

**Palmer Town Council
Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2018**

1 **Call to Order**

2 The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Tuesday, February 12, 2018 was called to order at 6:30pm
3 by Town Council President Barbara Barry. Councilors Mary Salzmann, Lorinda Baker, Karl
4 Williams Robert Lavoie and Matthew Lemieux. Michelle Sikes was absent. Also present was
5 Town Manager, Charles Blanchard and Executive Assistant, Nicole Parker.

6 **Meeting Minutes- January 8, 2018**

7 Motion was made to approve as amended by R. Lavoie. Seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0:1)
8 Lemieux

9 **Old Business**

10 Update on Security Camera Proposal

11
12 Chief Janulewicz was present to answer questions. Joe Cebula, camera vendor was also present to
13 answer questions. There was discussion over how long the cameras will hold memory. Mr. Cebula stated
14 that it depends on how much movement there is. It's really a broad range of time and cannot really be
15 predicted. It was recommended to have feed go live to the police station as that is the most accurate
16 way of seeing the footage. R.Lavoie stated that there is not much crime reported in town and that
17 maybe cameras weren't necessary. After more discussion, the Council decided to experiment with two
18 cameras and see if they are beneficial they can buy more in other areas.

19
20 Motion was made to purchase two cameras and supporting equipment with \$20,000.00 of free cash by
21 B.Barry. Seconded by M.Lemieux. Motion passed (7:0)

22 **New Business**

23

24 Bleachers in the High School and landscaping at the school campus and Town Hall

25
26 M.Salzmann brought up the previous discussion regarding replacement of bleachers in the high school
27 gymnasium and landscaping around the school grounds and around Town Hall. C.Blanchard stated that
28 they are receiving proposals for the bleachers which will need a contribution from Free Cash as it is not a
29 priority in Capital Improvements tis year. C.Blanchard also stated that he is trying to work the
30 landscaping funds into the budget this year.

31

32 **New Business**

33

34 First Reading, PV Ordinance Revision

35

36 A letter from the Planning Board dated January 10, 2018 was submitted to the Council requesting the
37 Council's consideration of their recommendation during the Public Hearing.

1 Letter requesting that the Palmer Passenger Station be moved up in the State Rail Plan priority list to
2 remain a part of the Inland Route Study

3
4 Draft letter was presented to the Council for their review to be sent to the Department of
5 Transportation, along with the presentation from the PRA requesting the plan stay a priority.

6
7 Motion was made to send letter requesting that the Palmer Passenger Station be moved up in the State
8 Rail Plan priority list by M. Lemieux. Seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0)

9
10 Ben Hood, Library Director, founder for Citizen's for a Palmer Rail Stop. spoke about the importance of
11 advocating for inter-city rail and encouraged individuals in Town send letters prioritizing the stop in the
12 new rail plan.

13
14 Opioid Litigation

15
16 C.Blanchard stated that the Town was approached by several law firms around the country that have
17 begun the litigation process and to become part of a large group joining together to fight the opioid
18 epidemic through litigation with opioid manufacturer's. The group Massachusetts Opioid Litigation
19 Attorney's (MOLA) has begun a Mass tort lawsuit, which is when civil actions that have many
20 plaintiffs involved against one or several defendant corporations. Several communities have
21 already signed on. Palmer Town Counsel is familiar with the Massachusetts firms and recommends the
22 Council join in. He explained that the method the lawsuit uses is to confirm the detriment the opioids
23 have had on law enforcement, Board of Health, schools, etc. may be identified individually and each
24 community will be compensated based on the impact the opioids have on it.

25
26 Motion was made to authorize Charlie Blanchard to sign the engagement letter by M.Lemieux.
27 Seconded by K.Williams. Motion passed (6:0:1) Salzman

28
29 Transfer From Stabilization Fund

30
31 Housing Partner's Inc was selected for the study on the reuse of Converse Middle School. C.Blanchard
32 reminded the Council that a total of \$70,000.00 was earmarked for the project and requested that
33 \$20,000 be transferred into an account for the first phase.

34 B.Barry stated that the contract from Housing Partner's states that the total is \$40,000 plus expenses
35 and inquired as to what that expense number may be? C.Blanchard stated that the actual amounts are
36 estimates .

37
38 Motion was made to transfer \$20,000 from the Stabilization Fund into an account to be used for
39 Consultant Services by L.Baker. Seconded by R.Lavoie. Motion passed (6:0)

40
41 7:00PM Public Hearing: Street name change

42 R.Lavoie read public hearing notice.

1 The applicant, Attorney Brandon Ruotolo of B.Ruotolo Law Practice, representing land owner of 1 Aspen
2 Circle, requests to consider a name change of Aspen Circle to Laurel Road.

3
4 The homeowner requests a road name change from Aspen Circle to Laurel Rd considering there is an
5 Aspen Circle in Wilbraham and it would be less confusing. The homeowner receives her mail through the
6 Wilbraham Post Office and access to Aspen Circle is through Wilbraham. Changing the only house on
7 Aspen Circle to Laurel Rd would benefit the emergency departments as well, as GPS does not direct
8 anyone to Aspen Circle in Palmer but to Aspen Rd in Wilbraham.

