

# ***Palmer Town Council***

## ***Town Council Meeting Minutes***

Monday, May 5, 2014

### **1. Roll Call**

The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, May 5, 2014 was called to order at 6:30 pm. Present were Town Manager Charles Blanchard, Phil Hebert, Jason Polonsky, Barbara Barry, Matt Lovell, Donald Blais, Paul Burns and Mary Salzmann and Andrew Golas recording minutes.

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

Motion to accept the agenda as submitted by P. Burns, seconded by J. Polonsky. Motion passed 7-0.

### **3. Meeting Minutes**

None

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

P. Hebert stated that concurrently, a meeting was being held at Converse Middle School regarding the planned reconstruction of Eagar Park.

### **5. WWTP Sewer Debt**

Motion to transfer \$4,807.43 from the Sewer Surplus Fund Account to pay for accrued interest costs on the sewer debt to be paid off on August 1<sup>st</sup> by J. Polonsky, seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 7-0.

### **6. FY15 Budget**

#### **1. Veteran's Agent**

Veteran's Agent Deborah Shilaikis addressed the council regarding her proposed FY15 budget. She stated that she has lowered her requested amount for Chapter 115 Benefit funding to \$336,000 based on her current payouts. She stated that the veteran's office will have a number of seniors who will not be able to retire from the Chapter 115 Benefits until they pass away. She also stated that the Memorial Day celebration is scheduled to begin at 10:30am on May 26<sup>th</sup> beginning on Thorndike Street.

#### **2. Finance Director/Town Accountant**

Town Accountant and Finance Director John Kuzmiski addressed the council regarding the proposed FY15 Budget. J. Kuzmiski stated that his request included the bi-annual Actuarial Report. He also stated that the Accounting Clerk was reclassified as a principal clerk which increased funding for the position. J. Kuzmiski stated that according to the last actuarial study, the auditors recommended that the Town fund the OPEB liability by forming an OPEB trust. J. Kuzmiski acknowledged that the current OPEB liability is \$37 Million. He recommended that the council adopt the trust with a starting fund balance of \$10,000 to

\$15,000. J. Kuzmiski recommended Bartholomew & Co. as the Town's OPEB Trust custodian. M. Salzmann questioned how the Town could be assessed a \$37 Million OPEB liability. J. Kuzmiski stated that the unfunded OPEB liability is not unique to Palmer but is recognized statewide. He recommended adopting a resolution to begin funding the OPEB trust. C. Blanchard stated that the Town Council could begin to look at adopting the OPEB trust at the next regular Town Council Meeting.

### **3. Assessors**

Principal Assessor Linda Leblanc addressed the Council regarding her proposed FY15 budget. L. Leblanc stated that the assistance in her office was invaluable. She stated that her office processes 300 property sales per year and 100 abatement applications. She stated that the revaluation was budgeted for \$26,300 in the FY15 budget. B. Barry asked who conducts the inspections of home sales and building permits. L. Leblanc stated that Assessors Mike Burns and Larry Jasak conduct inspections for residential properties. B. Barry asked how often L. Leblanc conducts field inspections personally. L. Leblanc stated that she has just begun conducting building inspections for pulled building permits. She stated that Roy Bishop of Bishop and Associates conducts the valuation on commercial and industrial properties. She stated that the office is on target to complete cyclical inspections as well.

### **4. Treasurer/Collector**

Treasurer/Collector Kristine Bissell addressed the council regarding her proposed FY15 budget. She stated that the request was for level funding with a 2% salary increase for each employee. She also stated that there will be a request for \$2,500 to be added in the contract services to fund an unemployment management group. K. Bissell stated that Unemployment Tax Management Group had been contracted by the town to process claims, provide audits and ensure that we pay unemployment correctly as well as provide support for the town at unemployment hearings. The cost to the town is a flat service fee based on the size of the work force.

B. Barry asked when the last year was that Tax Title properties had been leined. K. Bissell stated that FY11 had been completed by FY12 & FY13 were in progress. She also stated that there are 4 parcels which will be sold by the town at auction. B. Barry advocated that FY12 & FY13 should continue to be processed through tax title and a free cash transfer should be done to catch up on the tax title process. She also asked what the current liability is for the Tax Title Attorney. K. Bissell did not have the full liability cost to present. M. Lovell asked how much time is associated with leaning each property by the Treasurer's office. K. Bissell outlined the tax title process for the council. Finally, she stated that her office should be budgeted to receive one new computer in the budget.

### **5. Unclassified**

J. Kuzmiski presented the Debt Service schedule to the council. He noted that the SRF Project has begun. B. Barry asked how much is still owed by the town to fund the October Snowstorm recovery. An answer would be provided at a later time. M. Salzmann asked how many years were left on the Library construction debt. J. Kuzmiski would provide the answer at a later time. B. Barry asked for the reason why the Group Life Insurance had seen an increase. J. Kuzmiski would review the requested amount compared to the insurance estimates. B. Barry asked that a year to date expense report be provided.

## **7. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by P. Burns, seconded by M. Lovell. Motion passed 7-0 at 7:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Andrew M. Golas