

Town of East Hampton
Town Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, November 28, 2017
Town Hall Meeting Room

MINUTES

Present: Chairperson Melissa Engel, Vice Chairman Mark Philhower, Council Members Pete Brown (arrived at 6:40 p.m.), Tim Feegel, Dean Markham and Kevin Reich and Town Manager Michael Maniscalco

Not Present: Josh Piteo

Call to order & Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Engel called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

A motion was made by Mr. Reich, seconded by Mr. Feegel, to add an item to the agenda to Adopt the Agenda. Voted (5-0)

A motion was made by Mr. Reich, seconded by Mr. Philhower, to adopt the agenda as presented. Voted (5-0)

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Reich, seconded by Mr. Markham, to approve the minutes of the Town Council Organizational Meetings of November 8, 2017 and November 14, 2017 as written. Voted (5-0)

A motion was made by Mr. Reich, seconded by Mr. Philhower, to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2017 Regular Meeting as written. Voted (4-0-2) Mr. Feegel and Mr. Markham abstained as they were not on the Council at that time. (Note – this vote was taken after Mr. Brown joined the meeting).

Presentations

Presentation from Building, Planning & Zoning Department

Building Official Glen LeConche and Planning & Zoning Official Jeremy DeCarli were present to provide an overview of the permit process in their department. Mr. LeConche explained that the department has the same size staff as in the 1980's when the population was 8000 people. He noted that in the past permits were issued by staff which is not allowed by Statute and that is not happening in the department now. The normal process is that the application is reviewed and signed by Mr. LeConche. They have been working to upgrade the computer program for permitting. There were also code updates in 2016. The Public Library now has a copy of the new code book for residential building. The department works closely with the Assessor to communicate information regarding

certificates of occupancy for the grand list update. He discussed work that they do regarding special needs situations with homes that are unsafe for first responders and the homeowner. A group has been put together through Social Services including the Building Department, Fire Marshal, Police and the Health Department. The department would also like to develop guidelines for permits and requirements.

Jeremy DeCarli, Zoning Official, provided a flowchart of the process for permits through Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning & Zoning, Inland Wetlands and Middle Haddam Historic District. It shows the various avenues that a permit could possibly need to go through before a permit can be approved. It can be quite a complicated process. A copy of the flowchart will be included with the minutes filed in the Town Clerk's Office.

Public Remarks

Ann McLaughlin, 85 North Main Street, asked if the Town Council would do something for Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman, possibly at Old Home Day. She has attended many events in town including the Yellow Ribbon ceremonies.

Dean Markham noted that the 250th Anniversary Committee will be having a Town birthday celebration with cake on Thursday, December 7th at the High School T-Bell at 6:30pm.

Bids & Contracts

None

Resolutions/Ordinances/Policies/Proclamations

None

Continued Business

None

New Business

Approval of 2018 Meeting Dates

A motion was made by Mr. Philhower, seconded by Mr. Markham, to waive the 2nd reading. Voted (6-0)

A motion was made by Mr. Reich, seconded by Mr. Brown, to approve the 2018 meeting dates as presented. Voted (6-0)

Discussion & Review of TIF District

Town staff have been working on the development of a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the Village Center. A draft plan was provided to Council members. In order to put the plan into action it will need to be approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission and then the Town Council. Mr. Maniscalco provided an overview of the process noting that the assessment/tax value for the locations listed would be frozen. As assessments

and the mill rate increase, the incremental tax dollars would be put into the TIF district account. The funds can be used for many things including streetscape improvements, infrastructure and loans within the district. The Council should prioritize the projects and agree on the items within the document before it goes to Planning & Zoning. Some items to include are a clarification of what is and isn't frozen and what if an assessment drops, such as during a revaluation year. Council members will provide their comments and ideas to the Town Manager by January 9th and the final document will be provided and discussed at the January 23rd Council meeting.

Town Manager Report

State Revenue Projections

Recently OPM announced an additional \$600,000 in reduced funding as a result of revenue due to returns and what may be a \$200,000,000 deficit. A deficit of this size pushes the Legislature into action and will require some type of action to rebalance the State budget. At this point we do not see a need for a supplemental bill since we have done and continue to do so well with our tax sale and have a strong fund balance. The situation will continue to be monitored. Mr. Philhower asked for an updated listing on the tax sale.

Update on 1 Watrous Street

To date, the building has been about 90% cleaned out and the box trailers on the exterior have been removed. The work should be completed by the end of the week. The Town has been awarded a civil suit against the former owner of the property for the full amount owed. A lien was placed against the former owner's home in South Glastonbury and the Town Attorney recently received communications from a newly assigned executor for the estate. There seems to be a fair chance that the Town will get paid back for the work that has been done.

Update on 13 Watrous Street

The Brownfields Redevelopment Agency has identified a well driller and signed an agreement to move forward with the well relocation. Additionally, the homeowner has signed the agreement waiving liability and eliminating the easement once the well is successfully installed.

Update on Fuel Island

At the last regular meeting of the Town Council the bid was awarded for the fuel island. Notice to proceed was provided to the contractor a little over a week ago and call before you dig has been done. Work is expected to start anytime with the intent of being complete by March 2018.

Update on PD/Town Hall/BOE Project

With the passage of the project the Building Committee has met and has moved forward the engineer's contract. Borings should be started on November 27, 2017 and final reviews of floor plans with staff will be conducted on Thursday November 30, 2017.

Update on Winter Preparations

All plow trucks are prepared except two. Those last two should be completed by the end of November. Current salt supplies are full and we have identified a contract off of State bid if we need more salt as well as a backup supplier in order to avoid a shortage.

Update on Emergency Services/Radio Backbone

In order to have a backup for the tower at Baker Hill, the Town is having a fiber phone line strung to the DPW tower. This will act as a short-term band aid while a more permanent fix is designed. Due to the emergency nature of the situation, no bids will be sought and the Town Manager can approve the expenditure.

Update from Eversource on October Storm

The Town met with Eversource last week to discuss their response to the last storm. A report that was provided to the Town regarding some of Eversource's findings will be included with the minutes filed in the Town Clerk's Office. The Town Manger also provided a letter to PURA stating the issues with the storm and disputing a rate increase that has been proposed.

Appointments

Chairperson Engel made the following appointments:

Appointments Sub-Committee: Mark Philhower - Chairman, Pete Brown and Tim Feegel

Capital Committee: Melissa Engel and Dean Markham

Personnel Committee: Melissa Engel, Mark Philhower and Kevin Reich

Pete Brown will continue as the liaison with the Police Department and the Town Facilities Building Committee.

Tax Refunds

A motion was made by Mr. Philhower, seconded by Mr. Reich, to approve tax refunds in the amount of \$1,562.35. Voted (6-0)

Public Remarks

Karen Johansmeyer, 16 Penny Corner Road, Portland, commented on the reviving the Village Center and bringing back the corps. She noted she will be attending the Chester muster.

Communications, Correspondence & Announcements

The Council received the October Board and Commission Summary.

A question was asked about the old ladder truck. It was noted that the original buyer backed out and it is still for sale.

Ms. Engel and Mr. Brown met with the Town Manager and Tim Smith from the WPCA regarding water. Mr. Smith will attend the January 23rd meeting to provide the results of the Tighe and Bond study.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Markham, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Voted (6-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Sirois
Recording Clerk