

**Palmer Town Council
Working Session
Meeting Minutes
February 29, 2016**

The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, February 29, 2016 was called to order at 6:30 pm By Town Council President Barbara Barry. Present were Town Manager Charles Blanchard, Councilors Robert Lavoie, Barbara Barry, Lorinda Baker, Mary Salzmann, Philip Hebert, Karl Williams and Donald Blais.

General Discussion

B. Barry stated that the last few meetings have been extremely long. She requested that when the Town Council has a large agenda, that they hold two meetings per month. M. Salzmann stated that she agrees with the proposal of holding two meetings per month. C. Blanchard stated that one hour at the last meeting was dedicated to addressing the members of the legislature. The Town Council agreed to hold meetings the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month.

P. Hebert requested that a cigarette butt disposal bin be placed at the entrance of the Police Station

P. Hebert stated that he would like to see a skate park built at the Thorndike Park. He asked if there was a possibility of using Community Development Block Grant funds to improve the park. B. Barry noted an issue with skating at the new Endleson Playground and misuse of equipment. M. Salzmann suggested that a skate park be built at Chase Field. B. Barry stated that she would like to see the town invest in a portable skating rink.

K. Williams asked if there should be bathrooms placed at the parks during the summer.

D. Blais stated that he would like to see a gazebo built at Burleigh Park. R. Lavoie agreed that some type of shelter should be built at Burleigh Park.

L. Baker asked if the Bridge Meeting with MassDOT has been rescheduled. C. Blanchard stated that it has not and is dependent on the MassDOT commissioner's schedule.

P. Hebert discussed the current truck routes in town. He stated that the weight limit being exceeded on the Church Street bridges. He asked for increased enforcement of the bridge weight limits.

K. Williams addressed the homeless individuals living under bridges in town. B. Barry asked if the town does anything for the homeless population. C. Blanchard noted that the Community Development office has reached out to the population. They noted that many choose to live that lifestyle. The town cannot just ban the homeless from town and many will not utilize shelters if they were to be provided. B. Barry suggested that those seeking help be directed to the Salvation Army.

D. Blais asked about the status of the capital improvement plan. C. Blanchard stated that the plan is progressing moving along but some items on the town's priority list may not receive funding.

M. Salzmann asked which departments are moving as part of the Town Hall Renovation plan. C. Blanchard outlined the new outlay of the Town Administration Building.

L. Baker asked why crosswalks are painted blue, yellow or striped throughout town. C. Blanchard stated that the blue colored ones were done around the school zones and yellow ones were painted at highly used crosswalks. The DPW is currently addressing illegal crosswalks throughout town. Legal ones will be painted brighter colors and illegal crossings will be blacked out.

L. Baker addressed illegal dumping on Emery Street and Route 67. She suggested that signs be placed that say the area is monitored by camera

P. Hebert asked about the construction of a sidewalk along High Street to the school. It was noted that a study had been conducted and determined that there was not enough land in that area to build a sidewalk.

M. Salzmann asked about the structural issues at CMS. C. Blanchard stated that it would not be a high cost to fix the issues and they have had preliminary talks about the reuse of building if the school were to close.

B. Barry stated that she would like to see additional code enforcement of illegal signs. She has brought up the issue with Bonnie Weeks.

B. Barry stated that she would like to go forward with a plan to move the DPW. She hoped that the town could develop a low cost plan and continue to improve the town's infrastructure.

B. Barry noted that the town still needs to address the flooring concerns at OMP. C. Blanchard stated that the town is currently looking at proposals to replace the concrete sidewalk along the front of OMP.

B. Barry addressed the weeds that have grown along sidewalks in the downtown areas. C. Blanchard stated that the town will use Northern Tree to address weed issues on sidewalks this year.

B. Barry asked for an update on the Police Chief search. C. Blanchard stated that an assessment center will be conducted to fill the permanent position.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by B. Barry, seconded by R. Lavoie. Motion passed 7-0 at 8:50 pm.