

## Palmer Town Council Meeting Minutes January 14, 2019

Call to Order The Palmer Town Council Meeting of Monday, January 14, 2019 was called to order at 6:30 pm by Town Council Vice President Mary Salzmann. Councilors Lorinda Baker , Karl Williams, Matthew Lemieux, and Michelle Sikes and Robert Lavoie were present. President Barbara Barry was absent. Also present was Town Manager, Charles Blanchard and Executive Assistant, Nicole Parker.

### **Old Business**

#### **Comcast Contract**

C.Blanchard introduced Eileen Leahy, Senior Manager of Government and Regulatory Affairs Division of Comcast regarding the 10 year renewal of the cable contract. It was noted that the largest area of town (Old Warren Road/Boston Road and Woodland Heights) that don't comply with density requirements have been added to the new contract. The Town also is able to retain the maximum 5% local cable contribution and a \$50,000 increase for MPACT.

There was discussion regarding shortening the density mileage requirement that are currently at 25 aboveground/35 underground. Ms. Leahy stated that Palmer has one of the lowest requirements in the region. Ms. Leahy stated that contract length of time, funding and line extensions are all negotiable.

There was discussion over senior discounts. Ms. Leahy stated that there are many more packages available called "big packaging" that are more attractive as senior discount refers to cable only, and not bundling.

Ms. Leahy stated that if there are any other changes requested, to please get them in as soon as possible in order to have a clean and accepted version for the public hearing.

The majority of the Council was satisfied with the negotiated contract. The Council stated that they would hold the public hearing at the next meeting on February 11, 2019.

#### **Joint Letter with School Committee was reviewed**

M.Salzmann would like to add language to the draft letter. She also would like to see the entire Council sign the letter. C.Blanchard stated that the letter is in its final stage and just needs to be forwarded to the state. M.Salzmann stated that she would make the changes she would like to see and send it back electronically for the next meeting.

#### **Resolution 2019-21 : MGL Chapter 64N Section 3- 3% tax**

Motion was made to approve the adoption of MGL Chapter 64n Section 3 for local tax option by R.Lavoie. Seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0)

Town Manager Evaluation and Town Manager self-evaluation Form

C.Blanchard presented a self-evaluation to the Council. Everyone should get their Town Manager evaluations back to B.Barry by email by January 25, 2019.

Town Manager Report

Submitted by Charles T. Blanchard

January 14, 2019

1. I am pleased to announce that Jeff Stanhope was been appointed Recreation Director. He will be at your February meeting to hear your thoughts and ideas on programs that you would like him to work on over the next year. If you would like, you can send me your suggestions before the meeting so that he will have an idea of the programs you have in mind.
2. Susan Petzold has been appointed Sealer of Weights and Measures, and her husband Gary has been appointed Deputy Sealer. They currently provide this service to Wilbraham and Hampden, and they were recently appointed to be Sealer for Monson. The passing last year of long time Sealer Joe Serrato created this vacancy in Palmer and Monson. Based on data provided by our new Sealer our fees have been updated to be consistent with surrounding communities.
3. The Converse Middle School Re-use subcommittee has been meeting with our Consultant and Architect to review the Feasibility Study and finalize the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) that will be issued in order to find a developer for the conversion of the building to approximately 60 to 65 senior affordable housing units and a Community Center.

Based on the Feasibility Study, here is the list of the key components of the RFQ:

January 10, 2019

Page 2

- Sale or lease the building to a developer for \$1.
- Up to 65 units of affordable senior housing will be developed.
- Enough parking spaces will be set aside for a one to one ratio of spaces to units for the tenants; the rest of the parking will remain available for public use.
- The Town will retain ownership of and access to the playing fields.
- The building will be historically rehabilitated.
- The auditorium, first floor locker room and gym will be leased back to the Town for \$1.

- The developer will build 2,500 square feet of community space within the building which will be leased to the Town for \$1. The Town will pay to furnish this space.
- The Town will bear all operating and maintenance costs related to these spaces as well as contribute to the maintenance of the parking area.

We have also re-negotiated the consultant's fee that would have been due now (at the completion of the Phase 1 Feasibility Study) so that it will fund the consultant's services through April, 2019.

At that point we should be close to having a developer selected who would reimburse the Town for the remainder of the consultant's fee. (The Town would be liable for any portion of this \$84,000 fee that cannot be negotiated to be paid by the developer.)

4. Chief Janulewicz is working with his staff to hold a Citizens' Police Academy in March. He will present the details on this at the February meeting.

The Chief is also getting an updated cost on the purchase and maintenance of Body Cameras for the February meeting and will discuss this with you at the February meeting as well.

5. Joey Sawicki has been in communication with Monson Highway Superintendent / Selectman John Morrell regarding the poor condition of the State Street Bridge between Palmer and Monson beyond our Highway garage. The Monson Board of Selectmen will be requesting that you join with them to make this bridge a high priority for major repairs or replacement by the State.
6. Bruce Henriques has investigated the possibility of installing a PA system in the meeting room and determined it would create too much feedback with the cable TV audio system.

### **Councilor's Roundtable**

M.Salzmann reiterated the fact that political signs need to be removed 48 hours after elections and the fact that there are fines associated with leaving them up. She would like to see more enforcement of these laws and hold the individuals accountable.

### **Adjournment**

Motion was made to adjourn at 7:30PM by K.Williams. Seconded by L.Baker. Motion passed (6:0)