



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR STEPHEN WOODS

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Conference Room L-101 Lower Level – Town Hall
7:00 P.M.

April 28, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Woods at 7:00 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Banach
Councilor Borjeson
Councilor Castelle
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor McDonald - absent
Councilor Marocchini
Councilor Nagel
Mayor Woods

Staff Attendees:

John Salomone, Town Manager
Craig Minor – Town Planner
Jaime Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager – Administration
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She welcomed Councilor Banach back to the Council.

Havital Miltz: Indicated several people had contacted her and told her not to say anything about Cece Borjeson since he would come after her. She stated 1) his wife had no right to criticize her when she requested a list of chemicals used in Town Hall and the Library 2) Mr. Borjeson was on the Council to represent the Town and sat on a State board Newington residents were paying for. She felt he misrepresented the Town and suggested he resign from the Town Council.

Roy Zartarian, 25 Stuart Street: He stated that the agenda included a building committee for the Library and was in favor of the expansion. He stated it was time to review all the facilities (Town Hall/Library/Senior Center) as a whole and not as individual pieces. If leveraged together, there might be

opportunities to optimize community use. Other buildings would need renovations in the future and suggested the Town examine all physical holdings and identify what work would be needed in order to develop a long range plan for this work.

Steven Silvia, 45 Basswood Street: He suggested once again the Council determine what services could be eliminated in Town and thought they could look at closing one of the swimming pools in Town. He had discussed with Dr. Collins that there was no engineering analysis or inspection of the swimming pool. Mr. Silvia noticed through drone inspections the flashing had been damaged from snow and ice. He asked permission to engage the Town Engineer and a roof specialist to conduct a full drone inspection and provide the information to the Council and the appropriate department for evaluation. Secondly he indicated some towns in the South had approved multi-purpose zoning to include residential/commercial/governmental at a site. He thought it might be possible to use these techniques on the Town Hall Renovation. He also said that Newington had the opportunity to optimize human capital and delivery of existing services by combining departments like Human Services and the Senior Center, Finance, Town Clerk and Town Planning and school buses and Dial-A-Ride. Currently managers were responsible for approximately five employees and the usual standard in business was 15-20 employees. Recently West Hartford had consolidated departments and suggested this be researched as a possible solution in Newington.

(No name/address given): He suggested that CTfastrak if given a chance would be good for the Town like the building of the railroad long ago. The busway was here whether people supported it or not but no transit oriented development had been adopted for the two stations in Newington as yet. This type of transit was used by residents who were able to walk to it. There had to be a certain level of local people using the transit before there would be incentive for commercial businesses to locate in the area. People who live near it would pay a premium and generally would be empty nesters and young people starting out with no children or very young children. Developed correctly the stations had the potential to add hundreds of millions of dollars to the grand list.

(No name/address given): She was pleased the Open Space Committee was going to be resurrected and there would be many tasks for them. Some of which would include surveys, monitoring plans, grants, etc. She suggested they research what other towns had done and work with Parks and Rec to enhance the use of city parks. The last committee was too large and hoped the Town Council would keep that in mind when creating a new one.

July Igielski, 23 Musket Drive: She welcomed Councilor Banach back to the Council and felt he would be open minded and work for all residents in Town.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: He stated the Town should find another place to put the impound lot. He had heard the possibility of tearing down the Town Hall and thought that would be folly. He stated he was not convinced that high density housing was a good idea around the busway and reminded everyone that Myra Cohen had been opposed to that idea. He wondered where the housing was since it was not in Detroit, Hartford or New York. Mr. Bachand thought the Council should adopt a resolution to oppose 6851 since the Town would only be one vote out of twelve. He was glad Toll Bros. backed out of developing the property, which gave Newington the opportunity to purchase it. However, he felt credit should be given to the Conservation Commission for their hard work on the issue. He asked the Town Manager how much money had been spent fighting Toll Bros.

Dana Havens, 113 Stoddard Avenue: She stated the residents were concerned about the development around the busway to ensure Newington maintains the ability to develop the area as they wanted and not the State. The Town should be leery of affordable housing because many times the high rise type are not kept up. Single family housing might work in the area.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken)
A. Appointment of Auditor

Councilor Castelle moved the following:

RESOLVED:

Per Section 610 of the Newington Town Charter, the firm of Blum Shapiro is hereby appointed as auditor for the Town of Newington for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015; said firm agrees to file a complete report on or before December 15, 2015.

Councilor Castelle indicated the Town ordinances required this resolution be passed each year even though the contract ran for three years. Mayor Woods stated Blum Shapiro changed auditors each year so that fresh eyes would review the account.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Klett and passed 8 – 0 (Councilor McDonald-absent).

B. Open Space Committee

- 1. Disband Current Committee**
- 2. Form and Charge New Committee**

The Mayor suggested creating a sub-committee with a mix of the public and councilors to determine the structure of the new committee. The sub-committee would then present a report to the Council. Councilor Nagel volunteered to work on the sub-committee as did Councilor Banach. Two members of the public would be picked at a later date. The councilors planned to meet in the near future to develop a timeframe, dates to meet and determine what members of the public would want to serve. The Mayor thought that Bernadette would be willing to be part of the sub-committee. The Town Manager suggested including the Town Planner as well.

