



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

1. Called to order at 1905
2. Roll Call:
  - a. Present: Mr. Burns, Mr. Backus, Mr. Dinuovo, Mr. Duguay, Mr. Williams, Mr. Streeter
  - b. Absent: Mr. Magiera, Mr. Remillard, Ms. Barry, Mr. Hebert
  - c. Informational meeting with the Casino Committee only; no quorum present
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Discussion – Report from Citizens Casino Impact Study Committee
  - a. 14 Questions were submitted in writing; 11 questions pertained to infrastructure and public safety; they will be addressed first.
  - b. There will be no public input tonight; there will be a separate public meeting for that at a later date
  - c. No one on committee received communication about meeting; Mr. Chudy said that he had been notified but had not passed word to members; committee members did not receive questions
  - d. First question: (Mr. Burns): How was number of police officers arrived at, and what population was used to estimate?
  - e. Mr. Mastalerz: At interview with police chief; chief specified that he would need 20-24 additional officers based on having a number of police on duty at casino and available for traffic control; figure was not based on population figure
  - f. Second question (Mr. Burns): Fire Dept estimate: First, how was number of 24 additional firefighters arrived at, and second, if there is a need for firefighters in Three Rivers and Palmer, why is there no need in Bondsville?
    - i. Mr. Mastalerz interviewed Chief Roy; who said he needs 4 groups of 1 deputy chief and three firemen led by a chef per shift to cover casino; since Three Rivers backs up Palmer, one crew is needed there for backup
    - ii. (Mr. Burns): Might these numbers be too low?
    - iii. These extra men would be needed full time to be on call for casino
  - g. Third question (Mr. Burns): Buildings needed for Fire, Police, and DPW:
    - i. Police fire and DPW would need new buildings; has cost savings for building a Public Safety Complex been looked into? Former town manager told committee not to look into buildings; that issue would be covered at a later date.
    - ii. Mr. Backus said that combining police and fire services in one building wasn't working well in Southbridge when he was on police station investigation committee

- 1 h. Fourth question (Mr. Burns): Was there any study done on mitigating any increases in crime,  
2 traffic crime, DUIs?  
3 i. Mr. Mastalerz stated that traffic would be worst problem  
4 ii. (Unknown audience member): Rate of crime may not increase but increase in population  
5 would increase crimes  
6 iii. (Second unknown audience member): visible police presence seems to decrease crimes in  
7 towns with casinos  
8 iv. (Second unknown audience member): investigation has shown that the crime rate has  
9 gone down; Big problem is DUI in casino towns  
10 v. (Second unknown audience member) stated that the Chief would like 1 officer full time  
11 in casino to watch for DUI 24/7  
12 vi. Mr. Mastalerz discussed how building a new safety complex centrally located would  
13 improve police and fire response times throughout town  
14 vii. Mr. Mastalerz discussed with Pat O'Connor the necessity of 6 full time firemen per shift  
15 should be on duty at complex  
16 i. Fire questions (Mr. Dinuovo):  
17 i. Distance requirement for response time: does central building affect insurance rates and  
18 response times?  
19 1. (Second unknown audience member): Discussed buying Walnut St. Café to build  
20 office space and fireman duty station, discussed impact on outlying areas, talked  
21 about moving one station at Springfield St. to central location. Palmer would be  
22 full time; Central St. station would stay, as well as Bondsville, Thorndike, and  
23 Three Rivers Stations. (Second unknown audience member) discussed buying  
24 Walnut St. Café that abuts building currently in place  
25 2. (Mr. Dinuovo): Casino would expect services from town as a result of insurance  
26 costs and taxes paid in town  
27 j. Mr. Burns: Bylaws, ordinances and concerns for the town:  
28 i. Mr. Chudy: Casino issues are expensive for the town, especially host community;  
29 hotbedding ordinance is needed; there are ordinances in place in other state towns  
30 ii. Mr. Chudy discussed laws to address issues of meals tax, liquor tax, livery tax, and room  
31 tax to generate revenue for town above and beyond state taxes  
32 iii. Mr. Chudy: Council can ask for the help of people in House and Senate to help host  
33 communities be prepared for extraordinary expenses; current discussions have been held  
34 behind closed doors  
35 iv. Mr. Chudy: understanding infrastructure issues are very important for the town,  
36 especially water issues  
37 1. Town will need to tie into Quabbin to address future needs for businesses,  
38 laundry, extra water use and population growth  
39 2. Transportation and train stop issues also need to be looked into by the town  
40 3. Funding and legal issues must be investigated  
41 k. Mr. Burns: Multifamily tax rate increases?  
42 i. Mr. Chudy: Bylaws that state occupancy levels by unrelated persons must be addressed;  
43 Multifamily units should be taxed at a higher rate than single family dwellings  
44 ii. (Unidentified audience member): Non-owner occupied dwellings should also be taxed at  
45 a different rate; Mr. Chudy agreed  
46 iii. Mr. Dinuovo: Strategies must be addressed now that budget discussions are over  
47 iv. Mr. Chudy: Future planning and preparation is supremely important to successful  
48 operation  
49 l. Mr. Burns: Did committee investigate what benefits/liabilities would be if we are a neighboring  
50 town instead of a host?

