



**PALMER TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MONDAY, June 8, 2009 @ 7:00 PM**  
**Town Council Meeting Room, Palmer Town Building**  
**Minutes**

1. Meeting called to order at 1911
2. Roll Call
  - a. Present: Mr. Magiera, Mr. Backus, Mr. Dinuovo, Mr. Duguay, Mr. Burns, Mr. Hebert, Mr. Remillard, Mr. Williams, Mr. Streeter
  - b. Absent: Ms. Barry
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Consent of the Agenda Order: Moved item 8i up for consideration after two public hearings; Mr. Backus moved, Mr. Dinuovo seconded motion to accept agenda; Council voted 8/0/0 to accept agenda as amended
5. Minutes of Preceding Town Council Meetings
  - a. April 30
    - i. Mr. Burns moved, Mr. Backus seconded to accept minutes
    - ii. Vote was 7-0-1 to accept minutes with Mr. Duguay abstaining
  - b. May 11: Add vote count for first round of voting for council seat
    - i. Mr. Burns moved, Mr. Dinuovo seconded to accept minutes as amended
    - ii. Vote was 7-0-1 to accept minutes with Mr. Remillard abstaining
  - c. May 18
    - i. Mr. Burns moved, Mr. Backus seconded to accept minutes
    - ii. Vote was unanimous to accept minutes
  - d. May 21
    - i. Mr. Hebert moved, Mr. Hebert seconded to accept minutes
    - ii. Vote was 6-0-2 to accept minutes, with Mr. Duguay and Mr. Remillard abstaining
  - e. May 27a
    - i. Section 4, line 5 add "since you have been here only 5 months"
    - ii. Line 5 somebody other than Mr. Burns had to second motion
    - iii. Item 4, b, iii, b insert "previously"
    - iv. Mr. Burns moved, Mr. Dinuovo seconded motion to accept minutes as amended
    - v. Vote was 5-0-3 to accept minutes with Mr. Remillard, Mr. Dinuovo, and Mr. Magiera abstaining
  - f. May 27 b
    - i. Mr. Burns moved, Mr. Duguay seconded motion to accept minutes
    - ii. Vote was 5-0-3 to accept minutes, with Mr. Dinuovo, Mr. Remillard, Mr. Magiera abstaining
6. Old Business:
  - a. 7:00 PM – Public Hearing Ordinance 2009-05 CSO Project loan authorization

- 1                   i. Hearing opened at 1918
- 2                   ii. Opening statement of Ordinance read by Mr. Magiera
- 3                   iii. No discussion; hearing closed at 1919
- 4           b. Mr. Dinuovo was appointed council clerk for the meeting in Ms. Barry's absence
- 5           c. Public Hearing FY10 Budget
- 6                i. Hearing opened at 1920
- 7                ii. Discussion: Ms. Melanie Liebold: Are any other departments going to be level funded or
- 8                   less?
- 9                    1. Most departments received major reductions
- 10                   2. Operating budget reduced 5%
- 11                   3. Library reduced 5.02%
- 12                   4. Wastewater Treatment level funded
- 13                   5. Pathfinder assessment going up 23%
- 14                   6. Schools reduced 5% not counting fed stimulus money
- 15                   7. Total town budget is reduced 1.5% even using free cash
- 16                iii. Hearing closed at 1924
- 17           d. Discussion – Palmer Redevelopment Authority
- 18                i. Mr. Blake Lamothe: outlined redevelopment ideas to expand opportunities, quality of life
- 19                   downtown, and enhancing rail service and recreational park
- 20                ii. Also ideas to create revenue for town
- 21                iii. Palmer could host commuter services for many surrounding towns due to proximity of
- 22                   roads and rail services
- 23                    1. Short and long term parking services
- 24                    2. Tying in with recreational services offered
- 25                    3. Walkway and canoe access, picnic areas along river near Depot Village
- 26                iv. Lake Hitchcock Development- Mr. Larry Jutruis
- 27                    1. Opportunities generated around existing rail access
- 28                    2. Three development projects:
- 29                        a. Relocation of DPW garage (assessed value \$300,000)
- 30                            i. Removal from flood zone to centralized area
- 31                                1. Reduce truck routing
- 32                                2. More secure centralized facility
- 33                                3. Easier maintenance
- 34                                4. Proposed to move site to Burleigh Park
- 35                            ii. Convert site to highest and best use
- 36                            iii. Adding new activities for residents
- 37                            iv. Generating economic activity in the town
- 38                b. Development of parking areas
- 39                    i. 7.2 acres available
- 40                        1. 640 parking spaces
- 41                        2. 40 bus spaces
- 42                        3. Boat ramp and boat trailer parking
- 43                        4. Pay station will generate revenue
- 44                    ii. Will generate consistent revenue
- 45                    iii. Less affected by flooding
- 46                    iv. Increased river access
- 47                    v. Space available to host other activities
- 48                c. Rehab of railroad station
- 49                    i. Establish passenger rail service in Palmer
- 50                    ii. Renovation of passenger platform
- 51                    iii. Subway walkway to be reopened and upgraded

