

## Palmer Town Council Meeting Minutes December 10, 2018

**Call to Order.** The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, December 10, 2018 was called to order at 6:30 pm by Town Council President Barbara Barry. Councilors Lorinda Baker, Mary Salzmann, Karl Williams, Matthew Lemieux, Michelle Sikes and Robert Lavoie were present. Also present was Town Manager, Charles Blanchard and Executive Assistant, Nicole Parker.

### **Minutes:**

October 15, 2019

Motion was made to approve minutes by L.Baker. Seconded by K. Williams. Motion passed (6:0:1)

November 18, 2019

Motion was made to approve minutes by L.Baker. Seconded by K. Williams. Motion passed (7:0)

### **Old Business**

#### **Comcast Contract**

C.Blanchard provided a copy of the new draft contract including updated changes reflecting the addition of service to Old warren Road, Boston Road and Woodland Heights. The Council voiced concern over the 10 year long length of the contract and not having the option to modify, considering the unanswered requests to Comcast of the Council inquiring whether there are other parts of Town that are not serviced by Comcast. C.Blanchard stated that Comcast has extended coverage to a far greater area than in other community's contracts. The Council would like to see the current Comcast contract so they can compare the changes by the next meeting.

#### **Palmer Rail Steering Committee**

At the November meeting it was determined that there would be a rail committee formed to provide the Town Council input on the East West Rail initiative. The Town Council had requested that letters of interest be submitted in before tonight' meeting. A list was compiled and submitted to the Council. The committee was nominated and is as follows:

Two Town Council Members; Mary Salzmann & Lorinda Baker. Depot Village Business owners; Karl Williams & Scarlett Lamothe. Planning Board member; Paul Burns- Johnson. Town Planner/Economic Development Director; Linda Leduc. Redevelopment Authority member; Jan McCoy. PRA Rail Advisory member; Ben Hood. Three Rivers Chamber member; Lenny Weake. Citizen's for a Palmer Rail Stop; Rob Gromosky. Community Development Director; Sarah Sczcebak.

Palmer resident that commutes to Springfield or Boston had three respondents; Kelsey Sheehan, Nate Fischer and Brian Sizer. Nate Fischer was present and spoke about his interest on the committee.

A motion was made to choose Nate Fischer by M.Salzmann. Seconded by L.Baker. (7:0)

There were also two applicants for Regional Representative; Tanya Neslusen & Tracy Opelinski,

A motion was made to appoint Tracy Opelinski as Regional Representative by B.Barry. Seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (7:0)

### Town Branding

C.Blanchard provided the Council with a Mission Statement along with the suggested committee members. Paul Wizniewski was present to discuss the statement and the suggested committee members.

The Council stated that the goal for this meeting was to create the mission statement and have people that may be interested in being on the committee submit a letter of interest.

C.Blanchard reviewed the history of the project from its inception as Paul proposed the cast iron trains for street signs then had flourished in to what the Town could be branded as, hence stemming the need for a mission statement and committee appointment. The Council determined that more than just one item can brand Palmer and more work needs to be done to encompass what the Town of Palmer should be branded at. Overall the Council believes Mr. Wieziewski's idea is great, but would like to see the branding expanded. After more consideration the Council determined that they would allow the current informal committee to continue their work until they need more input or resources from the Town.

### Bridge Repair update

C. Blanchard reviewed the most recent updates for the bridges that have structural work scheduled.

#### Main Street Bridge; Three Rivers

The contract for the repair of the bridge was awarded to New England Infrastructure of Hudson, MA earlier this month. C.Blanchard reached out to them and spoke with the Project Manager assigned to the project, Keith Miles, is waiting for MA DOT to schedule the pre-construction meeting. Mr. Miles asked C.Blanchard to call MA DOT about scheduling the meeting so that they know this is a high priority for the Town, which C.Blanchard has done.

#### Main Street and Church Street Bridges; Thorndike

Joey Sawicki and C.Blanchard met with the bridge engineers from Tighe & Bond to discuss the feasibility of doing "aesthetic repairs" on these bridges.

It turns out that the sidewalk on the Church Street Bridge was not closed because of its condition on the surface, but rather because it is cantilevered over the side of the bridge and the supports that hold it up were considered to be unsafe with the last State inspection. This

means that the sidewalk cannot be repaired and re-opened without addressing this structural problem.

The Main Street Bridge has recently had two holes in the deck repaired at a cost of over \$20,000. During this work the contractor noted there was significant corrosion in some of the rebar, so the engineer recommended that this be evaluated before designing the cosmetic repairs.

The Tighe & Bond proposal is attached for your information. G. Skowronek and C. Blanchard have reviewed it and decided to go forward at this time with the Base Service Fee, Option 1A and Option 2 at a cost of \$41,500 which we will be funded from the remainder of the \$70,000 appropriated for bridge repairs.

It was stated that the start of the design work would be able to start immediately with the site work starting shortly thereafter.

B. Barry requested a copy of the most recent bridge report. C. Blanchard stated that he would forward it to the Council.

### **Other Old Business**

M. Salzmaan inquired about the body camera trial. C. Blanchard stated that it was understood that once Free Cash was certified there would be more conversation with the Chief. Free Cash was certified today and C. Blanchard stated he would speak with the Chief and get back to the Council.

B. Barry inquired about the Citizen Police Academy. C. Blanchard stated he spoke with the Chief and will be getting back to him with dates.

B. Barry was concerned that the in-house audience was not being able to hear the Council or people that are at the table. C. Blanchard stated that there are devices available for hearing impaired. The council would like to see audio to a speaker from their existing microphones. C. Blanchard will look into it with MPACT.

### **Discussion: Adopting C64N of MGL; 3% local tax Option on Adult Use Marijuana**

There is a provision in the Mass General Law regarding the 3% Local Tax that can be collected by the Municipality on Adult Use Marijuana sales. The Town Council will take this up at their next meeting.

### **Sub Committee Reports:**

Converse Middle School Reuse committee met with the Consultants (Housing Partners, Inc) who are putting together an RFP to put out to Developers. They will be meeting again on December 17 to finalize the documents.

### **Town Manager Report**

1. The first “Coffee with the Town Manager” was held on December 5th at the Maple Tree Industrial Center Management Office. It was graciously hosted by John Rottman who sent out invitations to all of his tenants that regularly spend time there staffing their businesses. Five people attended representing four businesses:

- Creative Materials • RGS Communications • Australian Natural Soapworks • Paint the Town

The meeting went very well. C.Blanchard went over current issues we are dealing with, explained how our town government works and listened to their thoughts and feelings about the Town. One person expressed an interest in getting more involved in Town Government.

After spending a significant amount of time trying to locate a good site for the Regional Animal Shelter on Town land near Burleigh Park, it was learned that our preferred location at the leaf pit is an endangered species site that would need a waiver to allow it to be constructed. Last week we toured the Monson Developmental Center and found a site that would be much more economical to use. Work is proceeding on using that site.

### **Councilor’s Roundtable**

The Councilor’s would like to see some Christmas decorations up. C.Blanchard said he would have the DPW put them up.

Christmas on the Common was on Sunday, December 9, 2018. It was well attended and the Council would like to thank the volunteers.

PHCC had a very successful Tree Festival.

### **Adjournment**

Motion was made to adjourn at 8:30 by K.Williams. Seconded by L.Baker . Motion passed (7:0)