9
10 Motion was made to change the name of the road from Aspen Circe to Laurel Rd by M.Salzmann.
11 Seconded by K.Williams. Motion passed (6:0)

12
13 Discussion; Recreational Marijuana Ban

14
15 B.Barry stated that she brought the topic forward for discussion due to it being a two-step process. The
16 law states that the legislative body must approve the ban as well as the voters as a ballot question.
17 There is an election in June, and if the Council would like to take the opportunity to allow the residents
18 to vote, it should be decided by the next meeting. It was also stated that if the Council does not vote to
19 ban it then it never goes to ballot. C.Blanchard stated that there is currently a moratorium on
20 recreational marijuana and the Planning Board would have the opportunity to write an ordinance
21 regulating the whole process. M.Lemieux stated that even if a town bans or has banned recreational
22 marijuana, people can still get home delivery and it cannot be banned. He believes that the Town should
23 be capitalizing on the revenue that can be reaped. B.Barry wanted to reiterate that although the town
24 approved legalizing recreational marijuana, the next step here is whether or not Palmer wants to sell the
25 product. She believes that if the Town has the opportunity to be heard then that process should be
26 utilized first, rather than just the Council making the decision. Some Councilors agreed and others
27 thought considering they have been voted in they have the authority to make the decisions. She
28 requested that everyone take this month to reach out to their constituents and urged voters to reach
29 out to the manager's office for any questions.

30
31 Town Manger Evaluation

32
33 A copy of the summary sheet is attached to these minutes. B.Barry read all of the scores from all of the
34 Councilors. The average score was 3.92 and was based on 1-5 with one being lowest.
35 C.Blanchard thanked the Councilors for their reviews and will take all into consideration.

36
37 Subcommittee reports

38
39 B.Barry stated that Town Manager Goals subcommittee is Mary Salzmann, Lorinda Baker and Michelle
40 Sikes. She requested that the Councilors get all of their recommendation to the subcommittee by next
41 week to present them at the March meeting.

42
43

1 **Town Manager Report**

2
3 The town was awarded a Community Compact grant to assist in hiring a consultant to assist with the
4 development of ADA self-evaluations and transition plan. The Town also received a \$67,000.00
5 efficiency and regionalization grant for the design of a Regional Animal Control Facility and we are also
6 one of the town's that will benefit from a \$150,000.00 grant to establish a new mosquito control district.

7 There are currently 3 internships in the Town: Jessica Sizer, a student at UMass is interning in the
8 Manager's Office as well as other Departments to get a feel of how a Town operates, and has interest in
9 becoming a Town Manager. Alexandria Florence, an HCC student studying environmental science, is
10 interning in the Board of Health office and Olivia Brown, a Pathfinder student, is interested in
11 construction, is interning in the Building Department.

12 Pathfinder annual budget presentation 3/14/2018 at 7:00PM. Councilors should RSVP by 3/1/18 if they
13 will be attending.

14 Veteran Services Outreach event at Big Y at 3/29/18 representing Palmer and surrounding communities.

15 PVTA may be changing routes and increasing the fee structure. There will be two meetings. Town Hall
16 2/13/18 at 11AM and next week on 2/21 at 7:00PM at the library.

17

18 **Miscellaneous Correspondence**

19 Acknowledge receipt of following correspondence:

20 Comcast agreement expiring. C.Blanchard stated that negotiations have begun and a survey is going on
21 the website for customers to voice opinions.

22 Cub Scout letter: Ice Dragons crossing over to Boy Scouts. A ceremony in their honor will be 3/4/18. R.
23 Lavoie will attend and possibly K. Williams

24 Mass State Lottery Commission: Keno monitor is being installed at Luke's Beer and Wine.

25 R. Lavoie stated that REAL oldies radio station 1250 AM is simulcasting in FM on 97.7

26 **Town Council Roundtable**

27 K. Williams stated that the MMA conference was very informative.

28 **8:20PM Adjournment**

29 Motion was made to adjourn at 8:20PM by R.Lavoie. Seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0)

Town of Palmer Performance Evaluation Town Manager February 12, 2018	Baker	Barry	Lavoie	Lemieux	Salzmann	Sikes	Williams	Average by Topic	Total Points / Category - Max 30
Scoring									
1-Unacceptable									
2-Poor									
3-Acceptable									
4-Good									
5-Excellent									
Budgetary/Financial Administration	4	4	4	4	3		5	4.00	24
Personnel Administration	3	4	4	4	4		4	3.83	23
Supervision/Leadership	3	4	4	2	4		5	3.67	22
Staff Development	4	4	4	3	4		4	3.83	23
Public Relations	4	3	5	2	4		3	3.50	21
Employee and Labor Relations	3	3	4	3	3		5	3.50	21
Policy Execution	5	4	4	4	4		5	4.33	26
Interaction with the Town Council	4	4	4	3	3.5		5	3.92	23.5
Intergovernmental	5	5	5	4	5		5	4.83	29
Effectiveness/Productivity	4	4	4	5	4		5	4.33	26
Goal/Performance Attainment	3	3	4	2	3		5	3.33	20
Average by Councilor	3.82	3.62	4.18	3.27	3.77	0.00	4.64	3.92	
Total points / Councilor	42	42	46	36	41.5	0	51		