

FINAL

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 11, 2016 in Council Chambers, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Present were: Mayor Joan Gamble, Deputy Mayor Sydney Schulman, Councilors Patrick DeLorenzo, Wayne Hypolite, Joel Neuwirth, Derrick Seldon, Leon Rivers and Joseph Washington

Also present were: Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager, Sharron Howe, Assistant to the Town Manager, Attorney Marc Needelman and India M. Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Absent was: Councilor Joseph Merritt

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Gamble congratulated S & S Centerless Grinding on their grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony held on April 9th.

PUBLIC HEARING

There was a public hearing held concerning a proposed ordinance relating to Veteran's Tax Benefits.

The public hearing opened at 7:36 p.m.

There were no public comments.

The public hearing closed at 7:38 p.m.

CITIZENS STATEMENTS & PETITIONS

1. **Attorney Aaron Romano, 55 Woodland Avenue** spoke regarding his client Mr. Shawn Kong, owner of 6A Tobey Road. Attorney Romano expressed concerns regarding the right

of refusal for immediate abutters to purchase town owned land. He also requested clarification on how to proceed with the Request for Proposal as an immediate abutter.

Deputy Mayor Schulman stated that the RFP outlines the contractual obligations for town owned land.

Attorney Romano stated six different factors in RFP, however right of first refusal only addresses the price. There are five other factors listed as requirement for the RFP.

Deputy Mayor Schulman stated that the need for clarification would come from the Town Attorney. The recommendation would suggest the best interest of the town to execute this right. All of these concerns would be referred to Town Administration as recommended by the Town Attorney.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES

Administration & Education – There will be a special meeting of this subcommittee held on Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss Capital Improvement Road Repairs.

Golf – Councilor Rivers stated that the golf course will attempt to open under current weather conditions.

Finance – The next meeting of this subcommittee will be held on Monday, April 18, 2016 at 5:45 p.m.

Public Safety – Councilor Washington will give a detailed report of this subcommittee at the next Council meeting, scheduled for April 25, 2016.

Committee on Committees – Councilor Washington stated that there was no quorum at the last meeting held.

Land Use & Economic Development – There will be a special meeting of this subcommittee held on Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

FY 13/14-4: Consider and Take Action Regarding Amendment to Policy 3014.01 – Sale of Excess Town Land

It was moved by Councilor Hypolite, seconded by Councilor Washington to amend the existing Town of Bloomfield Policy Number 3014.01 regarding the Sale of Excess Town Land by adding the following subsection:

F. - The Town Council, at its sole discretion, may notify any immediate abutters of pending sale of property and offer a right of refusal with a specified time limit to execute such sale.

Councilor Hypolite read amendment and requested clarification on the intent of the suggested language regarding abutting land owners and their right of refusal.

Councilor Rivers stated that any applicant interested in the RFP must comply and respond to all items required for consideration.

Councilor Seldon emphasized the word “may” in the recommended motion and would be at the Council’s discretion for notification.

Councilor DeLorenzo stated that the outline of this policy is clear and the question “may” is determined by the procedure.

Mr. Schenck, Jr. clarified the motion and the inclusion of “may” by giving flexibility to the Council. The new policy is permissive rather than restrictive. The final determination and the process will be controlled by the Council.

Councilor Washington asked for clarification regarding the new proposed ordinance. It was noted that the intent of the amendment was to allow Council to restrict the sale of property if desired, to abutters and place conditions on a particular property as part of the sale.

**VOTE: AYE: J. Gamble, P. DeLorenzo, L. Rivers, J. Neuwirth, J. Washington
 NAY: W. Hypolite, D. Seldon
 ABSTAIN: S. Schulman**

The motion passes, 5-2-1.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 15/16-61: Consider and Take Possible Action Regarding Adoption of Proposed Ordinance Sec. 18-8 – Exemption for Veterans and Surviving Spouses

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Schulman, seconded by Councilor Rivers and voted unanimously to adopt Ordinance Sec. 18-8 Exemption for Veterans and Surviving Spouses.

