

**Palmer Town Council
Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2016**

1 **1. Roll Call**

2 The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, May 9, 2016 was called to order at 6:30 pm by
3 Barbara Barry. Present were Town Manager Charles Blanchard, Councilors Robert Lavoie, Karl
4 Williams, Philip Hebert, Barbara Barry, Lorinda Baker, Mary Salzmann and Donald Blais.

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6 **2. Visitors Comments**

7 William Byrnes of 41 South High Street, Bondsville addressed the Town Council. He requested
8 additional enforcement of laws on tag sales and burned/blighted buildings. He noted that there
9 is an abandoned house adjacent to his property that he ended up cleaning due to inaction from
10 the property owner. He noted his concern regarding yards filled with junk on High Street. W.
11 Byrnes stated that he wants stronger wording in ordinances which address blighted properties.
12 Discussion on other blighted properties in town. B. Barry noted a response from the Board of
13 Health which stated that many of the blighted properties brought up by Mr. Byrnes' are being
14 addressed through various channels such as housing court. C. Blanchard outlined the
15 receivership program and highlighted issues the Board of Health has made progress on. Board of
16 Health Agent Josh Mathieu outlined the history of the Church Street Thorndike property which
17 burned in February 2015. B. Barry noted how difficult it is to enforce ordinances on property
18 owners who have walked away from a building. She noted the walkthrough of Three Rivers that
19 she took with members of the legislature. She stated that people need to have ownership of the
20 area around them.

21 B. Byrnes noted the number of double utility poles in town and stated that the town should take
22 action to remove them. C. Blanchard noted that they are following up with utilities to make sure
23 that these poles are removed. B. Byrnes asked about blight designation for down town Three
24 Rivers. C. Blanchard noted that the blighted designation was done to increase the potential for
25 grants to improve the downtown area.

26 Philip Lachut of 109 Griffin Street, Bondsville, shared photos of blighted properties around town.

27 B. Barry noted that there is an annual Pickup Palmer Day, but it is difficult to recruit volunteers.
28 She welcome people to come support the issue of blight around town and hopes to work
29 toward correcting issues.

30 L. Baker stated that the Playground Committee has been meeting to discuss what can be done in
31 parks around town. B. Barry noted that she would like to have a "town meeting" to discuss
32 issues throughout town and address resident's questions directly.

33 Douglas Farmer asked approximately how many properties in town have absentee landlords. C.
34 Blanchard stated he did not have the number at this time, although many cases involve tracking
35 down heirs to abandoned properties.

1 B. Byrnes asked about the status of the property adjacent to him on Pleasant Street. C.
2 Blanchard stated that he is unsure of the current status but will look into it.

3 **3. Meeting Minutes**

- 4 a) **March 28, 2016 - Held**
- 5 b) **April 11, 2016 - Held**
- 6 c) **April 25, 2016 - Held**

7 **4. Old Business**

8 a) **Final Report of the Special Committee on Ordinance Recodification**

9 Paul Burns-Johnson and Mike Magiera addressed the Town Council regarding the final
10 report of the Special Committee on Ordinance Recodification. P. Burns-Johnson highlighted
11 recommended changes to town ordinance which are attached to these minutes.

12 M. Salzmann asked if the changes to the Ordinances could be done by the town council or
13 would require a ballot measure. P. Burns-Johnson stated that it would only take action of
14 the Town Council. M. Salzmann thanked all involved in the review of the Ordinances.

15 B. Barry asked why the recommendation of the Ordinance Review Committee was to list the
16 ordinances alphabetically. P. Burns-Johnson noted that many other towns use a similar
17 listing system.

18 *Motion to accept the final report of the Ordinance Review Committee by L. Baker, seconded*
19 *by K. Williams. Motion passed 7-0.*

20 b) **Other Old Business**

21 M. Salzmann asked for an update on the amount owed to the Tax Title Attorney. C.
22 Blanchard stated that his office received an update on the amount owed to the Tax Title
23 Attorney which will be brought forward at budget meeting.

