

MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008 AT 7:15 PM

RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

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 Stephen P. Corbett, Marilyn M. Petitto Devaney, Susan G. Falkoff, Jonathan Hecht, Angeline B. Kounelis, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Vice President Mark S. Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger. Also present were the Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll, Town Attorney Joe Fair and Council Clerk Valerie Papas.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: October 28th. Councilor Devaney moved to accept the minutes as amended, seconded Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

4. PUBLIC FORUM: none noted.

5. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE:

A. Public hearing and vote on a proposed Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2009 Budget. The Chair recognized the Manager who provided an overview noting that the following items contributed to the proposed Fiscal Year 2009 Amendment: Receipt of actual Cherry Sheet Estimated Receipts and Charges; New Growth number; payment in lieu of taxes; and sale of town property. The Chair opened up the hearing to the public. There being no comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Corbett asked why the pilot amount on the Tufts property increased so dramatically. The Manager stated that Tufts purchased the property on Mt. Auburn Street and working with the Town Assessor in negotiations, Tufts will pay dollar amounts in lieu of taxes comparable to the town of Quincy. He noted that the amount will increase 3% each year, for the next twenty years. Prior to the sale, the real estate taxes on the property were paid for by a private party.

Councilor Kounelis asked what the variance was in lieu of taxes compared to the real estate tax. The Manager stated that the real estate taxes by prospectus are \$1.3 million. He noted that it will now be redistributed.

Councilor Kounelis stated, so we are losing \$700,000 on the property. The Manager answered no, the town is gaining on the lieu of taxes, the nexus is redistributed among the remaining real estate tax base therefore the town is not losing on the bottom line, noting that it was a \$ 1.288 gain in lieu of taxes – redistributed among other real estate taxes, \$1.3 million versus the \$600,000.

Councilor Devaney asked how many students are included in Charter schools reimbursement tuition. The Manager stated that he doesn't know the exact number but will send a memorandum to Dr. Hiersche asking him to report back to the Council on that particular question.

Councilor Sideris moved the Budget Amendment, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

6. COMMITTEE REPORT:

A. Committee on Public Works report/and review of pending issues – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair. The Chair recognized Councilor Falkoff who read the Committee report (attached) regarding a number of ongoing issues. Councilor Sideris moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by voice vote.

The Chair asked if the Committee could look into why bicyclists are not using the new racks. He asked if it is an educational issue that can be addressed by our schools and the Bicycle Committee.

Councilor Lawn noted that the new bike racks have a very usual design and are not like the traditional ones.

Councilor Falkoff stated that perhaps the Manager could refer the President's question to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee for review and comment.

7. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS:

A. Informational Presentation on operational issues as they relate to the election activities of the November 4th National Election – Board of Election Commissioners and John E. Flynn, Town Clerk/Chief Election Officer. Mr. Curtis Whitney and Mr. John Flynn provided a presentation. Mr. Whitney noted that it was a smooth election and thanked the poll workers, staff and commissioners. Mr. Flynn noted an increase of eligible voters and increase in absentee ballots. Mr. Flynn thanked his staff, poll workers, police department, schools and public works for their assistance.

Councilor Lawn stated that there were long lines in precinct 8, and no lines in precinct 9 and asked if there will be a redistricting to balance out the inequity.

Mr. Flynn stated that due to the shift in census, there will most likely be a redrawing of the lines in 2010.

Councilor Devaney questioned if there is a process in place to deal with illegal voting. She also spoke in concern with respect to the closing of the Town Hall as a voting location and indicated that there is no parking at the Middle School from 7am to 4pm. Mr. Flynn stated that identification is required only when someone registers to vote or there if a social security number does not match.

Councilor Hecht asked if the election commissioners will consider moving to a two shift work day for poll workers. He noted that the work day can be as long as twelve to fourteen hours and is a long day for workers. Mr. Flynn noted that he look into two 6 hour shifts.

Councilor Falkoff asked how long voters had to wait at the polls. Mr. Flynn stated that the waiting time did not exceed 10-15 minutes even at peak times.

8. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

A. First Reading on a proposed Order allocating the property tax levy among and

between property classes for Fiscal Year 2009. The Chair recognized Town Assessor, Daniel Loughlin who provided a brief overview of the proposed Order. The Manager noted that the Order has been advertised for a public hearing and vote on November 25th.

B. First Reading on a proposed Order setting optional tax exemptions for Fiscal

Year 2009. The Chair recognized Mr. Loughlin who provided a brief overview of the proposed Order. The Manager noted that the Order has been advertised for a public hearing and vote on November 25th.

9. REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

The Chair stated that he attended an event for Veterans Day and noted the importance of honoring our veterans.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

The Manager announced 3 work session dates for the Coolidge School apartment application process. He also noted that the deadline of November 21st for applications have been extended to December 12th at the request of the Council.

11. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Councilor Kounelis stated that she has not received an answer to her previous questions regarding the pigeon issue. She indicated that she contacted Mass Highway and learned that they use rolling wooden doors or tarps for their salt sheds.

Councilor Kounelis asked for a status on the street and sidewalk list.

Councilor Falkoff asked for an update on the Secretary of State investigation regarding the previous election.

Councilor Devaney asked that amendments be allowed for the September 30th executive session minutes prior to being released.

The Chair asked if the Manager could look into utility lines being knocked down near Buick Street due to 8 wheeler trucking.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Kounelis announced that she will be stepping down as President of the EWBA.

Councilor Sideris asked that Councilors submit their comments regarding the policy guidelines by November 20th and announced that the next two budget and fiscal affairs meetings will be November 20th and December 2nd.

Councilor Piccirilli announced that yellow caution tape has been placed around three, large trees on the Lowell School property. He noted that Arborist Chris Hayward and an independent arborist indicated that the three trees are in poor health, are dangerous and need to be taken down. A presentation will be made on November 19th at the Lowell School regarding the removal of the trees.

The Manager noted that no formal tree hearing will take place due to the fact that the trees are not along the street but are on school property. The presentation on November 19th will explain the tree removal process.

Councilor Devaney congratulated the Pop Warner cheerleaders for their recent win noting that they will now go to Florida to compete.

Councilor Lawn indicated that the Police Building Committee met earlier this evening and that a report will be forthcoming.

13. PUBLIC FORUM

Maria Rose, Conversation Commission member, announced a film about water entitled "Liquid Assets" at the Main Library on December 4th.

There was a Moment of Silence for the passing of Skating Rink Director, Dan Brothers' mother.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilor Sideris moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm and go into executive session in order to discuss real property. It was noted that the Council will not return to open session following the adjournment of the executive session. The Motion was seconded by Councilor Hecht and adopted by voice vote.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting for which a quorum was present, the minutes were adopted by voice vote on November 25, 2008