



Town Council

*Kevin M. Manley, President
Paul L. Federici, Vice President
Kathleen G. Hill*

*Donald J. Anderson
Eric H. Madison
Michael J. Kane
Joseph Ford*

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MINUTES

Town Council Minutes

Tuesday, September 27, 2016 at 6:00 P.M.

Council on Aging Media Room, 328 North Main Street
East Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01028

Present: Kevin M. Manley, President, Paul L. Federici, Vice President, Kathleen G. Hill, Eric H. Madison, Michael J. Kane, Joseph Ford, Denise Menard, Acting Town Manager, Thomas P. Florence, Clerk of the Council.

The President of the Town Council opened the meeting at 6:00P.M. With the Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence. Announcements were made in accordance with G.L., 30A, s.20 (e). It was noted that ELCAT and Chris Goudreau of The Reminder were taping the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT & COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments offered.

BY-LAW SUB COMMITTEE INTRODUCTIONS/OBJECTIVES

President Manley explained that according to the charter, a By-law Review Committee is required to be established by August 1st. President Manley thanked the members of the committee for their time. The members of the By-Law Sub Committee are: Larry Levine, William Fonseca, Anthony Dieni, Peter Levesque, Ray Miller, George Kingston, Tom O'Connor and Marilyn Richardson.

Councilman Madison stated that the charge of Article 9, section 3 of the Charter is a big undertaking. He explained that the recommendations of the committee are due on April 12 and the Town Council will have a 90-day period to act on the recommendations and added that the committee works under the supervision of the Town Attorney. Mr. Florence stated he will coordinate the first meeting of the committee within the next two weeks. Discussion followed about open meeting law requirements in regard to meetings of the committee. The committee members were directed to address their questions to the Town Attorney regarding Open Meeting Laws.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

General Matters:

Office of Business Development Representative:

The State representative for the Office of Business Development presented options for economic development incentives that the Town can offer to businesses that are interested in expanding or relocating in East Longmeadow. Ms. Menard stated that once the research is completed on how it can benefit the Town, then the representative will be available to make a presentation to the Council, if interested.

Additional Liquor License Application: Ms. Menard requested that an additional one-day liquor license permit be added to the agenda for October 9th at St. Paul's the Apostle Church's Social Hall from 5-9 pm for beer only.

Tree 413 – Log Storage Adjacent to Rail Trail:

The application for waiver of site plan review that was submitted by the tenant was rejected by the Planning Board on September 20th so the issues at the site continue. Ms. Menard added that the tenant has been instructed to submit a full site plan by October 20th to avoid further action.

Phase 2 – Town Hall Renovations:

Phase 2 of the Town Hall renovations is expected to begin by November 1st and when she receives a copy of the plan, it will be provided to the Council.

New Officer:

The Town Council is invited to a brief ceremony to be held at the Town Hall at 9 am on October 3, 2016 for Officer Alex Serra to be sworn in.

Financial/licensing software:

Ms. Menard stated that after meeting with various departments, the Munis software system is being fine-tuned to provide a higher level of efficiency.

FY 2017-2018 Capital Projects:

A letter requesting departments' capital projects for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 is being distributed this week with a return date of November 4th. Ms. Menard and the Town Accountant will be working closely on the capital projects budget and it will be submitted to the Council for review and eventual approval.

Update on Reorganization of Town Departments:

The Town's budget categories for the coming fiscal year are being changed to reflect the new organizational structure and the job descriptions and salary ranges for the new positions established by the Charter are being gathered.

Financial Matters Motions:

Ms. Menard met with the Clerk of the Council and the Town Accountant regarding motions to financial matters that the Council has to make, and recommended that the Council receive suggested motions for these types of motions when they receive the agenda.

Staffing Updates:

Ms. Menard gave the following updates:

Assistant to the Town Manager:

A number of applications were received and requested approval to officially offer the position of Assistant to the Town Manager to Margaret Larocca, who has been acting in that capacity since July.

Motion: President Manley entertained a motion to approve the Acting Town Manager's request (to offer the position of Assistant to the Town Manager to Margaret Larocca). Seconded by Councilman Federici and all were in favor.