Sec 18-8. Exemption for Veterans and Surviving Spouses

- (a) Pursuant to the authority granted by Connecticut General Statute §12-81f, the Town of Bloomfield hereby authorizes an additional real property tax exemption for qualifying veterans and their surviving spouses.

- (b) The additional property tax exemption permitted by §12-81f of the General Statutes applicable to the assessed value of property up to the amount of \$10,000, is hereby authorized for veterans and their spouses described herein. Any veteran entitled to an exemption from property tax in accordance with §12-81f (19) of the General Statutes or any veteran's surviving spouse entitled to an exemption from property tax in accordance with §12-81f (22) of the General Statutes shall be entitled to an additional exemption applicable to the assessed value of property up to the amount of \$10,000, provided that such veteran or such surviving spouse meets all of the requirements of §§12-81f and 12-81] of the General Statutes.
- (c) The additional property tax exemption described in sub-section (b) shall be applicable to the assessment year commencing October 1, 2016, and each assessment year thereafter.

FY 15/16-62: Consider and Take Action Regarding Approval of Tax Appeal Settlements

This matter was referred for discussion during Executive Session.

FY 15/16-63: Consider and Take Action Regarding Approval of Personnel Matter

This matter was referred for discussion during Executive Session.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Gamble requested a Moment of Silence for Mrs. Cynthia Bercowitz. Mrs. Bercowitz was a longtime resident of Bloomfield, former Lions Club member and the widow of Herman Bercowitz, founder of Copaco Shopping Center.

Mayor Gamble reminded dog owners to protect their animals from vicious stray dogs in some neighborhoods.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager reported the following updates to the Town Council:

- Mr. Schenck, Jr. stated that the Department of Public Works will be completing neighborhood street sweeping. They will also begin to clean catch basins per DEEP regulations.
- The Annual Town Meeting will be held on May 2, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at Bloomfield High School auditorium. The proposed town budget was increase by 1.47%, which is an increase of .65 mils.

- On April 16, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., the Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee (CEEC) will sponsor a light bulb swap. Each town resident may exchange their iridescent bulbs to more efficient LED.
- The town issued a Letter of Appointment for the Bloomfield Police Cadet Program. This application period will remain open and Human Resources will continue to recruit.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Seldon to approve the minutes of March 28, 2016 with noted corrections.

VOTE: AYE: J. Gamble, J. Washington, W. Hypolite, L. Rivers, J. Neuwirth
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: S. Schulman, P. DeLorenzo

The motion passes, 5-0-2

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor DeLorenzo reminded all town residents to donate to the local Food Bank.

Councilor Neuwirth reminded all town residents to support the golf tournament fundraiser for “Celebrate Bloomfield”. The tournament will be held on May 1, 2016 at Wintonbury Hills Golf Course. Contact Councilor Neuwirth for more information.

Councilor Rivers attended the open house of S & S Centerless Grinding on April 9, 2016. He applauded all small businesses in town.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:23 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Schulman, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session A. – Discussion Concerning Pending Claims and Litigation.

At 8:43 p.m., it was moved by Councilor DeLorenzo, seconded by Deputy Mayor Schulman and voted unanimously to exit Executive Session A.

At 8:44 p.m., it was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session B. – Discussion Concerning Personnel Matter.

At 9:11 p.m., it was moved by Councilor Rivers, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to exit into Executive Session B and enter into regular session.

It was moved by Councilor Washington, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to authorize the Town Attorney to enter into settlement with the following tax appeals:

- **Tunxis Avenue L.P. (Woodside Village) vs. TOB for \$11,795,920.00**
- **Connecticut General vs. TOB for \$54,433,700.00**
- **Wintonbury Healthcare vs. TOB for \$3,850,000.00**

It was moved by Councilor Seldon, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with Chief Paul Hammick concerning Retiree Health Benefits.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:16 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Schulman, seconded by Councilor DeLorenzo and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.