



Town Council

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

*Donald J. Anderson
Eric H. Madison
Michael J. Kane
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MINUTES

Town Council Minutes

Tuesday, October 25, 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 6:01P.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 was taping the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

Councilman Madison spoke about American Saw/Newell Rubbermaid being sold to Black & Decker and suggested that the Council consider sending correspondence welcoming Black & Decker to the town and offered to draft a letter to bring back to the Council for their consideration. Vice President Federici commented that Stanley/Black & Decker is located locally in New Britain, Connecticut and hopefully will keep the facility.

Councilwoman Hill explained that she was approached by a resident that has been cleaning up at the Bark Park when he is there and has noticed that there is a marked increase of disposed hypodermic needles. The resident asked if a representative of the town could investigate the area and make it more secure after hours. Councilman Kane stated that the Police should be notified of the situation.

Reminder: NOVEMBER 10TH DATE FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING DUE TO STATE ELECTION

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

The Town Manager gave updates on the following:

General Matters:

Town Council Stipends: At the last meeting, the Council asked how stipends were paid to other boards in Town. The Finance Department said most are monthly and suggested that a monthly payment is the easiest for them.

Fire Department Emergency & Emergency Response: The Fire Department will begin responding to medical emergencies to assist our current ambulance service provider.

Chief Paul Morrissette gave an explanation of the occurrences that will necessitate the Fire Department to assist. Vice-President Federici commented about AMR contract requirements. Chief Morrissette gave a description of a recent problem and AMR's response. A discussion followed about the AMR contract. Councilman Madison congratulated the Fire Department on taking a pro-active approach at EMS, and stated it would be a win-win for the town. Councilman Ford asked Chief Morrissette about the timeframe was for the EMS plan. Chief Morrissette gave a brief description of his plan. Councilman Ford stated it should be evaluated sooner than later. Chief Morrissette stated he would put some information together. Councilman Madison spoke about having an EMS Enterprise Fund and working with surrounding communities regarding ambulance service.

Public Hearing 6:30 PM: Tax Classification Hearing Meeting with Board of Assessors

Council Clerk Florence introduced Diane Bishop, Director of Assessing and Martin Grudgen, Chair of Board of Assessors.

President Manley explained that the purpose of the hearing was to determine the percentages of tax levy to be formed by each class of real and personal property for Fiscal Year 17 and for open forum for the discussion of local property tax policy.

Mr. Grudgen explained that residential property values have risen, and because of that a lower tax rate has been chosen. Ms. Bishop explained that the Town Council will be required to vote if there is going to be a factor of one (a single tax rate) or a split tax rate. Ms. Bishop gave an explanation of the information that was used to compute the FY17 tax rate. Ms. Bishop gave a summary of tax rate options and a description of shifting the tax rate between the classes. Mr. Grudgen gave a description of new growth level in the town. Mr. Grudgen state that a split tax rate is generally used by cities. Ms. Bishop gave a description of surrounding communities with single tax rates. Ms. Bishop gave a description of other tax rate shift options.

President Manley asked for any public comment.

Mr. Ralph Page urged the Council to keep a tax rate of one.

Mr. Charlie Christianson, representing the East of the River Five Town Chamber, encouraged the Council to stick with a single tax rate and gave a description of reasons for it.

Ms. Nancy Connor, Executive Director of the ERC5-East of the River Five Town Chamber reinforced Mr. Christianson's comments and urged the Council to keep a single tax rate.

President Manley closed the Public Hearing.

Motion: Councilman Madison moved that the Town of East Longmeadow adopt for the Fiscal Year 2017 tax rate a factor of one, a single tax rate with no residential or small commercial exemptions. Councilman Ford seconded, and all were in favor.

Ms. Bishop gave a description of a document that needs the Town Council's signature. Discussion followed about the amount of the tax rate.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT, continued

Great Horse Golf Course in Hampden: Hampden Selectmen's Office has been contacted to inquire about a rumored development by Great Horse Golf Course in Hampden. Superintendent of Public Works stated he had not been contacted about a proposal for them to hook into the East Longmeadow water and/or sewers and after checking he was told that Great Horse was under the impression that getting approval from East Longmeadow would not be a problem. Ms. Menard stated that she will be attending meetings in Hampden to keep up on the issue. Councilman Ford asked what the impact of the project will be on East Longmeadow. Ms. Menard stated that the Town Attorney is looking into the requirements for statutory decisions by various boards. Mr. Madison stated concerns pertaining to the rumored project and if it would be brought before the Council. Councilman Ford asked Ms. Menard to continue to investigate the issue.

