

Minutes

WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

SWIFT MIDDLE SCHOOL

LIBRARY

MONDAY, July 19, 2010, 7:30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Elaine Adams
Richard DiFederico
Katherine Duplissie
Richard Fusco
Linda Masayda
Raymond Primini, Chairman
Paul Rinaldi
Mary Ann Rosa, Vice Chairman
Thomas Winn

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chuck Frigon, Town Manager
Frank Nardelli, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

OTHERS ABSENT:

None

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Primini, Chairman called the meeting to order 7:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. King, Secretary executed the roll call.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Public Participation

Carl R. Mancini – 74 Regency Hill Drive, Watertown

Rumor has it that the Town Council is going to bring back a 1 mill increase for the third referendum in late August, this is after a 249 vote defeat that saw 32% of the town vote at the last referendum. This 1 mill increase still represents a 4.47 % tax increase. The town leaders have to realize that there is still two parts to the budget, the Board of Education and the town side, just because the budget for the town was passed it does not mean that you should not look at both sides. The town side looks good because it shows the 0% increase in spending that is only because you are not counting the extra money needed for the pool at Crestbrook Park, or for 3rd phase of the school renovation project or the lost revenues from investments. The town budget should be managed much the same way as our own household budgets. You have to make a decision to either increase your income or cut your spending. The same scenario goes for the town budget, increase the income, raise taxes, or cut spending. I think I know what we would all have to do in our homes to balance our budget, hard choices have to be made. A 4.47 % increase will not pass at the 3rd referendum; do not only look at the Board of Education budget to cut. Thank you.

5. Minutes

a. Regular Meeting –June 21, 2010

a. (Mary Ann Rosa sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting – June 21, 2010.

Discussion: none

In Favor: 8

Opposed: 0

Abstain: (1) Duplissie

b. Special Meeting – May 18, 2010

b. (Mary Ann Rosa sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve the revised minutes of the Special meeting – May 18, 2010.

Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Chairman's Report - none

7. Subcommittee Reports

a. Public Works Subcommittee –

Sidewalk repair beginning on Main Street by CVS then from Buckingham to St. Mary Magdalen next to the corner of Main Street and Echo Lake Road and finally at Hickcox Funeral Home.

b. Town Hall Subcommittee –

The subcommittee will meet again and get back to you.

8. Town Manager's Report -

Blight Ordinance – Working on a draft ordinance that would only look at abandoned buildings.

Inter District Emergency Connection - between Fire District and the Water & Sewer Authority has begun construction.

Barnes & Bunker Hill – Binder coat on the Bunker Hill portion, Barnes Road is still unpaved and scheduled to be paved this week.

French Street – still in review by the State of CT for ARRA compliance.

Mr. Rinaldi: the blight ordinance, is it going to be enforced?

Mr. Frigon: yes, we are suggesting that. Once it is completed we will give it to the ordinance subcommittee and then we will comment on that point.

9. New Business

a. Consider appointments to boards and commissions.

a. (Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to appoint Joseph Pawlak, 173 Middlebury Road, Watertown, CT. to serve on Police Commission with a term to expire in January 2011.

Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

a. (Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to appoint Eric Markiewicz, 16 Seminole Road, Watertown, CT. to serve on the Planning & Zoning Commission with a term to expire in January 2014.

Ms. Adams: I had heard that the town had a lawsuit against Eric Markiewicz for the Oakville Green damage can you give a status update on that.

Mr. Frigon: there was an amicable settlement between the Town of Watertown and the company and the case was settled. There was a case brought against the Town of Watertown as well and that case was settled out of court.

Ms Adams: we sued him for not fixing the damage at the Oakville Green and he in turn countered sued us and we settled.

Mr. Frigon: that is correct.

In Favor: 6

Opposed: 3 Masayda, Adams, Rinaldi

Abstain: 0

MOTION PASSES

- b. Consider the adoption of a resolution establishing an investment trust for the purpose of pre-funding other post-employment benefits as provided in Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-450 of Title 7, Chapter 113.**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move that the Town Council adopt the resolution establishing an investment trust for the purpose of pre-funding other post-employment benefits as provided in Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-450 of Title 7, Chapter 113.