24 **5. New Business**

25 a) **Historical Commission Appointments - Lisl Donaldson and Lisa Wozniakowski**

26 C. Blanchard recommended appointing Elizabeth Donaldson of 209 Summer Street and Lisa
27 Wozniakowski of 18 Fuller Street to the Historical Commission.

28 *Motion to confirm the appointments of Elizabeth Donaldson and Lisa Wozniakowski to the*
29 *Historical Commission by L. Baker, seconded by R. Lavoie. Motion passed 7-0.*

30 C. Blanchard noted that the artifacts in the possession of the Historical Commission are kept
31 in climate controlled storage at the Palmer Technology Center. He stated that since the
32 commission now has a full membership, they will be able to meet requirements of the grant
33 program which provides them funding.

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1 **b) 300th Anniversary Committee Appointment – David Whitney**

2 C. Blanchard recommended the appointment of David Whitney to the 300th Anniversary
3 Committee.

4 *Motion to appoint David Whitney to the 300th Anniversary Committee by M. Salzmann,*
5 *seconded by L. Baker. Motion passed 7-0*

6 **6. Subcommittee Reports**

7 **300th Anniversary Committee** – L. Baker stated that Armchair Races were held at St Mary’s Club.
8 She reported that the committee raised \$700 from the event. L. Baker stated that there would
9 be a Historical Lecture at PHCC Tuesday, May 10th sponsored by the 300th Anniversary
10 Committee. She stated that May 22nd Noah Lis would be performing at Pulaski Park beginning at
11 noon. L. Baker stated that Country Bank had make donations of \$2,500 to the 300th Anniversary
12 Committee and \$2,500 to Palmer Events Planning.

13 **7. Town Manager’s Report**

14 C. Blanchard stated that they have begun preparations to conduct the Police Chief Assessment
15 Center now that a proper pool of candidates is available. The representatives from the
16 Assessment Center will begin meeting with town officials to determine the needs of the Police
17 Department. The process will need approval from civil service before they can proceed. He
18 stated that he hopes to have the final recommendation for appointment to be brought forward
19 in October.

20 C. Blanchard noted that that the new truck and sweeper which were purchased through Free
21 Cash have been received by DPW.

22 C. Blanchard gave an overview of proposed uses of Free Cash. He recommended making an
23 appropriation to the General Stabilization fund in the amount of \$150,000. He also proposed
24 appropriating \$40,000 to revise the Town’s chart of accounts. J. Kuzmiski stated that the Town’s
25 auditor recommended including the school in revision of the chart of accounts.

26 C. Blanchard encouraged the Town Council to appropriate funds toward a Converse Middle
27 School reuse study. He stated that a reuse of the building could cost between \$10 Million and
28 \$15 Million, however, grant funds could be available depending on the proposed reuse. He
29 encouraged the Town Council to consider appropriating \$25,000 from Free Cash toward a reuse
30 feasibility study. B. Barry asked if the town retain building if the reuse was not for a municipal
31 use. C. Blanchard stated that the feasibility of the town retaining the building would be part of
32 feasibility study, however, it would be most likely that the building would be sold and space
33 would be leased back to the town for any proposed community use.

34 B. Barry asked if the former general store building on Main Street, Three Rivers which was taken
35 by tax title, would that be leased or sold if it were to be revitalized. C. Blanchard stated that the
36 original plan for the building was to have the Palmer Redevelopment Authority take ownership
37 of the building and rehabilitate it. He stated that the town would need to obtain grants in order
38 to rehab the building, however, the most feasible option would be to sell building as is. C.

1 Blanchard stated that the Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce is offering a free month's rent to
2 businesses willing to move to Three Rivers to help spur downtown development.

3 **8. Misc. Correspondence**

4 B. Barry acknowledged correspondence regarding upcoming events including a Pancake
5 Breakfast, a Memorial Service at New Hope Cemetery and the CMS Spring Concert

6 **9. Councilor's Roundtable**

7 D. Blais stated that the Memorial Day Parade would be held May 30th, He also stated that he is
8 working on a historical presentation for the fall.

