

1 **Palmer Town Council**

2 **Town Council Meeting Minutes**

3 Monday, May 19, 2014

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5 **1. Roll Call**

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7 The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, May 19, 2014 was called to order at 6:30 pm.
8 Present were Town Manager Charles Blanchard, Phil Hebert, Jason Polonsky, Barbara Barry,
9 Matt Lovell, Donald Blais, Mary Salzmann and Andrew Golas recording minutes. Paul Burns
10 was not present for roll call but joined the meeting at 6:32 pm.

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

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14 Motion to accept the agenda as submitted by M. Lovell, seconded by J. Polonsky. Motion passed
15 6-0.

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17 **3. Meeting Minutes**

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19 April 28, 2014 – Motion to approve the minutes of April 28, 2014 as amended by J. Polonsky,
20 seconded by D. Blais. Motion passed 5-0-1 with B. Barry abstaining.

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22 P. Burns joined meeting.

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24 May 12, 2014 – Motion to approve the minutes of May 12, 2014 as amended by J. Polonsky,
25 seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 7-0.

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

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29 None

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31 **5. New Business**

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33 **1. OPEB Trust**

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35 Motion that the Town Council votes to accept Section 20 of Chapter 32B of the
36 Massachusetts General Laws to establish Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust
37 Fund and designate the Collector/Treasurer as the Trustee by J. Polonsky, seconded by B.
38 Barry. Motion passed 7-0.

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40 Motion that the Town Council votes to transfer \$10,000 from Certified Free Cash to the
41 OPEB Trust Fund by J. Polonsky, seconded by B. Barry. Motion passed 7-0.

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43 J. Kuzmiski explained that the recommended annual contribution to the OPEB trust for the
44 town was \$3 Million according to the latest actuarial study and an overall liability of \$37
45 Million. He stated that Bartholomew and Co would be designated as the OPEB custodian for
46 the fund for a minimal administrative cost.

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2. Snow and Ice Deficit Transfer

Motion that the Town Council votes to transfer \$176,500.00 from Certified Free Cash to the Snow and Ice Accounts to offset the FY14 deficit by J. Polonsky, seconded by B. Barry. Motion passed 7-0.

3. Town Hall HVAC Replacement

Motion to that the Town Council votes to transfer \$105,375.00 from Certified Free Cash to the Town Hall HVAC Phase II Replacement Account #24123610 by J. Polonsky, seconded by P. Burns. C. Blanchard stated that the amount being funded by the town for the project represented a 50% share of the total project cost. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion that the Town Council votes to transfer \$76,374.00 from the Capital Stabilization Fund to the Town Hall HVAC Phase II Replacement Account #24123610 by J. Polonsky, seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 7-0.

6. FY15 Budget

1. Council on Aging

Council on Aging Director Erin Pincince addressed the council regarding her proposed budget. She stated that she has requested an increase in her budget to support retaining her part time van driver because as of July 1st, government funding of the position will be cut. She stated that without the federal funding, out of town doctors trips for seniors would be eliminated despite the addition of the new Council on Aging van. J. Polonsky stated that he understood the need for out of town services for seniors and would support the proposed increase. B. Barry commended E. Pincince on an excellent job providing improved senior services for the town.

2. Police Department

Police Chief Robert Frydryk addressed the Council regarding his proposed FY15 budget. He stated that he has presented a level service budget. The proposed increase in the salary and overtime line was to compensate for the negotiated union salary increase for FY15. He also proposed an increase in salary for the licensing clerk to compensate for her time of service and funding to support per-diem monitors for the new police facility. Adjustments were also made to longevity and the uniform allowance to compensate for union increases. R. Frydryk stated that the request for computer software was for maintenance to the computer system at the new station. B. Barry questioned whether or not new computers were necessary to carry in the budget with all the new computers in the new station. R. Frydryk stated that all computers were replaced as part of the project cost but would like to maintain a regular replacement schedule. He noted that all of the laptops in the cruisers had also been replaced. B. Barry asked if the funding for new computers could be removed. R. Frydryk stated that if the budget were removed, it would need to be replaced in the budget next year. R. Frydryk also recommended maintaining the full cruiser replacement budget for FY15. He noted that the Humvees added to the police department fleet were federal excess property and had been painted by Pathfinder.

3. WWTP

102 WWTP Superintendent Gerry Skowronek addressed the council regarding his proposed
103 FY15 Budget. He stated that salaried had been adjusted for union employees to remain
104 competitive with other municipalities. He also proposed an increase to the overtime line
105 to fund a second on call operator as well as an increase of \$50,000 in contract services to
106 fund the nitrogen study. G. Skowronek stated that he had requested funding for a new
107 mechanical bar rack under new equipment and proposed a reduction in sewer
108 maintenance costs due to full sewer replacements such as the CSO and SRF projects. He
109 noted that the sewer use fee has not increased in four years. G. Skowronek provided an
110 update on the SRF project schedule.

111 112 **4. Library**

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114 Acting Library Director Mary Bernat and Library Board of Director's Chairmen John
115 Dinovo addressed the council regarding the Library's proposed FY15 budget. J. Dinovo
116 announced that M. Bernat would be retiring soon from the library. He stated that they are
117 currently conducting interviews for a new director, but only one qualified person has
118 applied for the position. J. Dinovo stated that the salary of the assistant director had been
119 set at \$39,000 and the technician position had been reduced. He also explained that the
120 \$92,726 budgeted for library collection was a certain percentage of the operating cost that
121 must be dedicated to collection to be eligible for state funding and accreditation. The
122 total requested budget for FY15 was \$728,749. J. Dinovo explained that the contract
123 services were budgeted to fund labor counsel.

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125 P. Hebert noted that the Palmer Public Library is 51% above the state's per capita
126 spending average. J. Dinovo noted that the level of service that the library provides is
127 equal to a population of 25,000 plus they must maintain the large building. C. Blanchard
128 questioned the \$30,000 budgeted for Bibliotemps. Discussion continued whether funding
129 for the Bibliotemps should fall under staffing. M. Lovell noted that the minimum state
130 funding requirements of the library are similar to the minimum net school spending
131 requirements. P. Hebert asked what the minimum funding would need to be to qualify for
132 a waiver. J. Dinovo stated that a cut to the library budget would need to be proportionate
133 to all other budgetary decisions. B. Barry stated that the bibliotemps should be reflected in
134 the staffing and not be held as a separate line item. J. Polonsky requested that an updated
135 budget be provided to the council by the library.

136 137 **5. DPW**

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139 C. Blanchard explained that the contractual services and part time summer help had been
140 increased in the proposed DPW budget. He would revisit and re-present the DPW budget
141 to the council after a full review.

142 143 **6. Discussion on Public Hearing**

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145 The council agreed to hold a discussion on the overall budget at their June 9th meeting,
146 hold the public hearing on the budget on June 16th and take a final vote on the budget on
147 June 23rd.

148 149 **7. Misc. Correspondence**

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151 J. Polonsky read a letter from Detector Technology thanking the town for supporting the TIF
152 and Economic Development plan.

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8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by P. Burns, seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 7-0 at 7:55 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Andrew M. Golas