Councilman Madison requested the Acting Town Manager to post the position of Assistant Town Clerk. Ms. Menard stated that the position would be posted according to the TEU Contract.

Building Commissioner:

Three viable applications have been received for the Building Commissioner position and that she expects to have a recommendation to the Council at the October 11, 2016 meeting.

Library Director:

Ms. Menard stated that she met with the Library Trustees on September 14, 2016 and a process was agreed upon for interviewing candidates for the position of Library Director. Ms. Menard is waiting to hear when that will take place.

ACT ON MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2016

Motion: President Manley made a motion to approve the open session minutes of September 13, 2016. So moved by Vice-President Federici, Seconded by Councilman Kane. Councilman Madison abstained and all were in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS**Discussion of Regulations for BYOB Events:**

Ms. Menard explained that a request was received from "The Cupcake Lady" to hold BYOB events. Ms. Menard stated that there are a few communities that have regulations for a one-day BYOB event and asked the Council to review the information provided regarding the regulations. Councilman Madison stated that it needs further review.

One Day Beer & Wine Permit: – Masonic Temple of East Longmeadow, 43 Chestnut St, Saturday, October 15, 2016, 6 pm – 11 pm. Insurance on file.

Motion: President Manley made a motion to approve the one-day Beer & Wine permit for Masonic Temple on October 15th, So moved by Vice-President Federici, Seconded by Councilwoman Hill, and all were in favor.

One Day Beer & Wine Permit: UNICO East Longmeadow Chapter for a Porchetta buffet dinner, at St. Luke's Church, 400 Prospect St., Friday November 4, 2016

Motion: President Manley entertained a motion to approve the one-day liquor license for beer & wine at the UNICO event on November 4th. So move by Vice-President Federici, Seconded by Councilman Ford and all were in favor.

One Day Beer & Wine Permit: St. Paul the Apostle Church, 235 Dwight Road, Beer only, Sunday, October 9, 2016, 5 pm – 10 pm, One-day Entertainment license, insurance on file.

Motion: President Manley entertained a motion to approve St. Paul the Apostle one-day liquor license for October 9th, 5 – 10pm. So move by Vice-President Federici, Seconded by Councilman Ford and all were in favor.

Columbia Gas of Massachusetts Invitation:

Invitation to attend the official ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, October 13, 2016 at noon, 2025 Roosevelt Ave., Springfield, MA – Enter through gate 1.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OLD BUSINESS

Permanent Town Manager Search Update:

President Manley stated he spoke with the Collins Center about the Town Manager Screening Committee and asked Clerk Florence to give an update.

Screening Committee Timeline:

Clerk Florence gave an update of posting for people to volunteer for the Town Manager Screening Committee and the process and meeting dates for the committee. President Manley stated that the Collins Center wants to meet with the Screening Committee to go over the process. A discussion followed about the timeframe for the first meeting. Councilman Madison and Councilman Ford volunteered to serve on the screening committee. Councilman Kane and Councilwoman Hill offered their services if needed. It was decided that the Council President would make the appointments to the committee at the next meeting.

Council Priorities:

Councilman Madison gave an explanation of the aspects of the Charter that the Council has started to address and those that should be placed on the Council's priority list:

- #1 – Search for & hiring of a Town Manager – process has started
- #2 – Update of the Town By-laws – process has started
- #3 – Appointment of a Board of Health – process has been started by Health Director
- #4 – Restructuring of Town Departments & establishment of a Department of Finance & establishment of Planning & Community Development Department
- #5 – Begin to discuss financial priorities and goals
- #6 – Hire a Human Resources Director

Councilman Madison stated he would like the Council to establish a priority list with the examples he explained to set a positive direction for the community.

Councilman Kane stated that the Council has been working on the hiring of four Police Officers, a Building Commissioner and the law suit regarding the former Police Chief. Councilman Ford stated that most of the items on the list are in motion and are taking time to finalize. Discussion followed about having a process for the priority list and the importance for the Council of the appropriation of the town budget.

