

**Palmer Town Council
Meeting Minutes
June 26, 2017**

1 **1. Call to Order**

2 The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, June 26, 2017 was called to order at 6:30 pm by
3 Town Council President Barbara Barry. Present were Town Manager Charles Blanchard,
4 Councilors Lorinda Baker, Barbara Barry, Mary Salzmann, Philip Hebert, Robert Lavoie, Karl
5 Williams and Matthew Lemieux.
6

7 **2. Visitors Comments**

8 None

9 **3. Old Business**

10 **a) Vote – FY18 Budget**

11
12 The FY18 Budget Resolution was read by R. Lavoie.
13

14 *Motion to approve the FY18 Municipal Operating Budget as presented by P. Hebert, seconded by R.*
15 *Lavoie.*
16

17 M. Salzmann stated that the budget presented did not reflect the additional hours of operation
18 approved for the Endleson splash park. B. Barry stated that the intent of the DPW is to monitor the
19 water use at the park. She noted that the splash park is currently active and the Council will monitor
20 the usage and supplement the budget if needed. B. Barry stated that she did not agree with all items
21 that were added into the budget since the Budget Hearing. She hoped that the Council could discuss
22 the additional budget items at their July meeting. B. Barry stated that there is no section of law
23 which allows for an additional stipend for the Town Accountant receiving his certification. She also
24 stated she is not clear what the use of the stormwater management fund appropriation would be
25 for.
26

27 *Motion on the floor to approve the FY18 Budget was approved 6-0-1 with M. Salzmann abstaining.*
28

29 **b) Vote – FY18 Capital Improvement Plan**

30
31 *Motion to approve the transfer of \$26,000 from the Capital Improvement Stabilization Account for a*
32 *zero turn mower for the Parks Department by P. Hebert, seconded by M. Lemieux 7-0.*
33

34 *Motion to approve the transfer of \$9,100 from the Capital Improvement Stabilization Account for the*
35 *purchase of Computer Software for the Cemetery Department by M. Lemieux, seconded by P. Hebert.*
36 *Motion passed 7-0.*
37

38 *Motion to approve the transfer of \$20,000 from the Capital Improvement Stabilization Account for*
39 *the pointing of the exterior brick at Memorial Hall by P. Hebert, seconded by L. Baker. Motion passed*
40 *7-0.*
41

1 *Motion to approve the transfer of \$35,000 from the Capital Improvement Stabilization Account for*
2 *the purchase of a new Ford F-250 with Plow for the Department of Public Works by P. Hebert,*
3 *seconded by R. Lavoie. Motion passed 7-0.*
4

5 *Motion to approve the transfer of \$16,000 from the Capital Stabilization Account for the purchase of*
6 *a Walk-in cooler for the school department by L. Baker, seconded by M. Lemieux. Motion passed 7-0.*
7

8 **c) Vote – Revolving Fund Authorization under Chapter 44, Section 53E1/2**
9

10 The motion to approve the Revolving Fund Authorization under Chapter 44 Section 53E1/2 was read
11 by R. Lavoie. M. Lemieux asked why the cap on electrical fees was much higher than the other
12 inspector’s revolving accounts. C. Blanchard explained the number voted is only a cap on the
13 amount that can be expended from the receipt of electric fees, and not a total amount paid to the
14 inspector.
15

16 *Motion to drop the cap on Electrical fees to \$50,000 by M. Salzmann second by B. Barry. J. Kuzmiski*
17 *noted that the account activity level has averaged at around \$65,000 the last few years. Motion*
18 *failed 0-7.*
19

20 *Motion to cap electrical at \$75,000 by M. Lemieux, seconded by L. Baker. B. Barry noted that she felt*
21 *the fee structure for the electrical inspector may need to be amended to compensate for the high*
22 *amount being paid for large scale solar projects. Discussion continued on the fee schedule of the*
23 *inspectors. C. Blanchard provided information on inspector fees over the past 5 years to the Town*
24 *Council. Motion failed 3-4 with R. Lavoie, P. Hebert, B. Barry and K. Williams opposed.*
25

26 *Motion to approve the Revolving Fund Authorization as presented by P. Hebert, seconded by R.*
27 *Lavoie. Motion passed 5-1-1 with M. Salzmann opposed and B. Barry abstaining.*
28

29 **d) Vote - Free Cash Expenditures**
30

31 **i. School District WiFi**
32

33 *Motion to appropriate \$48,000 for the installation of Wi-Fi in the schools by L. Baker, seconded by R.*
34 *Lavoie.*
35