- 1 i. Mr. Chudy stated that surrounding towns must also provide for traffic and increased  
2 population; state law can be made to help finance these concerns for neighboring  
3 communities also; we need to address state legislators about legislation to help with  
4 funding for these issues.
- 5 ii. (Second unidentified audience member): The committee looked mostly at the impacts to  
6 the Town of Palmer, not impacts to surrounding towns; if we become a neighboring  
7 community, we would suffer mostly negative impacts. Without negotiating a decent Host  
8 Community Agreement, we can't afford to undertake the costs.
- 9 m. (Third unidentified audience member): Water issues were discussed during at least two  
10 committee meetings; Water Dept said that Palmer would have to outsource water needs due to  
11 redundancy needed to cover fire, water access, and extra population that comes with casino
- 12 n. (Mr. Burns): Housing report (p. 10): Numbers are not clear; Mr. Chudy clarified entries
- 13 o. (Mr. Burns): Did any committee members change their minds as the process progressed?
- 14 p. Mr. Dinuovo left the meeting in protest; saying question is improper without whole committee  
15 present and that nothing is being accomplished here.
- 16 q. (Unidentified audience member): Committee could not find a host committee to use as an  
17 example; that was surprising result of research. Many communities had lists of regrets about what  
18 they hadn't done or should have done. Sooner or later town will need to have referendum about  
19 casino; referendum should take place after legislation is enacted so town will know what town is  
20 getting into.
- 21 r. (Mr. Duguay): Who pays for the negotiating team? (Third unidentified audience member): Town  
22 Council should decide certain things that are not negotiable. Developer should sign an agreement  
23 before negotiations start to cover anticipated and unanticipated costs and expenses concerning  
24 casino. Report was issued in the best interests of the town at the time report was issued; personal  
25 convictions should not enter into it.
- 26 s. Mr. Burns: Will school bus routes be impacted during construction and after opening?
- 27 i. (Second unidentified audience member): Definitely; town needs to work something out  
28 with developers to minimize traffic impact.
- 29 ii. Offshoot from turnpike requires state approval
- 30 iii. Lights should be put at either end of Breckinridge St to control bypass traffic
- 31 t. Mr. Burns: Medical facilities: are any placed by casino, and what is being done to prevent drop-  
32 offs at medical facilities?
- 33 i. (Second unidentified audience member), with Mr. Chudy: No; they would have at most  
34 EMTs on site
- 35 ii. Might negotiate for ambulance on site
- 36 iii. Might also require negotiations with Wing to cover emergencies
- 37 iv. May be large liability issue
- 38 v. Mr. Burns also discussed requiring leasing to a medical or ambulatory care facility onsite,  
39 and requiring adding EMTs to Fire department. (Second unidentified audience member):  
40 investigation found that Ambulance service would require more vehicles and staff to  
41 cover emergencies
- 42 u. Mr. Burns: Do other casinos require an annex for police on site? Mr. Chudy: No, only on tribal  
43 land
- 44 v. Mr. Burns: No public comment was allowed at this meeting; Council consensus is that we need a  
45 negotiating committee. Mr. Chudy: Tax issues must apply to the whole town; we can't just tax the  
46 casino. Spot taxes aren't legal
- 47 5. Mr. Burns adjourned informal meeting at 2007.

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49 Respectfully submitted by:  
50 Ramon Dole  
51 Recording Secretary