Ms. Menard stated she expects the financial priorities of the Council will flow once the Capital Plan is established and then the Town Council will need to discuss priorities for the coming year and the message to relay to department heads. Ms. Menard expects the process to start in November.

Councilman Madison gave an explanation of the intent of the Financial Sub-Committee is to bring their report to the Town Manager by the beginning of the year. Councilman Ford stated that the Council members need to take steps to formulate the vision that the Council wants to present to the departments. Ms. Menard spoke about presenting the budget to the Council on a monthly basis if they so desired. Councilman Madison spoke about the Sources & Uses document that the Appropriations Committee utilized and might be useful to the Council with alterations.

Hanward Hill Petition Update:

Councilwoman Hill gave a description of meeting with the Town Clerk, Superintendent of Schools, Officer Strohman, and Mr. Freccero of the School Committee to look at the concerns regarding spectator parking along Hanward Hill and ways to help mitigate the issues. Councilwoman Hill stated that the group will meet again in a week or two to come up with a short-term plan to bring to the Council. Councilwoman Hill explained that the group discussed the concern of the petition to have the voting moved to the High School and gave a description of the issues that prevent that from happening.

Petition for Crossing Guard Proposal at Overlook Drive:

Councilwoman Hill gave a description of the need for a crossing guard for the area. Councilwoman Hill stated that the majority of the students that bike to school in that area have purchased bus transportation for the colder months, and the urgent need has changed and the issue is under review.

Former Chief Mellis Outstanding Pay:

President Manley stated that if all the Council members agreed on the amount of the settlement, then a vote could be taken. Councilwoman Hill stated that the concern at the last meeting was the expiration date of the waiting period of the agreement.

The Town Attorney gave an explanation of the timeframe of the settlement agreement and noted that the final date of the agreement was September 13th.

Motion: Councilman Madison made a motion to approve a reserve fund transfer to fund \$165,000 for the settlement agreement for former Police Chief Douglas Mellis and additionally authorize the President to sign any associated paperwork as the representative of the Council. So moved by Vice-President Federici. Seconded by Councilman Ford. All were in favor.

Councilman Madison stated that after lengthy executive session conversations the Council sought to find a fair and equitable deal with Mr. Mellis but at the same time respecting the fact that the Council has a duty to the residents of the Town of East Longmeadow. Councilman Madison offered his gratitude to his fellow Council members on their conduct throughout the whole process and on a job well done.

Appropriations:

Pay Prior Year Bill:

Town Accountant Sara Menard gave a description of the prior year (FY16) unpaid bill from the Building Department and the process involved when departments submit bills for payment. Ms. S. Menard explained the options of funding the payment of the bill; raise & appropriate (add to tax rate); reserve fund transfer; and the use of free cash (not currently certified) once it has been certified. Ms. Menard explained that if the funding is not approved, then the Dept. of Revenue will penalize the Town on the free cash for the deficit and she recommends that appropriating the funds would be best. Ms. Menard gave a description of utilizing a reserve fund transfer and the process of raising & appropriating.

Motion: Councilman Madison motion to approve from the reserve fund \$596.87 for the purpose of paying the outstanding debt to W. B. Mason. So moved by President Manley, Seconded by Councilman Ford and all were in favor.

Councilman Ford inquired about the order process of the departments. Ms. S. Menard gave an explanation to the Council.

Sara Menard – Discuss FY16 year-end clean-up items & current status of audit:

Ms. S. Menard stated that the yearly audit has occurred; that it is 98% complete and went better this year. She stated that the auditors were happy with what they saw and that they will be sending a management letter. Ms. S. Menard stated that free cash will be certified early this year similar to last year and there were a couple of things that need to be addressed going forward regarding revolving funds. Ms. S. Menard gave an explanation of revolving accounts:

Council on Aging Account –The Council on Aging Revolving account did spend in excess of their authorization in fiscal 16. Ms. Menard stated that the program is funded by grants and continues to grow and it will most likely happen with fiscal 17. Ms. S. Menard requested the Council to increase the authorization for fiscal 17 by \$10,000 as the revolving account brings in revenue in an average year of \$113,000, with a balance of excess funds that continues to grow.