36 M. Salzmann asked what the actual amount was that was received for the Wi-Fi project. C.
37 Blanchard stated that the school received \$166,800 total. B. Barry asked why the town’s
38 contribution toward the project is still the same despite having a higher reimbursement from the E-
39 Rate grant. C. Blanchard stated that there is additional work that the school would like to complete
40 relative to the project with the excess funds.
41

42 *Motion on the floor passed 7-0.*
43

1 **ii. Laviolette Field Restroom**

2
3 *Motion to appropriate \$28,000 for the renovation of the Laviolette Field Restrooms by L. Baker,*
4 *seconded by P. Hebert.*

5
6 M. Salzmann asked if the \$28,000 included exterior improvements to the building. C. Blanchard
7 stated that it did. L. Baker asked why the appropriation request was higher than low bid presented.
8 C. Blanchard noted the total cost didn't include \$3,870 for stainless steel fixtures and they would
9 need to update the pricing before moving forward. B. Barry asked if the low quote would make the
10 building vandalism proof. B. Barry proposed moving the funding to the stabilization fund so the
11 Council could address questions prior to committing funds.

12
13 *Motion on the floor failed 0-6-1 with L. Baker abstaining.*

14
15 *Motion to appropriate \$28,000 to the Stabilization Fund by M. Salzmann, seconded by B. Barry.*
16 *Motion passed 7-0.*

17
18 **iii. Consultants to assist with the reuse planning on Converse Middle School & Additional cost**
19 **of Town Hall Renovations**

20
21 C. Blanchard explained that he would like to appropriate funding to study reuse of Converse Middle
22 School as senior housing. C. Blanchard also explained that he would be requesting additional funds
23 for the Town Hall renovation.

24
25 C. Blanchard requested a motion to appropriate \$150,000 from free cash to the Stabilization Fund.
26 M. Lemieux asked how much was originally appropriated for the project. C. Blanchard explained that
27 the base bid included contingencies due to the unknown condition of the building.

28
29 Bob Haveles of Architectural Insights noted that original scope was only interior replacement and
30 leaks from the roof was believed to have been an issue with a roof drain. Further investigation
31 showed the roof needed to be replaced. B. Haveles explained the extent of the renovation project.
32 He noted that they are pushing for the end of August as a completion date. B. Haveles stated that
33 there were high contingency costs for asbestos abatement. He stated that the community will be
34 proud of the final product.

35
36 M. Salzmann asked when the roof leak was revealed and how much had to be replaced due to the
37 leak. B. Haveles stated that the only damage that was done by the leak was a small amount in the
38 building inspectors office from a leak discovered during demolition. M. Lemieux asked if extras built
39 into the budget are off the table. C. Blanchard stated that the extras have been removed from the
40 project.

41
42 M. Salzmann asked how ownership rights would be affected by reusing Converse Middle School for
43 Senior Housing. C. Blanchard stated that the ownership rights would be addressed as part of the
44 feasibility study.

45

1 *Motion to move \$150,000 to the stabilization fund from Free Cash by P. Hebert, seconded by R.*
2 *Lavoie. Motion passed 7-0.*

3
4 B. Barry asked if there needs to be funds appropriated now to finish the Town Hall project. C.
5 Blanchard stated that costs presented are projected but the only remaining unknown is the removal
6 of the wall in the meeting room. The final cost of the project should be available for the July
7 meeting.

8
9 *Motion to transfer \$70,000 from the Stabilization Fund to the Town Hall Renovation Project by P.*
10 *Hebert, seconded by M. Lemieux. Motion passed 7-0.*

11
12 **iv. Town Council Discretionary Expense**

13
14 *Motion to appropriate \$25,000 to the Town Council Discretionary Expense Fund by R. Lavoie,*
15 *seconded by M. Lemieux. L. Baker asked what the funds were used for in FY17. B. Barry stated that*
16 *the funds were used to purchase a Speed Board and Pedestrian crossing signs. Motion passed 7-0.*

17
18 **e) Any Other Old Business**

19
20 B. Barry noted the email from the Town Manager on the coordination of the use of CMS. C.
21 Blanchard noted that town will need to coordinate activities at CMS beginning in August. He stated
22 that the school budget still reflects the CMS utilities. B. Barry wanted a firm written commitment
23 from the school as to what their responsibility will be with CMS. She requested a written
24 commitment from the school prior to their July 10th meeting. Discussion continued on use of the
25 CMS facility.

26
27 B. Barry acknowledged that this was P. Hebert's final meeting on the Town Council and thanked him
28 for his service.

29
30 **4. Adjournment of Formal Session**

31
32 *Motion to adjourn from formal session by P. Hebert, seconded by R. Lavoie. Motion passed 7-0 at*
33 *8:18 pm.*

34