



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.

October 22, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Woods at 7:05 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Borjeson
Councilor Bottalico
Councilor Castelle
Councilor Cohen
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor McBride
Councilor Nagel
Mayor Woods

Staff Attendees:

John Salomone, Town Manager
Ann Harter, Finance Director
Jamie Trevehan, Executive Assistant
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Sandy Lallier, 45 Elton Drive: She wished the questions at the Mayoral debate were more diverse and thought the clapping and booing were inappropriate. Mrs. DelBuono was well spoken and the Mayor did not speak as eloquently as Mrs. DelBuono but spoke from the heart. She stated that in talking to people after the debate she was disappointed to find there was not the usual sense of community among the spectators and felt voters needed to do some homework before voting. Mrs. Lallier hoped the new council would work together and not against each other for the good of Newington.

IV. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Borjeson thanked the voters for allowing him to serve the Town. He and his wife enjoyed meeting so many people in Newington. He thanked John Salomone, Jamie and the Town staff for all their hard work, and professionalism. Councilor Borjeson thanked the Board of Education, Dr. Collins, Mark Finkelstein and Mr. Carson for his work on the budget. He thanked all the volunteers in Town including the Fire Department, Ambulance Department, Library Board, Senior Center, and the Food Bank. He thanked Scott McBride who was a tremendous asset and was a voice of reason for the middle road. Lastly he thanked the Mayor who he felt taught him a lot and was eloquent, understated and concentrated on the positives of Newington.

Councilor Bottalico asked John Salomone for an update on the Firestone lawsuit. Mr. Salomone indicated there was no further update other than a check he issued for \$300.

Councilor DelBuono wanted to assure the public that at no time was she questioning the work done in the Town Clerk's office regarding the question of a time stamp on a document. She had the utmost respect for the Town Clerk and her staff and that they acted very ethically, were very professional and they took their job seriously. Councilor DelBuono thanked all the Town employees for their hard work, which was appreciated. She also thanked Scott for his service and for being a voice of reason at the Council.

Councilor Klett asked Mr. Salomone to give an update at the next meeting on the two attorneys being ordered back to court regarding the Firestone lawsuit. She also remarked about complaints of noise around the busway near Nathan Hale area. A wall had been constructed near the Chapman area which caused the noise to bounce back and it was louder than in the past according to a resident. She asked for an update at a future Council meeting.

Councilor Nagel asked if there had been any traffic studies done with regards to what could happen around the Newington Junction. He stated a resident on Francis Street told him that at one time the Town considered closing off Francis Street. Councilor Nagel wondered if a study had been done regarding the possibility of more traffic in the area. John Salomone indicated there had been no traffic studies done in the area by the Town but would find out if the State had any and would get back to the Council.

Councilor Cohen thanked Scott for his dedication and contributions to the Council and understood the demands of a young family and wished him well.

Councilor Borjeson indicated they would investigate the noise issue on Chapman Street but commented that once the construction was done there would be less train noise and overall construction noise. He stated the busway was slated to begin operation in February 2015 and had recently attended the opening of the Flatbush Avenue bridge. Councilor Borjeson stated the Francis Street area would be the rail side of the project and had been delayed since the funding had not been received. He thought the project would be completed in 2018 or 2019 and not 2016 as originally stated. One of the biggest items to be resolved would be parking for the walkway, which was to be investigated. On November 21 a meeting will be held in Town Hall with all towns affected, the DOT, and anyone interested to discuss specific stops in each town (Cedar Street/Newington Junction) and any issues surrounding each one.

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion: CIP Updates

Ann Harter and John Salomone reviewed a spreadsheet concerning the CIP and figures on what had been budgeted and amounts still to be spent. Councilor Borjeson thought the spreadsheet was straight forward and asked if any department heads had concerns or issues with the CIP. Mrs. Harter indicated that no department head had expressed concern.

Councilor Bottalico asked about drainage improvement (\$109,722) money that was still in the account and asked if it would be used this year. Mr. Salomone stated the money would be part of the reserve for the next budget. The Mayor asked if the drainage improvement was a reserve account and Mr. Salomone indicated that a certain amount was contributed to the account and when there was sufficient money for a project, the money would be tapped. Councilor Bottalico asked about fixing the playscape at Mill Park and

Mr. Salomone said the playscape was safe and if the Town Hall project became a reality with the Mortensen Center being at the new site, they might relocate it to the new center near where the pool might go in the future.

Councilor Nagel asked about the sidewalk and stonewall repair item. He asked if it was for repair only or would it be used to create new sidewalks for better connectivity to the center of Town. Mr. Salomone stated the money could be used for the creation of new sidewalks and for the repair of them. The funds budgeted have not allowed for a lot of expansion of the sidewalks and that safety was the first priority for children walking to school. Mayor Woods indicated the Board of Education each year provided a list of needed repairs and where sidewalks were needed to the Highway Department.

Councilor Klett said that two years ago the Council increased the budgeted amount for playground equipment at Mill Pond as well as money for replacing the rubber around the equipment. She asked the Town Manager for a written report on what repairs had been done and what were the future plans. Mr. Salomone said he would get the information to the Council. She mentioned that residents were concerned about streets in disrepair and wanted people to know they could go online to get information on the repairs, which a lot of residents did not know about. Councilor Klett indicated there were two streets, Winslow and possibly Elm Ridge (off Tremont) that were in disrepair and asked for someone to take a look at them. Mr. Salomone indicated he would email a list of where the streets were on the repair list.