- iv. Rail maintenance to the site, signage
  3. Attractive area for development
  4. Palmer is central link in MA for roadways
  - v. We could put presentation on the website for public information
  - vi. Discussions coming Friday with Amherst; UMass has much influence in rail routing
  - vii. We have space available for developments
  - viii. Studies in handouts show Palmer as prime development corridor by population
  - ix. Seeking support from Town Council for seeking stimulus money for development
  - x. George: Has soil been tested for soil and chemicals? Should be looked into; not sure ball field has been fully cleared for use
  - xi. Knowledge corridor is looking for \$50,000,000 in stimulus money to develop rail corridor along CT river from shore through to VT; taking away Palmer access to passenger rail and revamping rail infrastructure along CT river
  - xii. We are also members of Pioneer Valley Planning Commission; they also have influence other side of river and they currently support Knowledge Corridor even considering huge extra development costs
  - xiii. If we are going to present this proposal we need to develop consistent and accurate figures to support this
  - xiv. Town Council supports this concept
    1. Get presentation to Mr. Streeter to be posted on the web
    2. Develop numbers further
7. 5 minute recess @ 2012
8. Reconvened @2020; continued old business
- a. Second Reading – Ordinance 2009-05 CSO Project loan authorization
    - i. Mr. Burns moved, Mr. Backus seconded to waive reading; vote was unanimous
  - b. Resolution 2009-37 – Vote for School Department Budget for FY10
    - i. Mr. Streeter recapped previous discussions about school budget
    - ii. Operating budget has been reduced to \$14,830,000
    - iii. Time is of the essence to give school board numbers for FY 2010
    - iv. Worst case scenario; we may receive additional school funding depending on local aid numbers voted on from MA state budget
    - v. Not comfortable passing this budget; time constraints are very limiting
    - vi. \$377,000 for unemployment is worst-case scenario for school layoffs?
      1. Uses a ratio to develop numbers
      2. Doesn't include everybody who received pink slips
    - vii. Reduction of 5.19%; Pathfinder is up 23%
    - viii. Read and moved by Mr. Dinuovo, seconded by Mr. Backus
    - ix. Discussion:
      1. Moved by Mr. Dinuovo to amend motion by adding \$200,000 from stabilization fund to be reduced by any additional funding that comes from state aid, bringing amount to \$15,030,000
      2. Seconded by Mr. Burns
      3. Discussion on amendment:
        - a. Health insurance: potential for having employees increase copays; do we have numbers there? We would have to go back to bargaining table for discussion
        - b. Issue has to come from town council; changes would not take effect for 60 days; we have a problem with waiting as jobs are involved
        - c. No pay increase is being discussed with union to save \$700,000; still 34-36 people laid off

