

MEETING MINUTES OF THE
PALMER CITIZEN CASINO IMPACT STUDY COMMITTEE
GENERAL GROUP MEETING 16
PALMER TOWN BUILDING, MEETING ROOM 1
OCTOBER 1, 2008 – 6:30 PM

Meeting opened at 6:35 pm by Gerald Chudy, Chair.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT Rocqueline Blazejowski, Charlotte Burns, Gerald Chudy, Anthony Dimitropolis, Mickey Ghosh, Joseph Mastalerz, Stephen Sears, Michael Swiatlowski, Paul Wisnewski

ABSENT CathyAnn Gehlhausen, George Roy, Carol Sugrue,

OTHERS PRESENT Ken Somerville

MINUTES APPROVAL

Minutes Review for Meeting 13:

S. Sears is concerned that the question on page two does not encompass the full answer given by Mohegan Sun. M. Swiatlowski will review the video of the meeting and verify the question and answer.

The question will read:

Q – Before making a decision on whether or not to accept your casino plans, the town will sit down and negotiate with you prior to a referendum. Is this the way it will work?

A – The legislature should require a local referendum. The previous bill included this and I would assume the next bill will as well. People in town are going to want to know what the deal is before making a decision. Yes, I believe this is how it will work.

A motion was made by A. Dimitropolis to approve the minutes with correction.
R. Blazejowski seconded. The voted passed (9:0).

Minutes Review for Meeting 14:

S. Sears would like to see the Housing Sub-committee include Norwich as a part of their housing study.

A motion was made by J. Mastalerz to accept the minutes as written.
P. Wisnewski seconded. The vote passed (8:0, 1 abstention).

Minutes Review for Meeting 15:

P. Wisnewski questions the property tax rate for Northeast Reality and asks how the taxes are being paid by Northeast Reality. R. Blazejowski will confirm the answer.

P. Wisnewski asked G. Chudy to publicly announce that G. Olearzyk and A. Les have resigned from the committee. This will help remind the public that we are still an active committee and if they have any questions or concerns, they can be addressed at a meeting.

G. Chudy will contact M-Pact regarding television coverage for our Oct 15 and Oct 29 meetings.

A motion is made by A. Dimitropolis to accept the minutes as written.
R. Blazejowski seconded. The vote passed (9:0).

REVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

M. Ghosh asks why not include a dollar estimate in the report? Wouldn't the Town Council like to know how much some of this may cost? J. Mastalerz answers that it is nearly impossible for us to realistically quote this project and that it is not the committee's task to provide detailed cost information. A discussion takes place on what types of cost information is relevant and what is not. Each department in town has to come up with a budget and if they provide information to what future costs may be, then we should include this in our report.

P. Wisnewski states that we are not in a position to tell each department what they may or may not need. A discussion follows on the credibility of our report if we feel any single department is making far-reaching requests. It may discredit the budgets of other town departments.

M. Swiatlowski states that information within the report is good, but the format of the report is a little confusing. Perhaps the information can be broken into 4 categories: What are the issues now? What issues will grow with a casino? What new issues may arise as a result of a casino? How can each department better serve these issues?

Ken Somerville states that in an earlier meeting, Town Manager Richard Fitzgerald asked each of the departments to build their budgets as a result of an increased population in town. A discussion follows on whether or not Mr. Fitzgerald's estimate that the population of Palmer would grow to 20,000 people as a result of a casino is accurate or not..

P. Wisnewski proposes that the report follow two categories: direct and indirect impacts. A statement about population growth may be made in a cover page to summarize the thoughts of the overall report.

C. Burns asks if the population of Norwich, CT increased with the addition of two casinos nearby?

C. Burns also mentions that in her sub-committee's interview of Chief Frydryk that he provided slightly different numbers and more information that should be shared with the committee. It is suggested that the Infrastructure sub-committee ask Chief Frydryk for clarification on any numbers or statements in question. M. Swiatlowski will share the documentation from the Social & Cultural Impacts sub-committee with the Infrastructure sub-committee.

G. Chudy would like our committee to ask Sen. Brewer and Rep. Smola what can be done at the state level to help benefit the town as a host community. There is concern that with the addition of a casino in town the town of Palmer may be classified as an affluent community and not receive as much state aid. We will meet with them on Oct 29 and this point shall certainly be raised.

Moving onto the Water Departments, a discussion takes place as to how much water Mohegan Sun is projecting to need. Earlier in the year, the Quabbin was suggested as a possible water source. The cost of the water will be impacted by the source of the water. Our committee should verify the sourcing of the water with Mohegan Sun at our next meeting with them on Oct 15th.

On the page entitled Palmer Water District #1, S. Sears asks where Mr. Ammann came up with the figure of 500 new residences?

Regarding the Fire Departments, a question is raised if an increase in population was taken into consideration as part of the growth of the departments since the Three Rivers and Bondsville Departments cited backing up the Palmer Department as the reason for increased personnel.

Again, the topic of what exactly the casino needs is brought up. Mohegan Sun has yet to confirm their exact water needs and fire/public safety needs. It is discussed that this information will not be known until a proper, legal negotiation takes place.

P. Wisnewski brings up a point that we have not researched in depth where and how the traffic to the casino will be coming from. He envisions a way to show these traffic patterns at specific times of the day and week and feels it would be a great tool for the town to see what the traffic on the streets would really look like.

Regarding the Wing Hospital and EMT services, the report should include the estimated number of calls and emergency visits, using a proportionate scale from the number of emergency calls from Mohegan Sun in CT. A discussion also brings up whether or not Palmer would need a private ambulance service or a public ambulance service.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

- October 15 – Meeting with Mohegan Sun and Northeast Reality
- October 29 – Meeting with Sen. Brewer and Rep. Smola
- November 12 – Review of the Social and Cultural Impacts report
- November 19 – Review of the Impacts on Schools report
- December 3 – Review of the Impacts on Housing report
- December 17 – Discussion to wrap up full committee report

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by A. Dimitropolis to adjourn meeting at 8:35 pm.
R. Blazejowski seconded. The vote passed (9:0).

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL SWIATLOWSKI.

APPROVED – OCTOBER 15, 2008