

**Palmer Town Council
Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2017**

1 **Call to Order**

2 The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Tuesday, November 14, 2017 was called to order at 6:30
3 pm by Town Council Vice President Mary Salzmann. Councilors Lorinda Baker, Michelle Sikes,
4 Karl Williams and Robert Lavoie were present. Council President Barbara Barry was absent. Also
5 present was Town Manager, Charles Blanchard and Executive Assistant, Nicole Parker.
6

7 **Visitors Comments**

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9 Donald Blais, Jr. , Conservation Commission Chair, was present and let the Council know that two new
10 members of the Conservation Commission have been appointed. He also stated that he is going to the
11 Statehouse on February 10 to discuss the East-West rail subject and hopes to see the measure voted out
12 of the House at that time. He requested a vote from the Council to write a letter in favor of the study
13 but was told that one was already written in October.

14 **Old Business**

15 Security Cameras

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17 A spreadsheet was distributed to the Council regarding prices for installation and monitoring.
18 C.Blanchard stated that National Grid may require a meter possibly bringing up the figures depending on
19 what National Grid says. There were prices for recording the feed to play back at a different time, and
20 another price to send the live feed directly to the Police Station through internet. C. Blanchard stated
21 that proposals will need to be received in the event the Council would like to see the feed live to the
22 Police Station. It was also stated that the cameras will be purchased, and there are no known leasing
23 companies at this time taking responsibility for maintenance.

24
25 A motion was made to request quotes for direct live to the Police by L.Baker. Seconded by K.Williams.
26 Motion passed (6:0:0)

27
28 Discussion; Lavolette Field bathrooms

29 No new update has been submitted. It was stated at the last meeting that Pathfinder cannot do any
30 work until Spring.

31 Town Council Community Forum minutes

32 Motion was made to approve minutes by M.Lemieux and seconded by R.Lavoie. Motion passed (6:0:0)

33 Converse Middle School Reuse

1 C.Blanchard stated that the sub-committee met and an RFP had been put together for a housing
2 consultant and submitted for bids. The proposal states that the original section of the school will be
3 senior housing and the newer part will be used as a community center.

4 Town Hall Renovation

5 The renovations are almost complete. A final punch list was recently put together and moving forward
6 with final work.

7 Wading Pool

8 The professional pool installation specialist had not yet had a chance to take a look at the pool.
9 G.Skowronek stated he hoped to have an update by Christmas.

10 Letter of Support; Altitude Organics

11 A letter was drafted for support of an OMMD (offsite medical marijuana dispensary)and an RMD
12 (Registered Marijuana Dispensary) for the site located on Chamber Road for the Company; Altitude
13 Organics. Owners, Aaron Bluse and William Martin were present to explain their position. It was stated
14 that they need a revised letter to allow a retail dispensary. It was stated that the cultivation was already
15 approved and a letter of support was signed by the Council, but after closer review it was established
16 that the parcel can also house a retail building. A letter of Support for both cultivating and retail is
17 needed for their application to the state.

18 Motion was made to approve Barbara Barry to sign revised letter of support for an OMMD and an RMD
19 by L.Baker and seconded by R.Lavoie. Motion passed (6:0:0)

20 Pedestrian Crossing Signs

21 There was discussion of safety near the entrance of the schools and a vote was recommended to
22 purchase 4 flashing signs for pedestrian crossing from the discretionary account to be placed on the
23 Palmer Schools campus.

24 Motion was made to set aside \$8,620.00 from the discretionary account for pedestrian safety signs in
25 front of the schools entrance by K.Williams and seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0:0)

26

27 **New Business**

28 Tax Classification Hearing

29 R.Lavoie read public hearing notice.

30

31 Rob Leroux, Principal Assessor, along with Larry Jasak and Michael Burns, Board of Assessor's, were
32 present to present the Classification Hearing for FY19. R.Leroux presented the PowerPoint presentation
33 on the tax classification for the tax rate.

34 After the presentation R.Leroux stated that the Board of Assessor's held a meeting just prior to the
35 Council meeting where they voted to recommend the Council vote to keep a uniform tax rate for FY19.