- 1 d. Asking for town wide discussion about pay and insurance copays; we  
2 need to have discussion sooner  
3 e. Give union time to see what final budget is and how many are let go  
4 f. If we go to larger insurance copay what would figures be? We don't  
5 know; figures have been discussed but nothing concrete or convincing  
6 g. Some savings are possible for members even with larger copay; sooner  
7 we discuss more we can save  
8 h. We can work together to minimize impacts of changes  
9 i. We want to make good faith effort for everybody in this terrible year  
10 j. Vote on amendment: 7-1-0 with Mr. Backus voting against  
11 x. Vote on motion: 7-1-0 with Mr. Backus voting against; motion carried  
12 c. Vote – Ordinance 2009-05 CSO Project loan authorization  
13 i. Discussion:  
14 1. How many more budget and personnel cuts will this cause next year?  
15 2. Moneys have been available for CSOs for other communities to make CSOs  
16 compliant with Federal order  
17 3. We need to do a better job of hunting funds and financing before we vote to  
18 spend this money  
19 4. Once we appropriate this money we can never ever apply for grants or other  
20 financing for this project  
21 5. Capital expenditures should have a debt exclusion associated with them; there is  
22 no money in budget for this  
23 6. Fines for not appropriating funding-nobody has gone to jail yet over this funding  
24 or noncompliance; other cities are not being penalized with worse problems  
25 7. Nobody in town will be faulted if we don't vote this money  
26 8. This is before us tonight so we can qualify for funding grants and 2%SRF loans;  
27 if we don't vote by June 30 we lose opportunity for that funding  
28 9. There is no way we can absorb these costs within our budget; funding and grants  
29 are necessary.  
30 ii. Mr. Dinuovo moved the article to time certain at last meeting in June; have Mr.  
31 Kaczmarczyk and Mr. Skowronek come back with more information with which we can  
32 make a decision  
33 iii. Mr. Burns asked for state representatives to come in to discuss funding for this project  
34 d. Discussion FY10 Budget rescheduled for next working meeting by Mr. Magiera  
35 e. Re-organization of Council Sub-Committees tabled due to lateness of hour until next working  
36 meeting  
37 9. New Business:  
38 a. Council approval of Manager's Appointment to Conservation Commission  
39 i. Commission met and appointed Ms. Chrissy Beauregard to Commission  
40 ii. Informational approval  
41 b. Council Appointments:  
42 i. Regional Casino Task Force: Named Mr. Burns as primary member, and Mr. Backus as  
43 alternate  
44 ii. PVTA: Mr. Burns has volunteered to be liaison to replace Mr. Whitney  
45 iii. Charter Review Committee  
46 1. Charter says years ending in 9 we have to set up committee to review charter  
47 2. Asked Mr. Hebert and Mr. Duguay, who agreed to serve  
48 3. We need to request letters of interest to Town Manager before June 17<sup>th</sup>  
49 4. June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting we will make decision about 7 citizen members of committee  
50 5. We should set parameters as to rules and procedures; what they can and can't  
51 change



- 1 d. Mr. Duguay: Thank Mr. John Sasur for putting up poles for flower arrangements on bridges in  
2 Three Rivers  
3 e. Mr. Backus: Thank town for very successful Memorial Day Celebration  
4 f. Mr. Dinuovo: Congratulations to graduates  
5 g. Mr. Burns: Congratulations to graduates; amazed at number of awards and scholarships awarded  
6 to students  
7 h. Mr. Magiera:  
8 i. Congratulations to Mr. Streeter on his work to tear down fire damaged buildings in town  
9 ii. Meetings are planned this and next Wednesday at 7 PM; also meeting with Mr. Chudy  
10 and the Casino Impact Study Committee on July 8  
11 iii. Let me know by e-mail what your areas of interest are, so I can arrange proper  
12 representation from Casino Impact subcommittees at the meetings so the whole  
13 committee doesn't have to appear at the same time.  
14 13. Adjournment of Formal Session: Mr. Burns moved to adjourn, Mr. Dinuovo seconded, vote was  
15 unanimous to adjourn @2121  
16

17 Respectfully submitted by:

18  
19 Ramon Dole

20 Recording Secretary