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion: Establish Library Renovation Building Committee

Mayor Woods stated \$100k had been set aside to establish a building committee to hire an architect and do a feasibility study. John Salomone said the \$100k could be used for planning and architecture but not actual construction. The Mayor suggested the committee consist of two Town Councilors, two from the Library and three members from the public. The chairperson he felt should be from the public so there was continuity at that level. He asked each party to present their candidates at the next meeting.

Members of the Library Board indicated the plan was going forward and were comfortable with the level of funding. Some funds had already been spent on architectural plans, which would need to be revised since they were about five years old. They would be looking at reallocation of space in the building.

Councilor Borjeson said the funds had come from the money set aside for Garfield Street in the CIP budget. He also indicated the Town Hall renovation and the Library could not be mutually exclusive. They needed to work to share resources to ensure prices were kept down while still including everything the Town needed in the project.

Councilor DelBuono was concerned the two building committees had good communication and worked together. She felt they needed to look at a campus approach. Councilor Klett thought it might be good idea for the town staff to overlap the two committees. John Salomone indicated there would be overlap and neither the Library nor Town Hall were islands.

Councilor Castelle asked if resident members could be on both committees. The Mayor indicated they could but was unsure who would commit to that. Councilor Klett suggested that the same councilors serve on both committees.

The Library Board members asked if the new committee would be involved in the same referendum planned for the Town Hall renovation. The Mayor stated it would depend on how fast things moved forward, but it would be difficult to coordinate everything needed for a November referendum. To move forward they would need the basic size of the building and a budget before putting the idea before the voters. The Town may need two referendums but if it was a single referendum, the money would not be

borrowed all at once but as needed. Councilor Nagel indicated the plan for the Town Hall could be voted on in the November or it could be at a later date. No definite decision had been made.

B. Discussion: Housing Needs Study Survey Results

Councilor Borjeson thanked Mr. Minor and everyone involved in the survey. They originally had planned to survey senior needs only but later expanded it to include the entire town. Mr. Minor reviewed the results and four items in particular: 1) 58% of seniors intended to stay in their residence, 2) 65% of seniors expressed interest in senior housing, 3) 80% expected to spend less than \$1,250 for housing in the future, 4) 23% of seniors wanted subsidized government housing with demand exceeding supply.

Councilor Borjeson stated they learned that most of the middle age group were happy with their present housing and the millennials indicated there were not a lot of rentals in the area and that the seniors wanted to age in place.

Councilor Nagel said the younger group was looking for smaller homes in the range of \$150-250k and had thought they would be looking for rental properties or condos. He stated the CCSU students and professor did an excellent job on the survey and saved the Town a considerable amount of money. Councilor Castelle wanted to be sure the TPZ had a copy of the report since he felt it would be relevant to their work.

Councilor Banach asked if they could be given a comparison with Berlin and Wethersfield as to the number of seniors, number of housing units, etc. Mr. Minor stated he would get that information to the Council. The Mayor was not surprised with the results and would be a tool to be used in the future. He asked Mr. Minor to read through his summary sheet to the TPZ at their next meeting.

C. Discussion: Agent of Record

Councilor Castelle stated the Standing Insurance Committee every three years had to go through the RFP process for the agent of record. An agent of record had to be appointed by July 1, 2015. It was the unanimous vote of the committee to award the contract to USI Insurance Services of Meriden. They had many new ideas and had a large number of municipal clients. The company also had various software programs available to Newington. The price per year would be \$22,500 per year. The item would be placed on the next Council agenda.

VI. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken) (none)

VII. TAX REFUNDS (Action Requested)

Councilor Marocchini moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$2,332.82 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the "Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes," certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Borjeson and passed 8 – 0 (Councilor McDonald-absent).

VIII. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Action Requested) A. Special Meeting, March 18, 2015

- B. Regular Meeting, March 24, 2015**
- C. Public Hearing, April 2, 2015**
- D. Special Meeting, April 2, 2015**

Councilor Nagel moved to accept the above minutes as written and was seconded by Councilor Klett. The motion passed 7 – 0 (Councilor McDonald-absent; Councilor Banach-abstained).

IX. WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC

John Salomone updated the Council on 1) Police Chief search was down to 12 candidates and hoped to have an appointment in early June with the new chief starting at the end of June or early July, 2) Park and Rec Superintendent search closed last week, and they had several good candidates.

Mayor Woods read an email received from Rep. Guerrero regarding H.B. 6851. He said he was working to ensure the bill was equitable and that local control would stay in place regarding zoning.

X. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (In Person/Via Telephone: 860-665-8736)

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: He stated 1) he received the same email from Rep. Guerrero as well as from Rep. Lopes. He felt those were the talking points to make people feel better about the bill but the Town would still only have one vote, 2) In the Courant there was an article regarding millennials being attracted to mass transit but were also the second highest car buyers in the market, 3) H.B. 6851 – He indicated an ad was still running regarding plans to create housing at the National Welding site and urged the Council to support the TPZ.