Tina Gorskey – Attorney – USI Consulting Group, Glastonbury, Ct

I am here today to give you some information about the investment trust that you just adopted. It has to do with other post-employment benefits other than pensions; it is basically retiree health and life benefits that are provided. The statement of the Government Accounting Standards Board Statement 45 represented a change in how the cost associated with these other post employment benefits has to be reported on the town's financial statements, in the past it has been on a pay as you go basis. Employees would retire, if they have medical claims or premiums that need to be paid those amounts would be paid as they were needed. What GASB45 said was towns, municipalities in order to have more complete and useful reporting you are now required to report those amounts as they are accrued by employees during their active working lives. Instead of waiting until the claims have to be paid after they have already retired, it needs to be represented as a cost to the town today through the active working lives of those employees. In response to that you are able to set up a trust fund which can segregate assets that are used to fund those liabilities during the employees working lives. There is no requirement that you fund those amounts in advance but there are some advantages to you in the way those amounts are reported on the towns balance sheet. By establishing this trust the actuarial calculations that come into play in determining what that liability is for those benefits, you are able to use a rate that results in a lower liability amount. Your balance sheets are going to

show a lower liability because you have this vehicle that you are able to set aside money to pay for those benefits. Can I answer any questions for you in that regard?

Ms. Adams: that is happening by setting up a trust but there is no funding to be put in the trust but it is still puts us on the path to compliance?

Ms. Gorskey: it creates the vehicle for you, should funding become available in the future you can set aside those benefits. Again whatever is funded to the extent that you are able to that will lower the amount that you need to report on the balance sheet. Even if you did not fund anything the fact that you have established this trust allows you to use an interest rate that is going to make that liability amount less on your balance sheet. If nothing else you have that advantage and your credit rating agencies look upon it very favorable and from what I understand they have been pushing you to do it. It is a good thing all around and to the extent that you are able to set aside assets and contribute them to that trust and the market does things we want it to do on the investment earnings from those amounts can serve to also reduce your liability and any administrative costs. Trust agreement, the investment policy statement and the resolutions that you have before you accomplish that in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.

Mr. Fusco: you work for a company that does this, that we give money to you.

Ms. Gorskey: I work for a company that is consulting firm they assist with your health and life benefits.

Mr. Nardelli: USI handles our health and she is part of USI.

Ms. Duplissie: do you get to choose the investment options?

Ms. Gorskey: yes, there is an investment policy statement and there has been an investment committee that is established. That investment committee is charged with the fiduciary responsibility of putting any amounts that are set aside in the trust into investments that are suitable to generate investment revenues and protect the principle. The fiduciaries of the trust need to act in accordance with the prudent investor rule.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Consider Budgets for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I make a motion to approve the following budgets to be sent to referendum.

A.	Town General Fund	\$	25,452,103
B.	School General Fund	\$	35,205,816
	General Fund Total	\$	60,657,919
C.	Town Road Aid		\$178,800
D.	Water Operations		1,356,786
E.	Water Capital		118,678
F.	Water Extension		-0-
G.	Sewer Operations		2,031,995
H.	Sewer Extension		-0-
I.	Sewer Capital		160,500
J.	Water and Sewer Debt		160,750
K.	Crestbrook Golf Operations		726,266
L.	Local Capital Improvement		155,013
M.	Debt Service Fund		375,000

Ms. Rosa: I think it is important to say that it is bringing it down to a zero percent increase. The cut to the Board of Ed is over \$600,000 to get to that number.

Ms. Adams: clarification, the town would be the same as last referendum and the Board of Ed is \$600,000 less than last referendum.

Ms. Rosa: right

Mr. Nardelli: \$676,212

Ms. Adams: it is almost \$700,000

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Consider Setting Date for Machine Vote on Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budgets.

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve the Referendum Notice for the machine vote on the 2010-2011 Budgets as follows:

A referendum of electors and citizens qualified to vote in Town Meeting of the Town of Watertown will be held on Tuesday, August 24, 2010 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to vote for the approval or disapproval of Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budgets.

Voting will be at the following polling places:

Voting District 68-01 - Heminway Park School, 37 Heminway Park Road, Watertown, CT

Voting District 68-02 – Judson School, 124 Hamilton Lane, Watertown, CT

Voting Districts 68-03 and 68-04 - Swift Middle School, 250 Colonial Street, Oakville, CT

The temporary voting location for the Voting District 68-04-Polk School shall be the Swift Middle School, 250 Colonial Street, Oakville, CT

Persons qualified to vote in Town Meeting who are not electors shall vote at the Office of the Registrar, 51 Depot Street, Depot Square Mall, Suite 113, Watertown, Connecticut.

Absentee ballots may be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office.

Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Consider Setting Ballot for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budgets.

