

14. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

ADDENDUM

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of 9 for, 0 against, 0 present on November 22, 2016.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President
s/MWP

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2016 AT 7:15 P.M.
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

1. Minutes for October 25, 2016 Town Council Meeting (Item 4)
2. Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Classification Hearing, November 9, 2016 (Item 6A)
3. Public Hearing – Fiscal Note – Exemptions
From Town Manager to Town Council 10/20/2016 (Item 6B)
4. Resolution – Agenda Item – Resolution Adopting a Higher Maximum Qualifying Gross Receipts Amount for Tax Deferral Applicants
From Town Manager to Town Council 10/20/2016 (Item 7A)
5. Resolution – Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request
From Town Manager to Town Council 11/3/2016 (Item 7B)
6. Resolution – Agenda Item – Approval of Gift Expenditure
7. From Town Manager to Town Council 11/3/2016 (Item 7C)
8. Resolution – Agenda Item – Acceptance of Gifts of Tangible Personal Property
From Town Manager to Town Council 11/3/2016 (Item 7D)
9. Committee Report – Committee on Economic Development and Planning – Medical Marijuana Use – 10/26/2016 (Item 8A)
10. Committee Report – Committee on Public Works – 2017 Roads Program – 10/27/2016 (Item 8B)
11. Committee Report – Committee on Rules and Ordinances – Agenda Links and Committee Referrals – 10/24/2016 (Item 8C)