Gary Bolles, 28 Burdon Lane: He was concerned about the fatal accident on Cedar Street and wanted to ask the Council to send a letter to the developer of the property that there should not be a driveway into that community off of East Cedar Street. Regarding H.B. 6851 he stated that on March 24 there was tremendous opposition to it and did not know of anyone in attendance who was in favor of it. He thought the other towns were probably against it as well.

Steven Silvia, 45 Basswood Street: He indicated there was a group of citizens who were trying to have a dinner and a movie in Mill Pond Park. He hoped to have the event in the warmer weather once all permits had been received. Local restaurants would be notified and hoped people would watch the old fashioned movies presented.

Patty Foley, 51 Crown Ridge Road: She thanked the Town Council and Town Manager for putting the library renovation on the agenda and hoped to work with all in moving the project forward. She said that H.B. 6851 was not a good bill and all should be aware of what was going on.

Roy Zartarian, 25 Stuart Street: He had read a NY Times editorial regarding hi-speed broadband capacity. He indicated Connecticut was developing CT gig to contract with private companies to operate a fiber optic network using their own money and make a profit by allowing other businesses to use the network to sell internet services. If this happened, Connecticut could end up with a state of the art network and lower costs to consumers. He brought this to the attention of the Mayor and the Town Manager but nothing had been brought forward. Many cities had signed onto the project but Newington was not one of them. Lack of action was denying a potential benefit to Newington residents he said.

(Name/address inaudible): She said at a recent meeting the Lt. Governor indicated H.B. 6851 was killed and since the bill was voted on recently felt she had been lied to.

Wayne Alexander, 28 Burdon Lane: He was in opposition to 6851 and did not see anyone in favor of the bill. He asked if there was anyone on the Council who was in favor of it. The citizens did not want it and felt the Town Council should develop a resolution in opposition since so many citizens were opposed to it.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She was confused about the voting on the Council since there were mentions in the charter that seemed to conflict and hoped it could be resolved in the future. She felt there was a difference between 2/3 of the Council and 2/3 of those present and voting especially since for a number of months the Council consisted of only eight members. She felt that the DOT should be contacted regarding the situation on Cedar Street no matter what was built at the location. She was in favor of the library expansion but felt that both the Town Hall renovation committee and the Library committee needed to talk to one another since she had been hearing different stories about the continuing parking situation. She indicated it had been a year since she had asked about the results of the Newington Junction study and was still awaiting results. Regarding 6851 she felt the Council should have heard about the bill earlier and not at the end of the process.

XII. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Borjeson stated 1) he responded to remarks regarding his wife attacking the speaker. The comments made were that if she wanted to know what the chemicals were, they were available from the Library where a list was kept and not waste Council time when it could be found out individually 2) He would not be resigning from the Town Council and would only leave if voted off in November, 3) H.B. 6851 had moved forward from committee. There had been no change in the intent of the bill but the language had been changed to ensure concerns were addressed. The Town Council would have to vote on anything to do with it, 4) He indicated that over the past three years he tried to be a leader, worked hard and tried to be knowledgeable in the topics he brought to the Council. He understood he could be controversial at times and after discussions with the Mayor and the Democrat Town Committee Chair, he would be stepping down as the majority leader of the Council but would remain on the Council.

Councilor Klett asked for the AMR contract that was expiring be sent to the Council. She wanted further information on whether the DOT had been planning on taking out the bridge at the top of the mountain or not. Regarding the gridlock that occurred on Cedar Street after the fatal accident, she asked for information from the Police regarding rerouting of traffic to avoid some of the gridlock that occurred.

Councilor Nagel thanked the public for bringing some creative ideas to the Council. He congratulated the Kiwanis on their flea market and the Fire Department successful spaghetti supper fund raiser.

Councilor Banach stated he was personally opposed to H.B. 6851 and that Newington was the only Town to have a resolution against the busway years ago. He was not trusting of the State since years ago they had been asked during a Council meeting regarding the development along the busway that it was totally up to the town. He found it curious that all of a sudden 6851 appeared regarding eminent domain. He believed in home rule and wondered if the Town had purposely been misled.

Mayor Woods stated he had asked the Library Director and Town Manager's office to get the list of chemicals to the resident who asked for them. He said the material should be available within two days. He announced that he would not be seeking the nomination for reelection for Mayor in November. It was his 20th year and felt he wanted to spend more time with his family. Mayor Woods indicated again the Town needed to find a way to grow the grand list since it was not sustainable.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel

The Council went into Executive Session re: Personnel at 9:10 p.m. Town Manager Salomone and all Councilors present at the regular meeting attended the Executive Session.

Councilor Nagel moved to adjourn from Executive Session at 10:05 p.m. Motion seconded by Councilor Marocchini. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor McDonald - absent)

XIV. Adjournment

Councilor Nagel moved to adjourn from meeting at 10:06 p.m. Motion seconded by Councilor DeIBuono. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor McDonald - absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson
Clerk of the Council