

MINUTES
Town Council
Town of East Greenwich
Regular Session
July 25, 2016 @ 7:00 pm
Town Hall, 125 Main Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818

7:00pm ~ Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Town Council: M. Isaacs, S. Cienki, M. Schwager, S. Todd, W. Stone (absent)

Town Staff: T. Coyle, L. Botello, K. Benoit, J. Duarte, S. O'Neill, R. McGillivray, S. Brown, S. Cirella, P. Clarkin

Others: C. Malaga

President Isaacs called the meeting to order and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

Acknowledgments

None

1) Town Council Minutes

- a) April 28, 2016 (Special Session)

VP Cienki moved to approve, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

2) Reports and Communications

- a) Public Comment (15-minute time limit for items NOT on the agenda)

Evelyn Wheeler with the RI Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries provided some back-up materials to support her request for the adoption of a new ordinance for tax abatements for land owners who care for historical cemeteries on their property. She provided an excerpt from the Town of Lincoln for the Solicitor's reference. The exemption would be a flat fee. The Commission would work with the Tax Assessor to monitor projects.

- b) Status on Howland Farm Road sewer and paving project

Joseph Farside, 14 Howland Farms Road, reported that unanimous approval to proceed has been obtained by all neighbors. All of the legal paperwork is in order and they are in the process of getting original signatures from all homeowners in order to record the documents with the Town. The administrative subdivision plan will then be reviewed by Peter Nolan and submitted. The project will then go out to bid.

Mr. Duarte was satisfied with the documents and their commitment to pay the Town back for

road improvements. The bidding process should be expedited to finish up before winter sets in. He is agreeable to providing trash and plowing services. The scope of the project was explained in more detail. Funds will come from the 2009 sewer bond. Only administrative actions remain.

c) Finance Report – June 2016

Ms. Benoit provided highlights for the monthly financial report for June 2016. Departmental expenditures that are over budget were explained. Quarterly reports submitted to the State are showing potential surpluses for both the Town and School Department. Miscellaneous school expenses were discussed.

3) Public Hearing

a) Sewer Budget FY 2017

Shawn O’Neil, an employee with 25 years of service, was congratulated on his recent promotion as the new Superintendent of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Duarte gave a detailed explanation of variations in revenues and expenditures from last year’s budget. There is an overall increase of 3.9%. Capital outlay requirements were explained in detail which includes replacing pumps, manholes, mixer and infrastructure improvements. Debt service is decreasing due to refinancing. Sewer use is trending down with 68% of flows being residential due to the lack of industry in Town.

Discussion followed on further reducing the debt service number, tie-ins, assessment revenues, RBC’s and the status and timeline of the project to replace them. The sewer budget is separate from the Town’s operating budget and therefore, contains salaries from several Town employees.

Robert Vespia, Shippeetown Road, suggested that Council take a look at Warwick’s ordinance related to sewer hook ups.

Michael Zaino, 5 Sylvan Drive, would like to see some capital improvements completed before the bond is issued.

4) Consent Calendar

a) RENEWAL of Holiday Sales Licenses 2016/2017

- i) Seaside Style
- ii) Thorpe’s Wine and Spirits
- iii) Spirit Halloween

b) Approval of Outdoor Sidewalk Liquor Service, Session 2 August 1 – October 31

- i) La Masseria Ristorante
- ii) Main Street Coffee

VP Cienki moved to approve the Consent Calendar, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

5) Unfinished Business

None

6) New Business

- a) Approval of petition from Verizon for a new pole location on Eldredge Avenue

VP Cienki moved to approve, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

- b) Vote on ballot question for November 4th General Election

“Should the Charter be amended to eliminate the Financial Town Meeting and to extend the time within which the Town Council must adopt an annual budget?”

An explanation of the time line changes and several advantages to both the Town and School were discussed. Councilors collectively shared their viewpoints.

Michael Zaino, 5 Sylvan Drive, voiced his support to abolish the Financial Town Meeting.

Robert Vespia, Shippeetown Road, suggested that residents be educated by Council on why they are considering abolishing it.

Further discussion followed on options and statistics of previous meetings.

VP Cienki moved to add the question to the ballot, seconded by Councilor Todd. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

- c) Appointments to Boards and Commissions

- i) An alternate member to fill a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review for a 3-year term to expire July 1, 2017.

VP Cienki moved to appoint Elyse Pare as an alternate member to fill a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review for a 3-year term to expire July 1, 2017, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

- ii) A regular member to fill a vacancy on the Planning Board for a 3-year term to expire January 1, 2019.

VP Cienki moved to appoint Nathaniel Ginsburg as a regular member to fill a vacancy on the

Planning Board for a 3-year term to expire January 1, 2019, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

- iii) An alternate member to fill a vacancy on the Planning Board for a 2-year term to expire May 1, 2018.

VP Cienki moved to appoint Benjamin Lupovitz as an alternate member to fill a vacancy on the Planning Board for a 2-year term to expire May 1, 2018, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

7) Town Manager's Report

Mr. Coyle announced two promotions within Finance and at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The paving project at Spring Street and Somerset is on schedule. The demotion of Harris Marina is pending receipt of a quote from a qualified professional as it involves asbestos removal.

8) Council Comments

President Isaacs noted that the next regularly scheduled meeting falls on a holiday and will need to be rescheduled.

9) Public Comment (15-minute time limit)

None

- 10) Executive Session per RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining/Litigation and (5) related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes.

VP Cienki moved to go into Executive Session per RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining/Litigation and (5) related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, seconded by Councilor Schwager.

- a) Union negotiations
- b) Update on any pending or previously settled litigation cases.
- c) 333 Main Street

Following the Executive Session, Councilor Schwager moved to return to open session, seconded by VP Cienki. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried. Councilor Todd moved to seal the Executive Session minutes, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried. Councilor Todd moved to adjourn at 8:30pm, seconded by Councilor Schwager. Voted 4-0 all in favor, motion carried.

Leigh A. Carney, CMC, Town Clerk

APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL OCTOBER 13, 2016