Motion: Councilman Madison motioned to authorize the revolving fund for transportation and nutrition at the Council on Aging from \$100,000 to \$110,000 annually. So moved by Councilman Ford. Seconded by Councilwoman Hill and all were in favor.

Community Preservation Account – Ms. S. Menard gave an explanation of using Community Preservation funds for the Pine Knoll pool renovations and that there is now a bond through the account that was previously a short-term bond anticipation note. During the FY16 budget process, the projected interest amount for the bond was short by approximately \$12,000. The General Fund paid the \$12,000 for the bond for the Community Preservation project. The CPC met on September 7th and approved the funding of the \$12,000 to the general fund and is requesting the approval of the Town Council.

Motion: Councilman Madison made a motion was made to accept a number not exceed \$12,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to the Town's General Fund to cover the costs associated with the bond to pay for the pool. So moved by President Manley, Seconded by Councilwoman Hill, and all were in favor.

Motion: President Manley made a motion to raise and appropriate \$5,000 for personnel services and \$12,000 for operating expenses for the library department #610 for a total fiscal year 2017 budget increase of \$17,000. So moved by Vice-President Federici. Seconded by Councilman Ford and all were in favor.

President Manley explained that this amount was agreed to at the last meeting but this language keeps the motion consistent.

Vice-President Federici shared comments he received from the Auditor saying that he is thrilled with the work the Town Accountant is doing for the Town and is pleased with how the books are and how the process is going.

Town Council Pay: A discussion began about a listing of various City Council & Board of Alderman Stipends/Salaries and an amount for the Council. Councilwoman Hill suggested that the Council should think about something that is reasonable but not look to be self-serving.

President Manley suggested figures of \$5,500, \$6,500 & \$7,500 for Council members depending on budget. Councilman Ford stated that relative to the commitment the members aren't looking for full-time compensation and the task was left to the Council to determine. Councilman Ford stated he would like to have a decision made so the Council can move forward. Discussion followed about gathering public input on the subject.

President Manley entertained a motion for Council pay. No motion was made. The topic was tabled to next opportunity to discuss.

Councilwoman Hill suggested that viewers of the meeting could email comments regarding Town Council Pay to the Town Clerk: Thomas.Florence@eastlongmeadowma.gov

Councilman Madison stated that the issue should be resolved by the next meeting. Councilman Kane stated that Councilman Anderson has information on the subject to share at the next meeting.

Councilman Madison requests – Establish Finance Sub-Committee:

Councilman Madison explained the concept to establish a Council Finance Sub-Committee and their role is to review all financial requests submitted to the Council for: any financial impact; the need; alternative funding sources if applicable; to recommend the most suitable funding source to the full Council; to monitor the financial impact throughout the year of appropriations made by the Council – specifically how those impact the tax rate, general fund and town reserves; and any other action that is requested by the Council on matters of finance. Other possible roles could include working with the Town Manager on Capital Budget and Annual Fiscal Budget and long-term borrowing. Councilman Madison explained that he envisioned no more than 3 members to serve on the sub-committee to work with the Town Manager, Town Accountant and Town Clerk. Discussion followed about the meeting dates of the sub-committee the concept of the sub-committee. Councilman Madison gave examples of tasks of the sub-committee.

Ms. Menard gave an explanation of the process she uses for financial matters to be brought to the Council. It was decided to stay with the process the Acting Town Manager is using and re-address if necessary.

Inclusion of “Council Member Comments” in Rule 5E, Order of Business:

Councilman Madison spoke about including a section on the agenda for Council Member Comment as an opportunity for Council members to make observations, statements or comments. Ms. Menard stated that in the Council Rules, #8 allows for it.

President Manley made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Chapter 214 Section 1B of the General Laws to discuss matters involving an individuals’ right to privacy to return to open session to adjourn. The motion was moved. Seconded by Councilman Madison. Councilman Madison-yes, Council President Manley-yes, Council Vice-President Federici-yes, Councilman Ford-yes, Councilwoman Hill-yes, Councilman Kane-yes.

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by: Margaret Larocca