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move that the budget question on the referendum to be held on August 24, 2010 be placed on the voting machines as follows:

1. SHALL THE FISCAL YEAR 2010/2011 SCHOOL GENERAL FUND BUDGET BE APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 35,205,816

2. SHALL THE FISCAL YEAR 2010/2011 TOWN GENERAL BUDGET BE APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 25,452,103 AND SHALL THE FOLLOWING FISCAL YEAR 2010/2011 BUDGETS BE APPROVED IN THE AMOUNTS OF:

A. TOWN ROAD AID	\$178,800
B. WATER OPERATIONS	1,356,786
C. WATER CAPITAL	118,678
D. WATER EXTENSION	-0-
E. SEWER OPERATIONS	2,031,995
F. SEWER EXTENSION	-0-
G. SEWER CAPITAL	160,500
H. WATER AND SEWER DEBT	160,750
I. CRESTBROOK GOLF OPERATIONS	726,266
J. LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT	155,013
K. DEBT SERVICE FUND	375,000

Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMIOUSLY

- f. **Consider setting a special town meeting on the proposed Fiscal Year 2010-2011 budgets.**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move that the Town Council shall hold a Budget Town Meeting at Swift Middle School Library at 7:15 p.m. on August 16, 2010 to consider the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budgets.

Ms. Adams: is that our regular scheduled council meeting?

Mr. Primini: yes

MOTION PASSED UNANIMIOUSLY

- g. **Consider a bid waiver for school for the purchase of Apple Computers for Watertown High School Graphics Lab and Photo Lab to be purchased through Apple Inc as a sole source provider for an amount not exceed \$77,259.70.**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve a bid waiver for the purchase of Apple Computers for Watertown High School Graphics Lab and Photo Lab to be purchased through Apple Inc as a sole source provider for an amount not exceed \$77,259.70.

Ms. Masayda: do we need Apple computers or can we use PC's which are half the price?

Ms. Baldwin: we need the Apple for the Graphics Lab and the Photo Lab and it is a Mac platform that we are using in that setting.

Ms. Masayda: is there anyway we can try to save the town money by pulling back on some of the high tech equipment and saving teachers?

Ms. Baldwin: this is all funded through the school construction grant that we have right now, so it is coming out of the bonded amount.

Ms. Masayda: if you did not spend the money yet and just because it is allocated it does not mean we should spend it all that is the way I see it.

Ms. Baldwin: the \$35,205,816 that is the Board of Education budget this money is not part of that. It is not included so we cannot trade perhaps a teaching position or another program for the monies that are identified here for this bid waiver, it is a separate pot of money.

Ms. Masayda: could we look at maybe not going full board with all the things they we originally were going to put into the schools and to give money back to the taxpayer. It moves the money around and we are not spending hog wild just because the money was allocated.

Ms. Baldwin: I do not think anyone is spending hog wild on the school construction project in terms of what we are putting into the school as part of the original design plan. We are right now on time and under budget at the high school presently and so it is possible that dollars that have been allocated through the bonding that in the end the total cost of the project is less to the town. We are mindful of that and working very hard through competitive bidding to make sure that if we are purchasing computers or furniture or anything like that, that we do get the best pricing. We work hard with our construction management firm as well as our lead architects at KBA to make sure that we can project this on budget if not under budget. Right now with about 8 months left to go we are on time and right now under budget that is a benefit to this community absolutely.

Ms. Masayda: you are constantly looking at that; to say do we need this now is this something we can add in the future.

Ms. Baldwin: if we do not do this now as part of the school construction project it would need to be funded separately by the town and by the board and we have to put that in our budget request. So now is the time because it is coming through as part of the \$85 million dollar bond and there is reimbursement on the school construction project. Now is the best time and we are getting competitive pricing for this work.

Ms. Duplissie: would it be cheaper to change the platform and get cheaper computers rather than sticking with the Mac.

Ms. Baldwin: this is only one component of the high school, it is specific to the programming needs that we have in that setting in terms of the Graphics Lab and the Photo Lab. We examined that early on in the design phase there is no option for us in the PC setting, we went with the Mac.

Ms. Adams: yes, we are using bond money to pay for these computers and also getting reimbursement from the state. The important thing is by the time we pay off these bonds that they are going to be obsolete and hopefully at the time when it comes to the board we are able to fund the updates on them.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- h. Consider authorizing the Town Manager to sign an agreement between the State of Connecticut and the Town of Watertown for the Construction, Inspection and Maintenance of the Reconstruction of Sunnyside Avenue utilizing Federal Funds under the Urban Component of the Surface Transportation Program**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve the resolution authorizing the Town Manager to sign an agreement between the State of Connecticut and the Town of Watertown for the Construction, Inspection and Maintenance of the Reconstruction of Sunnyside Avenue utilizing Federal Funds under the Urban Component of the Surface Transportation Program.

Mr. Frigon: this project has been on going for several years, I have asked our Director of Public Works present to you the entire project very briefly.