Proposed Zoning By-law changes: The Planning Board has proposed changes to their by-laws to reflect the change to the Town Council/Town Manager form of government. A copy has been provided to the Town Attorney to check for accuracy and he is doing research on the new Charter's impact on statutorily required functions of required functions of particular Town boards.

Mr. Ralph Page gave a description of the changes that were made to the Zoning By-Laws and an explanation of the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 40A Section 5. Mr. Page inquired about the timeframe to submit the changes. Attorney Donahue gave a description of the submission process for the proposed Zoning By-law changes. Mr. Page gave a description of the timeframe of the Zoning/Planning Board once the changes are approved by the Town Council. Attorney Donahue gave an explanation of the process for the proposed Zoning By-Law changes. A discussion followed about addressing the clerical changes as a whole or individually.

Sale of American Saw/Lenox: American Saw/Lenox has been sold to Stanley Black & Decker. The Planner and Acting Town Manager will meet with representatives of American Saw to understand what the impacts will be to our community.

Expansion of Senior Transportation: The Council on Aging Director, Carolyn Brennan, is working on expansion of senior transportation to include Longmeadow and Hampden. The program is grant funded. Ms. Brennan spoke about the creation of the transportation program and stated that the PVTA would like to use the East Longmeadow program as a model for their program. She added that there is a memorandum of understanding between the Town and the PVTA. Ms. Brennan is confident that the program will be successful. Ms. Brennan gave a description of details of the program.

Abatement of Meeting Room Space: Phase 2 of the Town Hall renovation is scheduled to begin on November 7th.

STAFFING UPDATES:**Assistant Town Clerk**

The Acting Town Manager requested Town Council approval to offer the Assistant Town Clerk position to a very strong candidate. The Council members agreed to the approval.

Library Director

First interview for the Library Director's position are scheduled for this week and second interview will soon follow.

Building Commissioner

After much discussion, the Planner, Councilman Kane and the Acting Town Manager have agreed to recommend that the Town should not hire a Building Commissioner that is not fully certified to avoid problematic situations. It was suggested to advertise the position again in January. The Acting Town

Manager is looking into alternative ideas for staffing the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement position and followed with a brief description. Councilman Ford suggested a method to advertise for the position. Discussion followed about strategies to fill the position.

Human Services Director-Director of Planning & Community Development and Director of Municipal Finance

The Acting Town Manager is putting together job descriptions and salary ranges for these new positions

The Acting Town Manager stated that the Charter mandates that the Acting Town Manager must receive approval from the Council for any hiring, terminating or discipline of employees. She added that there are a couple of employee matters that have reached the level of discipline and will require Council approval and asked how to get that approval with sensitivity to the employees' privacy and rights falls to the Council to decide. Ms. Menard requested that the matter be discussed at the next Council meeting.

ACT ON MINUTES & MOTIONS OF OCTOBER 13, 2016 OPEN SESSION

Motion: Councilman Madison made a motion to accept the Minutes as submitted for the October 13, 2016 Open Session. Councilman Madison made a minor change on the second page to add Municipal Finance Act, and not the Municipal Finances. So moved by Councilwoman Hill, seconded by Councilman Ford. All were in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Invitation for the Council member from the Springfield Regional Chamber Annual Government Reception – Thursday November 17th, 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Storrowtown Carriage House in West Springfield.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

OLD BUSINESS:

Town Manager Screening Committee Update

Councilman Ford stated that the first meeting was held on October 14, 2016 and Mr. Kobayashi from the Collins Center attended to give instructions, guideline and answer questions. Mr. Ford stated that the next meeting will be on Friday, November 4th at the Council on Aging Conference Room and gave a description of the agenda for the meeting. Mr. Ford gave a timeline of the schedule for the interviews and a description of the actions that will be taken.

Municipal Modernization Act Changes ([www.mass.gov.DLS](http://www.mass.gov/DLS))

Mr. Florence gave a description of the information he sent to the Council members of the Act that will directly affect the Town.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election Update

Mr. Florence gave a description of the first days of the early voting process. Mr. Florence predicted that the voter turnout for East Longmeadow will be above the state's projections. Mr. Florence gave an explanation of the process of handling the early voting ballots, the hours for early voting and the parking situation for the November 8th Election.

Motion to adjourn at 7:38 pm by President Manley, Seconded by Councilman Ford and all were in favor.