



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT

February 8, 2011

Minutes – Newington Town Council

EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: PERSONNEL

Councilor Banach moved to open the Executive Session Regarding Personnel at 6:16 P.M. in Conference Room One of the Town Hall. Seconded by Councilor Cohen Vote 9 – 0. All Councilors were in attendance.

Councilor Banach moved to close the Executive Session at 6:47 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Cohen. Vote 9 – 0.

Mayor Wright called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Helen Nelson Room of the Town Hall

I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II ROLL CALL

Councilors Present:

Councilor Banach
Councilor Casasanta
Councilor Cohen
Councilor Klett
Councilor Lenares
Councilor Nagel
Council Nasinnyk
Councilor McBride
Mayor Wright

Staff Present

John Salomone, Town Manager
Ann Harter, Finance Director
Jaime Trevethan, Exec. Asst. to the Town Manager
Tom Molloy, Highway Superintendent
Robert Hillman, Asst. Highway Superintendent
Mary Richard, Council Clerk

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Mayor Wright announced the phone number for the public participation – 860-665-8736 (no public participation)

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Set Public Hearing Dates Budget Process

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council, pursuant to Section 805 of the Newington Town Charter, will hold two Public Hearings on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2011-2012. These Public Hearings will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall (unless otherwise indicated) as follows:

Monday, March 14, 2011

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Town Manager's Proposed Budget

Town Council's Proposed Budget

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta
SECONDED BY: Councilor Nasinnyk
VOTE: 9 – 0

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Single Stream Recycling Update

Highway Superintendent Tom Molloy said that the Single Stream Recycling Update is moving along very well and he distributed a handout showing the progress (attached). He said that the second page shows the last three years with monthly averages.

Councilor Nasinnyk said that she believes this is one of the best programs encountered but some people are still confused with when the blue bin goes out. She asked at what point would weekly recycling pickup be considered. Mr. Molloy said that the problem right now is that we pay almost \$300,000 a year, and with a weekly collection we'd pay double that. Councilor Nasinnyk commented on how much easier the process is. Councilor Banach asked if there is a second barrel available if needed. Mr. Molloy said yes there are extra barrels available at no charge. Mr. Molloy said that the guide originally placed on the top of the container is the best guide to use for deciding what should go into it. Mr. Molloy said that there would be no additional costs, the Town supplies these containers.

Mayor Wright said that we're spending right now is about \$111,000 per year and looking at about a \$12,000 per month savings. Mr. Salomone said that another reason for the reductions is because people are buying less and one area is cardboard and newspapers and this effects recycling quite a bit because of the weight. This process makes it much easier. He mentioned that Mr. Molloy and Mr. Hillman are too modest but they went through it with no major hitches and was a very smooth process and he thanked them for such a good, successful job. Mr. Hillman said regarding electronic devices, there is a recycling location in Meriden and residents can drop any electronics devices there. Councilor Nasinnyk asked about the Christmas trees, some of which have not been collected due to weather and are under snow banks. Mr. Molloy said that about 75% of the trees have been collected but with the heavy snow fall they can't be seen, but will soon be able to find the rest. Councilor McBride asked about where the recycled electronics are processed. Mr. Molloy said that it goes to a secure Meriden location. It's all taken apart and basically 100% of computers are recycled and the hard drives are completely erased and destroyed. Councilor Nagel said regarding the computers, he asked how safe the drop off area is, noting that someone might try to get information from the hard drive. Mr. Molloy said that there is a 30 foot lock-in trailer very near the attendant so he can keep an eye on it.

B. Mid-Year Transfers

Ms. Ann Harter, Finance Director submitted a report on the Mid Year Transfers for FY 2010 – 2011 showing Expenditures, Transfers and Revenues. She included the entire report in the packet. Mayor Wright said that for the people at home this report relates to the current budget year and the Governor will be presenting his budget next week. Ms. Harter said that on the Expenditure side, it seems to be right on target with a light surplus of \$67,800 from what we budgeted in July and some area we need to move some funds around but there have been savings in other accounts. She said she likes to wait for President's Day and see where we are. Councilor Banach asked what the average cost of a storm might run and Ms. Harter said that it varies with each storm and for the month of January we were looking at about \$60,000 in total which was significant. Mr. Salomone added that the storm with 23 inches was about \$28,000 in overtime which was a little than half but there was a lot of overtime, also was when the storm hits, weekends, holidays are more costly basically for the over time. Our salt supply is in good shape and with the storage area and we could stockpile sufficient quantities to get us through all the storms. Councilor Cohen asked how our equipment is holding up. Mr. Salomone said that we have an excellent maintenance crew and we have spares and so far it's been good with no problems. Councilor Klett asked about the Police Special Duty account and Mr. Salomone explained that the Police Special Duty account is the private contractors pay for police protection and need an officer for traffic and what we do is charge a fee that goes to the officers which covers pensions and deductibles and then when we receive enough of that money then transfer it back to the pension fund. Councilor Klett asked if this something that's done each year and Ms. Harter said that yes it is done every year.

VI. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS

- A. Open Space Committee
 - 1. Accept Resignation – Carol Anest

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Carol Anest from the Open Space Committee, in accordance with a communication dated January 26, 2011.

MOTION BY: Councilor Banach
SECONDED BY: Councilor Nasinnyk
VOTE: Passes 9 – 0

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointment:

Open Space Committee

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
TPZ Representative: Gary Turco	98 Williamstown Count	D	TPZ Term	C. Anest (Res. 1/2011)

MOTION BY: Councilor Banach
SECONDED BY: Councilor Nasinnyk
VOTE: Passes 9 – 0

VII. TAX REFUNDS

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$977.84 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.

