

1 **Palmer Town Council**

2 **Town Council Meeting Minutes**

3 Monday, January 13, 2014

4
5 **1. Roll Call**

6
7 The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, January 13, 2014 was called to order at 7:00 pm.
8 Present were Town Manager Charles Blanchard, Phil Hebert, Barbara Barry, Jason Polonsky,
9 Matt Lovell, Donald Blais and Andrew Golas recording minutes. Absent were Paul Burns and
10 Mary Salzmann.

11
12 **2. Consent of the Agenda Order**

13
14 Motion to accept the agenda as amended by J. Polonsky, seconded by B. Barry. Motion passed 5-
15 0.

16
17 **3. Meeting Minutes**

18
19 December 9, 2013 – Motion to approve minutes as amended by J. Polonsky, seconded by B.
20 Barry. Motion passed 5-0.

21
22 **4. Visitors Comments (for items not on the agenda)**

23
24 None

25
26 **5. Old Business:**

27 **1. Endleson Playground Update**

28
29 Mike Switlowski addressed the Council to give an update on the private fundraising
30 efforts toward the reconstruction of Endleson Playground. He noted that the group had
31 fundraised through events such as the firemen’s muster and the sale of dedicated bricks
32 and benches. The group had also received various private donations. Donna Collete gave
33 a financial update on the status of the group. She stated that the group had raised \$18,928
34 toward their \$20,000 goal.

35
36 Motion to transfer \$17,050 from Stabilization toward the reconstruction of Endleson park
37 by J. Polonsky, seconded by B. Barry. Motion passed 5-0.

38
39 Community Development Director, Alice Davey, addressed the Council. She stated that
40 there would be a public hearing on Thursday, January 16th at 6:30pm. in Town Hall
41 Meeting Room. She also stated that another grant opportunity had recently opened up
42 which she would look into. P. Hebert encouraged residents to come to the meeting and
43 show their support for the project on Thursday.

44
45 **2. Sewer Replacement Project Update**

46
47 Tony de Cruz of Tighe and Bond addressed the Council concerning the status of the
48 project. He highlighted some of the benefits toward the town in investing \$6.09 Million
49 toward the sewer replacement. T. de Cruz stated that construction would take place
50 between April and November of 2014, and then final paving would take place between

51 May and August of 2015. He stated that some debt forgiveness would be applied to lower
52 the overall cost to the town. T. de Cruz stated that a neighborhood meeting would be held
53 January 21st at 7:00pm in Town Hall. With the completion of the project, 40% of the
54 town's sewer system would have been replaced in the last 12 years. J. Polonsky asked
55 about issues which delayed the Church Street Water Line Replacement. T. de Cruze
56 acknowledged the concern and noted that the issue would not affect the Sewer
57 Replacement Project.

58
59 **3. Joint Letter to Legislature on Chapter 70**

60
61 Motion to accept the letter concerning the Chapter 70 status of the Town of Palmer and
62 send to Representative Todd Smola and Senator Stephen Brewer as amended by B.
63 Barry, seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 5-0.

64
65 **4. OMP Carpet Replacement – MSBA Grant Application**

66
67 Motion to send a notice expressing the Town's interest in participation in the MSBA
68 Accelerated Repair Program by J. Polonsky, seconded by D. Blais. Motion passed 5-0. C.
69 Blanchard stated that he had signed the architectural contract with Reinhardt Associates
70 and the design was in progress.

71
72 **6. New Business**

73
74 **1. PRA Appointment**

75
76 C. Blanchard stated that he had selected Alphonse Lasota of 4192 Main Street,
77 Thorndike, but that appointment must be confirmed by the Town Council. Alphonse
78 Lasota addressed the Council. B. Barry asked why he is interested in serving. A. Lasota
79 stated that he would like the opportunity to bring Eastern Mass type businesses to Palmer.
80 In order to do so, Palmer needs to be prepared for development. A. Lasota noted the
81 possibility of adding an additional industrial park to bring more commerce to town and
82 the need to focus on development for the transportation industry.

83
84 Motion to accept Alphonse Lasota's appointment to the Palmer Redevelopment Authority
85 by J. Polonsky, seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 5-0.

86
87 **2. Proclamation for Detective Sergeant Scott Haley**

88
89 The proclamation commemorating the retirement of Detective Sergeant Scott Haley after
90 36 years of service to the Town of Palmer Police Department was read and signed by the
91 Town Council

92
93 **3. Town Manager Evaluation**

94
95 B. Barry highlighted C. Blanchard's performance review. She stated that as per the
96 contract, C. Blanchard would be entitled to a bonus based on the progress made toward
97 his goals of up to \$5,000. She questioned whether the Council should wait until a full
98 board is present until deciding on the bonus. J. Polonsky stated that the Council has a
99 quorum to conduct the meeting and should move forward with the issue.

100
101 M. Lovell stated that C. Blanchard was very successful in accomplishing his goals for
102 2013. P. Hebert stated that he felt C. Blanchard should receive 90 percent of the bonus.
103 B. Barry stated that C. Blanchard had a very good year including the successful

104 negotiation of the casino host community agreement despite its failure at the referendum
105 vote. She would be in support of the 90 percent bonus. D. Blais stated that he would be in
106 support of giving C. Blanchard the full bonus.

107
108 Motion to award C. Blanchard a \$4,500 bonus by M. Lovell, seconded by J. Polonsky.
109 Motion passed 5-0.
110

111 **4. Council Rules**

112
113 J. Polonsky stated that he wanted to discuss the potential move of the Town Council
114 meeting time to 6:30pm. A discussion on the proposal will be held at the next meeting.
115

116 **7. Subcommittee Report**

117
118 D. Blais reported that the Police Station is currently 85 percent completion with move in
119 scheduled for March.

120
121 B. Barry stated that the Town Manager Goals Subcommittee would be meeting to discuss goals
122 for 2014 and a new evaluation tool.
123

124 **8. Town Manager's Report**

125
126 C. Blanchard stated that the building inspector will be working with the Bondsville Fire & Water
127 district, Belchertown Land Trust and Riverbend Condo Association to repair the fence which
128 blocks access to the Swift River. He also reported that the final expense amount to Mohegan Sun
129 for the Host Community Agreement totaled \$391,934.20. C. Blanchard stated that Detector
130 Technology had informed the town that they are planning to expand their facility in Palmer and
131 would be applying for the economic development incentive program through the state and the
132 town.
133

134 **9. Misc. Correspondence**

135
136 P. Hebert noted that there would be a meeting regarding the replacement of Pathfinder's School
137 Roof on Wednesday, January 29th. He also noted the PVPC's letter of support for the IRAP grant
138 for the New England Central Rail Line.
139

140 **10. Councilor Roundtable**

- 141
142
- 143 1. D. Blais thanked all of the Salvation Army bell ringers
 - 144 2. M. Lovell wished everyone a happy new year
 - 145 3. J. Polonsky thanked everyone that helped the Salvation Army. He also thanked Gil's
146 Gym for their donation of equipment to Palmer High School.
147

148 **11. Adjournment**

149
150 Motion to adjourn by M. Lovell, seconded by D. Blais. Motion passed 5-0 at 8:20 pm.
151
152

153 Minutes submitted by: Andrew M. Golas