Mr. Cavanaugh: the Sunnyside project has been in the works for ten years and is part of the urban component of the Transportation Act. The monies are being funded through the COG; Watertown has been very successful in obtaining its fair share of these funds over the last few years. This represents the last major project that we are going to be doing through this program. What the project involves is complete replacement of the culvert under Sunnyside Avenue down at Falls Avenue. This will be the last component for Turkey Brook flood mitigation project. There are extensive utility relocations involved, after that we are going to skip over the central portion of

the Sunnyside Avenue going up the hill, somewhere around Hill Top Road start the reconstruction all the way toward the Waterbury line. Due to the accident history out there we are going to soften up some of the curbs and putting in mitigation measures, guard rail improvements, to make it a safer project. The final Mylar's have been submitted to the state, they are processing them right now. All of the monies both the urban transportation monies and the stimulus fund monies must be obligated by August 25th of this year. The project is scheduled to be bid in the spring of 2011; construction is anticipated to take approximately two years except for the Sunnyside Avenue portion the culvert replacement they are going to be shutting down Sunnyside Avenue essentially the whole summer so not to disrupt the bus service. At this point we do not know if that will occur in 2011 or 2012. The State of CT will be administering the project and doing the construction inspection.

Ms. Adams: finally by replacing this culvert hopefully it is going to solve a lot of the flooding problems we have down there.

Mr. Cavanaugh: it will be a big improvement than what we have right now. Skipper Avenue has already been done and all the other culverts done. It is on frequency for storm water somewhere between 10 and 25 years, that is why it is not a flood control project it is drainage improvement project. However this particular culvert is size appropriate for the rest of the project.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- i. **Consider an appropriation from the Sidewalk Fund in the amount of \$24,850 for sidewalk construction in connection with the Sunnyside Avenue Reconstruction Project.**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve an appropriation from the Sidewalk Fund in the amount of \$24,850 for sidewalk construction in connection with the Sunnyside Avenue Reconstruction Project.

Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- j. Consider a bid waiver for maps to be repaired and/or placed on Mylar for the Town Clerk's Office to be completed by Brown River for an amount not to exceed \$5,180. Funding for the project is through the Connecticut State Library preservation grant.**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve a bid waiver for maps to be repaired and/or placed on Mylar for the Town Clerk's Office to be completed by Brown River for an amount not to exceed \$5,180.

Mr. Primini: this is with grant money.

Mr. Frigon: \$5,000 of the money is being reimbursed from the state for historic preservation.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- k. Consider an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$6,199.92 for the repair of a Public Works Department Roller due to a motor vehicle accident. Funds have been deposited from the vehicle operator's insurance company. Also required is a bid waiver for the repairs completed by Tyler Equipment Corporation for an amount not to exceed \$6,199.92.**

(Mary Ann Rosa, sec. Richard DiFederico) I move to approve an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$6,199.92 for the repair of a Public Works Department Roller due to a motor vehicle accident. Funds have been deposited from the vehicle operator's insurance company. Also required is a bid waiver for the repairs completed by Tyler Equipment Corporation for an amount not to exceed \$6,199.92.

Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

10. Public participation.

Carl R. Mancini – 74 Regency Hill Drive, Watertown

I hear zero percent increase here, zero percent increase there. I did not hear anybody saying there were going to be a zero percent tax increase. What is the new mill rate going to be with that \$676,000 cut?

Mr. Nardelli: 23.16

Mr. Mancini: what will the tax increase be?

Mr. Nardelli: the mill rate increase will be .78 which is a 3.49 increase.

Ms. Rosa: I think it is important for particularly the newspaper reporters to get across the fact to the public. That the 3.49 that was just quoted as the mill increase we have money obligations that have already been approved for the bonding of the schools. I think people fail to realize that is not all new money, that it is money that they have already approved for us to spend and it has to show in the budget total.

Mr. Mancini: what was the percentage of the 3.49% increase in renovation for the school?

Ms. Rosa: it is my understanding that 3% of the bonding.

Mr. Mancini: when you do not have the money coming in any more you are not spending anymore new money, so what do you do, you have to cut back. I voted for the school project too.

Ms. Rosa: we got to pay it now.

Mr. Mancini: I have always said we are going to have to pay for that project someday in the future.

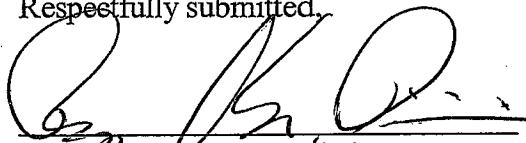
11. Adjournment.

Motion: (Katherine Duplissie, sec. Richard DiFederico) to Adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:09

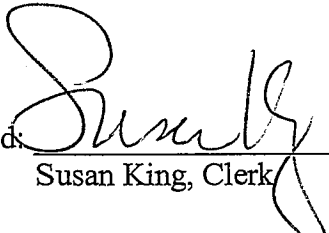
Discussion: none

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,


Raymond N. Primini, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

Approved: _____


Susan King, Clerk