MOTION BY: Councilor Nasinnyk
SECONDED BY: Councilor Casasanta
VOTE: Passes 9 – 0

VIII. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- A. Regular Meeting, January 25, 2011

Page 5 - Councilor Banach referred to the article and what needs to be what Councilor Nagel had referenced the previously article that they, the Department of Transportation would be losing the 9 – 10 millions dollars per year per the author of the Hartford Courant article. Councilor Klett said on Page 3 her comments were that every other meeting had been taped and that the committee had met monthly since May or June and the minutes should reflect that portion in the minutes.

Councilor Casasanta moved to accept the minutes with the changes and corrections. Councilor Banach seconded. Vote 7 – 0 Councilor McBride and Mayor Wright abstained due to being absent from the meeting.

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

Mr. Salomone said that he filed with the State for funding and with the last storm and it’s possible that we may be receiving help and he is cautiously optimistic. Also he mentioned the clearing of the roofs. He said on the Town had an engineer inspect each building that we manage and it was determined where the danger was. There was some removal of snow on some roofs that were getting to a heavy lead, the Senior Center and some

at the Town Hall. There will be some leakage when this snow starts to melt and we will be filing a claim with our insurance carrier. The good news is that there's one deductible for the whole Town and there might be some reimbursements. He asked that some residents be a little more patient and not be resentful when the plows push the snow back into their driveways, but we have to consider widening the roads and also drainage. Councilor Banach mentioned the question of plowing around the schools, where people drop off the children. Mr. Salomone said there is special attention paid to high traffic areas, with high piles of snow and are taking special precaution with safety concerns to those areas.

Councilor Banach also mentioned a letter the Council received from the Board of Education regarding a Freedom of Information request and the letter asked if the Town Council authorized the Town attorney to represent Councilor Casasanta and does the Council support the position and has the Town authorized the Town Attorney to make the claim against the Board of Education. Councilor Banach asked at whose behest did the Town Attorney appear at the Freedom of Information Act hearing?

Mayor Wright said that he, the Mayor, asked the Attorney to represent Councilor Casasanta. Mayor Wright said as Mayor he had the authorization to make the request for legal council, and also the Board of Education had chosen to have legal representation. Councilor Banach asked if the Council should have been notified of this request and Mayor Wright said no this was not a Council decision. He, Mayor Wright, said that any Councilor has the right to request information and that's why he cleared it with the Town Attorney. Councilor Banach asked what is the process to present a request. Councilor Banach asked Mr. Salomone would this be done knowing that the Town Attorney is making an appearance at a hearing. Mr. Salomone said normally he works with the Town Attorney and in this case he, Mr. Salomone, wasn't notified of the hearing date, wasn't served and was unaware of the actual date. Councilor Banach said that he believes that our Town Manager should be aware of any hearings that will be taking place. Councilor Banach said that he isn't comfortable with just a verbal response to the letter. Mayor Wright said that he will not write a letter. He said that the lack of consistency from the Board of Education is troubling to him. The bottom line is he requested the Town Attorney represent the Councilor who requested the information. Councilor Banach said that there is no presumption that anything is being hidden, on his part. Councilor Casasanta said that there is no presumption that the Board of Education is hiding anything, and the representation by Attorney Ancona was authorized by Mayor Wright and she would have gone in on her own, but as long as the Board of Education has their legal representation she felt it was appropriate that she also have representation.

Councilor Klett asked if the Attorney established that this was an ok thing for him to do. Mayor Wright said that the Attorney did submit a written opinion, and if Councilor Klett would like a written opinion on that matter she would be entitled to one. Councilor Klett said she would like a written opinion from the Attorney saying that this is the right move to have him represent a member of the Council. She said that the Mayor, Councilor Casasanta and the Town Attorney were the only ones who knew about this hearing and none of the rest of the Council knew. Mayor Wright said that Councilor Klett could write out the specifics she would like to know on his opinion. She said that the Town Attorney works for the Council and no one knew, including the Town Manager, that he, the Town Attorney, would show up at the hearing to represent Councilor Casasanta. She feels that the Council and the Town Manager should have been made aware of this hearing. Councilor Casasanta said that she understands that the Council feels as a whole, should have been notified, and she trusts Attorney Ancona that he looked at this request diligently and made sure that it was proper. She wanted to clarify one thing regarding the letter from chairman Woods, this matter did not take a week - it took several weeks just to be documented. There has been umpteen months before she even received a docket number. Councilor Klett asked that for any future hearings or issues of this type, could the Council be notified. Mayor Wright said that would be done.

X COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS - NONE

XI PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - NONE

XII REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Klett mentioned that we accepted the resignation of Carol Anest from the Open Space Committee and it appears her original appointment date was 1/12/10, which means that the committee has been in existence for one year with no report, can we find out when we'll get a report. Councilor Nasinnyk said there will be a report on February 22, 2011. Councilor Klett also mentioned an article that quoted the Mayor on the health benefits going to the Town Attorney and town Manager and at one point he spoke of meeting with the members of the Board of Education and Chairman Woods made a suggestion as to how we could better deal with the health benefits issue.

Mayor Wright said that he had spoken with the Town Manager and the Town Attorney regarding the recommendations and nothing was concluded.

Councilor McBride said that regarding the vote on the Busway as opposed to the Railway, and he wanted to say that he supported the Busway, and would not have supported the resolution against the busway at the last meeting.

Councilor Cohen said that the School Roof Building Committee did meet on the project at Wallace and did vote to appoint an architect. Councilor Nagel regarding Busway/Railway, indicated a strong support to rail and it looks like it's being looked at again.

Mayor Wright said that there will be a fund raiser at the Finn B-Ques on Wednesday, February 9 at 5PM to support the troops and families and he invited everyone to attend.

XIII ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Wright moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Casasanta. Vote 9 – 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Richard
Council Clerk