36 Motion was made to adopt the single tax rate by M.Lemieux and seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed
37 (6:0:0)

1 Motion was made to vote NO on the adoption of an Open Space Discount by L.Baker and seconded by
2 R.Lavoie. (6:0:0)

3 Motion was made to vote NO on the adoption of a residential exemption by R.Lavoie and seconded by
4 L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0:0)

5 Motion was made to vote NO on the Small Commercial exemption by L.Baker and seconded by
6 M.Lemieux. Motion passed (6:0:0)

7 Conservation Commission Appointments

8 Two members were being confirmed for the Conservation Commission by C.Blanchard. Nicholas Zeo and
9 Brenda Cole were recommended to be appointed for three (3) years for Mr. Zeo and two (2) years for
10 Ms. Cole.

11 Motion was made to confirm the appointments from C.Blanchard by K.Williams and seconded by
12 R.Lavoie. Motion passed (6:0:0)

13 Palmer Housing Authority Appointment

14 A new member was being confirmed for the Housing Authority, Katherine Izyk.

15 Motion was made to confirm the appointment from C.Blanchard by R.Lavoie and M.Lemieux. Motion
16 passed (6:0:0)

17 Proposed Verizon Cell Antennae

18 C.Blanchard distributed sketches and stated that Aaron Osborne, school business Manager, has been
19 working with Verizon to improve school campus cell phone reception. There is a program through
20 Verizon which allows schools to put small antennas on the roof. In this case it will require two small
21 antennas on the roof of the high school. The lease is being reviewed, would be \$400.00 a month with a
22 2% a year escalator. C.Blanchard stated under Chapter 40 section 3 of the MGL, it allows the money to
23 go to the School Committee for upkeep of the facility as well as any unspent remainder to go into the
24 General Fund at the end of the fiscal year, if the Council approves it.

25 R.Lavoie stated that he believed the money should stay at the school.

26 Motion was made to allow the money to stay at the school by R.Lavoie and seconded by L.Baker.

27 L.Baker questioned whether they have reached out to any other cell phone tower for a greater
28 payment. R.Lavoie stated that the tower they are offering are much smaller and a very limited range.
29 L.Baker asked if there was any way to add a larger tower or another vendor. M.Salzmann recommended
30 that the issue be tabled and more information be gathered to make a more informed decision.
31 C.Blanchard stated that the intent was to improve cell phone service at the school only. He stated that if
32 the Council wanted the School to solicit other vendors to generate more revenue for the Town/Schools
33 that is a whole different concept and not necessarily what they were asking for. L.Baker stated that the
34 Schools always seem to be underfunded and this could help generate more revenue for them if pursued.
35 M.Salzmann reiterated her idea to table the discussion. R.Lavoie stated he did not want to withdraw his
36 motion but would amend it to state:

1 Motion is made to allow the Schools to go forward with the lease of the Verizon antenna's by R.Lavoie
2 and seconded by M.Salzman. Motion failed (1:3:2) YES: R.Lavoie NO: M.Lemieux, K.Williams, L.Baker;
3 ABSTAIN: M.Salzman, M.Sikes

4 The Council would like C.Blanchard to go back to see if more carriers or Verizon would be willing to
5 install large towers for more revenue.

6 **Town Council Roundtable**

7 M.Lemieux wanted to congratulate the Palmer Cowboy PeeWee's on making it to the Superbowl. He
8 also wanted to congratulate Marge Cavanaugh having the FitRivers Trail naming ceremony.

9 L.Baker wanted to congratulate the boys Cross Country team, and one member is going to the State
10 Championship. She also stated that a new restaurant is opening in Three Rivers, Humble Pie on
11 November 17. She also wanted to thank Gerry Skowronek, DPW Director on his and his Departments
12 efforts.

13 M.Sikes wanted to congratulate U11 and U13 soccer teams on getting to the championship

14 R.Lavoie would like to congratulate the newest Eagle Scout, Alex Stevenson. He also wanted to tell Gerry
15 Skowronek how appreciative he is of the WWTP and all of the technical work involved.

16 M.Salzman wanted to thank all who participated in the Veteran's Day ceremony. She state that it was a
17 good turnout. She also stated a cabinet maker is going in to a leased area of the Junction Variety
18 building.

19 **Adjournment of Formal Session**

20 **Executive Session**

21 Motion was made by roll call to exit formal session and enter into executive session with adjournment
22 therefrom by L.Baker and seconded by R. Lavoie. Motion passed (6:0:0)

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