9 L. Baker noted that the underpass on Palmer Road in Three Rivers is missing a sign.

10 P. Hebert noted that the stone wall on Church Street outside of the cemetery on Thorndike
11 Street is collapsing. G. Skowronek stated that it will be taken care of by the contractor doing the
12 Thorndike water line replacement project. P. Hebert noted that he will not be able to attend this
13 year's Memorial Day Parade.

14 M. Salzmann thanked those who supported the Historical Commission

15 **10. Executive Session as per Chapter 39, Sec. 23B (3) Contract Negotiations**

16 *Motion to enter Executive Session as per Chapter 39, Sec. 23B (3) Contract Negotiations and*
17 *adjourn therefrom by D. Blais, seconded by L. Baker. Motion passed 7-0 by roll call vote at 8:00*
18 *pm. D. Blais – Yes, K. Williams – Yes, L. Baker – Yes, P. Hebert – Yes, R. Lavoie – Yes, M. Salzmann*
19 *– Yes, B. Barry – Yes.*

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Final Recommendation of the: Palmer Committee to Recommend Revisions and Recodification of the Town Ordinances Minutes

The Committee has voted to recommend to the Town Council the following changes to the Code of Ordinances:

- 1. That the Preface, List of Town Officials and the Town Charter be removed from the Code.**
- 2. That the Code of Ordinances be sequenced alphabetically and that the initial numbering of individual ordinances be enumerated beginning with the number 1 but leaving 5 spaces between each initial entry to allow room for additional ordinances to be added as they are adopted (Example Chapter 1, Chapter 6, Chapter 11 Etc.). the Committee also recommends that once the Code of Ordinances is rewritten that an Index of the Code be developed over time.**
- 3. That the following be removed from the Code of Ordinances and included in town regulations.**
 - Chapter 79-10
 - Chapter 90
 - Chapter 143 Sewers
 - Chapter 148 Underground Storage
 - Chapter 168 Wetlands
- 4. That the following be removed from the Code of Ordinances and be included in a listing of Town Fees**
 - 79-9 (fees related to dogs)
 - 121-3 (fees related to pawn brokers)
 - Chapter 90 (all) Fees
- 5. The Committee recommends that the Town Council consider making the following changes to the following ordinances**
 - a. Delete Chapter 5 entirely, obsolete
 - b. Chapter 9 delete, superseded by state law
 - c. Chapter 11 section 1 line 2 change the word problems to needs
 - d. Chapter 11 section 2 B review and align with current charter requirements
 - e. Delete Chapter 16 entirely obsolete
 - f. Delete Chapter 27 entirely obsolete
 - g. Chapter 68-7 Prohibited Activities recommend deleting the words "and all persons with firearms"
- 6. The Committee makes no recommendations relating to any provisions of Chapter 171, Zoning Ordinances. It was the consensus of the Committee that any**

recommendations relating to changes to this section of the Code of Ordinances should be made by the Planning Board or Planning Department.

7. For informational purposes the Committee would like to make the Town Council aware that the following Chapters have been previously removed from the Code of Ordinances

Chapters 2,3,4,6,7,10,12,13,14,15. Chapters 17-26 (inclusive)Chapters 28-28 (inclusive), Chapters 51-56(inclusive), Chapters 58, 59,60,61,62,64,65,66,67, Chapters 69 – 78 (inclusive), Chapters 79-89 (inclusive), chapters 91 – 105 (inclusive), Chapters 107-114 (inclusive),Chapters 116-120 (inclusive), chapters 122 -126 (inclusive), Chapters 128-136 (inclusive), Chapters 138-142 (inclusive), Chapters 147,149,150,151,Chapters 153-163 (inclusive), chapters 165,166,167, 169,170, Chapters 172-178(inclusive) Chapters 183 and above