

Palmer Town Council

Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2024

Call to Order:

The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, May 13, 2024, was called to order at 6:30pm by Town Council President Barbara Barry. Councilors Jessica Sizer, Mark Caci, and Karl Williams were present. Also present were Town Manager Brad Brothers and Executive Assistant Marlene Ottomaniello. *Councilor Philp Hebert arrived at 7:15pm.*

Visitor Comments –

Steve Kosmider, Thorndike – Would like an update on the plans for Thorndike Grammer School and the need for the Town Council to go onto executive session. The Town Council explains the need for confidentiality when discussing the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property under M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21 # 6. The Town Council also indicated that the new manager is currently reviewing items the previous Town Managers were working on and projects will continue to move forward.

Minutes-

November 13, 2023 - Motion by K. Williams, 2nd by J. Sizer *vote: 3-0-1*

April 8, 2024 - Motion by K. Williams, 2nd by J. Sizer *vote: 4-0-0*

No Old Business

New Business

National Grid Palmer to Ware Improvement Project

Jean Charles from National Grid gives a PowerPoint Presentation on the Palmer to Ware Improvement Project covering the Project Overview, Structure Comparison, Permitting Overview, Project Schedule along with Contact Info for anyone would like to reach out for more information. This project is being proposed to address the condition of the deteriorating 69 kilovolt (kV) O15N transmission lines and the need to update and maintain system reliability. The project will upgrade from the existing 69kV Transmission Line to a 115kV Transmission Line design standard but will continue to operate at 69kV for the foreseeable future. The Project is currently in its engineering/permitting stage. It is anticipated that construction will start in 2026 and the rebuilt line will be completed and in service by 2028. That timeline may shift due to permitting approvals and other requirements that National Grid must meet. National Grid is investing in infrastructure for potential future increases in demand for energy in this area. This project is in the beginning stages with two more public information sessions scheduled in May. As the project progresses more information and updates will be available through the Public Outreach Team.

Warrant for Annual Town Election June 11, 2024

Motion to sign the Warrant for the Annual Town Election by M. Caci, 2nd by K. Williams *vote: 4-0-0.*

Accept a donation of Seasonal displays from the Palmer Business Partnership

Discussion-Town Manager Brad Brothers and Chris Smith from the Palmer Business Partnership met and discussed that the town should take ownership of the displays for insurance purposes. This donation is for the currently displayed Purple Heart Banners. The full list of the donation includes 16 - Purple Heart Name Banners, 7 - Palmer Salutes Purple Heart Banners, 23 Banner Pole Mount Kits, 18 - 2.5' x 4' American Flags, 18 - Flag Poles, Flagpole Mounts and Maintenance Parts & Supplies.

Motion to accept a donation of Purple Heart Display by J. Sizer, 2nd by K. Williams *vote: 4-0-0.*

Accept gift donation of \$5000 from LWS Foundation to be used for the Beautification of Hryniewicz Park in Three Rivers (Community Development Office)

Motion by J. Sizer, 2nd by K. Williams *vote: 4-0-0.*

Accept a Gift Donation of \$1843 from Amvets Post 74 to the Town of Palmer Veterans Service Office for sponsorship of Wreaths Across America.

Motion by J. Sizer, 2nd by K. Williams *vote: 4-0-0.*

Streets and Sidewalks Ordinance – First Reading

Discussion- DPW Director Matt Morse gave a brief overview of the proposed updates to the ordinance.

B. Barry completes first reading -

Amend the Code of the Town of Palmer Chapter 122 Streets and Sidewalks by replacing Article III Snow removal in its entirety which will provide enforcement action for Snow, Debris, Water, and Sediment on Ways and Sidewalks. It will also consist of Violations and Penalties which will be Criminal complaint and Noncriminal disposition all to be enforced by the Police Department.

ARPA Request– Palmer Rd (Request 1) - Resolution 2024-13 - To approve the use of SLFRF/ARPA funds in the amount of \$70,000 for work invoiced to date for Palmer Road.

Discussion- The \$70,000 request would be to pay all invoices to date, more invoices are expected. The use of ARPA Funds for this project is in the town's best interest as there is no federal or state funding available. Town Manager Brad Brothers gives general update of ARPA Funds allocated and used to date. Palmers' allocation was just under \$3.7 million, roughly \$2.2 million has been allocated leaving just under \$1.5 million to be allocated or spent by December 31, 2024.

Motion by P. Hebert, 2nd by K. Williams *vote: 5-0-0.*

Resolution 2024-11- Approve a transfer of \$223,744 from Sewer Surplus to pay off the loan issued to fund the engineering services for the Dewatering Centrifuge.

Discussion- This project will be going out to bid and those bids are expected to come in around September/October 2024. Depending on the results of the bid there are two options, one would be to rescind all the funding and not move forward with the project and option two may be that we need additional money to move forward with the project.

Motion by P. Hebert, 2nd by J. Sizer *vote: 5-0-0.*

Resolution 2024-14 - To authorize the Town Manager Brad Brothers to execute the Barker Street Property Deed.

Motion by M. Caci, 2nd by P. Hebert *vote: 5-0-0.*

Misc. Correspondence

Town Manager Brad Brothers would like to congratulate our Town Accountant Gabriela Potter, who received her certification as a Certified Governmental Accountant by the Massachusetts Municipal Auditors' and Accountants Association.

Motion to enter Executive Session as listed and adjourn therefrom

M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21 # 6. To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Thorndike Grammer School

Motion by P. Herbert, 2nd by K. Williams *vote: 5-0-0.*

Roll Call Vote to enter Executive Session at 7:39pm

B. Barry- yes, J. Sizer- yes, P. Hebert- yes, K. Williams- yes, and M. Caci- yes