Councilor DelBuono asked Mr. Salomone to check the status of Eckert, which was a cul-de-sac with weeds growing out of cracks in the middle of the road. She asked about the progress of the Fire Department access control locks and the Library automated collection management system. Mr. Salomone stated the access locks was in the final stages of acquisition and should be completed within the next few months. The library system were in the process of being completed. The first phase (\$65k) would be expended by March.

VI. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS - none

VII. TAX REFUNDS

Councilor Borjeson moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$ 4,226.47 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 Cohen and passed 9 – 0.

VIII. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A. Regular Meeting, October 8, 2013

Mayor Woods said the minutes indicated his statement from the previous meeting was attached but he did not turn them in and would like that corrected for the record. Councilor Klett indicated under Public Participation, Maria Pane’s comment should read Councilor Borjeson talked to a reporter and not Councilor Klett. The second correction was to Remarks by Councilors and Councilor Klett’s comment regarding Mrs. Kenny’s comment regarding the use of cell phones. Councilor Klett wanted the record

corrected to read that she used her phone for the purposes of taking notes for personal, professional and (inaudible).

Councilor Borjeson moved to accept the minutes as corrected and was seconded by Councilor DelBuono. The motion passed 9 – 0.

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

none

X. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Castelle indicated the Senior and Disabled Center roof was on or slightly ahead of schedule and by Friday all the waterproofing of the roof would be completed. He said the railings and walkways still had to be done and that the canopy was on schedule.

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Sue Mazzoccoli, 149 Harris Drive: She wanted to say goodbye to Scott McBride and was sorry he was not running again but understood his reasons. Mrs. Mazzoccoli expressed disappointment at some of the behavior with the current politics. In the past, disagreements were kept mostly to letters to the editor and was disappointed with the debate. Personal attacks were more hurtful when made against a family member than against the candidate, which she stated was her personal experience. She stated she thought Rose Lyons was an outstanding citizen, attended all the meetings and had been for years and was disappointed that she had been bullied at the debate. She asked for everyone to tone down the language and to grow up.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: Mrs. Lyons thanked Scott for his service to the Town and hoped he would be back. She wanted to comment on the quotes and accusations attributed to Councilor DelBuono in a recent newspaper article regarding remarks made by Mrs. Lyons. Mrs. Lyons stated that she had remarked on the manner in which the Republican party had talked about bringing an ethics complaint and had not expressed her support for Mayor Woods at that meeting. She said that her comments would not have a bearing on serving on the Board of Ethics and as an alternate, would only be on the committee if a full Democrat member was not present and she was appointed by the Chairman. Mrs. Lyons expressed concern that it was because of her an ethics complaint was not to be filed. In her closing comment she hoped that the residents would get out to vote and encouraged voters to think about the people in Town who were down on the their luck.

Madeline Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: She thanked Scott for his time and after watching him over the years for the growth she has seen in him. She hoped he would consider coming back in the future. She commented that she had always tried to be respectful in her remarks. During a meeting she requested Councilors not text during public participation and Councilor Klett chose to remark that she used her phone for taking notes; however, Mrs. Kenny had not mentioned names and found it curious that the Councilor would need to remark on her comment. Mrs. Lyons hoped that the current negative atmosphere was not too deep that it could be mended after the election.

XII. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Bottalico: he wished Scott good luck and hoped he would be back in the future. Councilor Nagel appreciated Scott's thoughts and opinions since they were well stated and he hoped his future was bright.

Councilor DelBuono understood Mrs. Lyons comments and was sorry her comment was taken the way it was. She had concerns and tried to be honest during the interview. Councilor DelBuono stated she was confident the next Town Council would continue to function and work well together. She respected the members and hoped to continue to work with them either at the Council or in other capacities.

Councilor Cohen thanked John Salomone, Jamie, and the Town staff for their hard work and cooperation. She said Newington was a well run government of which she was proud and it was too bad that the current Council term was ending on an unpleasant note.

Councilor Klett thanked Scott and his wife since it required a lot of time away from the family to serve the Town. She respectfully disagreed with Mrs. Lyons since she had made no secret of her position regarding having individuals who had political affiliations on the Ethics Board.

Councilor Castelle thanked Scott and his wife for his service during the past two years. He had been a mentor to Councilor Castelle during his first two years and would miss him. He wanted to thank all the officials who served the Town especially the people on boards and commissions, volunteers, Town staff and looked forward to the next two years.

Councilor McBride thanked his wife and family for dedicating their time during the past four years and felt it was no longer fair to them. His family was his inspiration to serve since they had been active in their communities for years. He thanked the voters who gave him the opportunity to serve and the confidence to sit on the Council. Councilor McBride thanked the volunteers who also had dedicated a lot of time during his campaigns. The Town Council, Board of Education, public servants and the Town Manager were also thanked for their contributions, hard work and dedication. He thanked Jamie and the Town staff for their work on the behalf of the Town. He urged any resident who wanted to get involved to do so and did not want them to make excuses.

Mayor Woods thanked Scott for his service and being open minded during discussions. He hoped he would be back when the time was right. He thanked the community for the opportunity to serve as Mayor and thought the term had been successful. Even though the Council did not agree on everything he thought the Town did come out ahead at the end. Mayor Woods thanked John Salomone and his staff for their help during the two years.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Borjeson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor DelBuono. The motion passed 9 – 0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson

Linda Irish-Simpson
Clerk of the Council

Cc: T. Lane, Town Clerk