

FINAL

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2015 in Council Chambers, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

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

Absent was: Councilor Derrick Seldon

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

Presentation by Ms. Penni Micca, Interval House

Ms. Penni Micca presented information regarding services offered at Interval House. Interval House is dedicated to providing services to prevent and break the cycle of family and intimate partner abuse.

Ms. Micca requested financial support of the Council in the amount of \$2500.00 to continue to provide these services to the Greater Hartford catchment area.

Councilor Merritt suggested posting information regarding the request for donations on town website in conjunction with supporting a formal partnership with the police department.

Mr. Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager inquired if given consideration for a financial request would funding go towards Bloomfield residents.

Councilor DeLorenzo requested additional detailed statistics regarding services for Bloomfield residents.

CITIZEN STATEMENTS & PETITIONS

1. Michael Trueman, 7 South Barn Hill Road – stated that he declined to sign a petition advocating to oust neighbors due to their nationality “Brazilians” and the disruption in traffic for their business.

Mayor Schulman informed Mr. Trueman of ensuring consistent zoning regulations within town and it should not be selectively enforced.

2. Natali Dabaghi, 21 Foothills Way, reiterated Mr. Trueman’s comments and concerns regarding constant harassment and targeting due to their racial ethnicity.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES

Community Services- In the absence of Councilor Seldon, Councilor Rivers gave a detailed report of upcoming activities and events for Social & Youth Services, Senior Services and Leisure Services.

Administration & Education – Councilor Rivers read a detailed report outlining a presentation made by architects, Weston and Sampson regarding facility renovations for the Public Works department.

Public Safety - Councilor Washington read a detailed report from the last meeting held on September 15, 2015.

Committee on Committees – Councilor Washington deferred this report for discussion under Council business.

Finance – Councilor Hypolite gave a brief overview of the last meeting held of this subcommittee. He discussed the overall level of the fund balance at \$15,000,000 and 18%. There is increased cash flow and an excess in revenues due to delinquent tax sales held on October 1, 2015. The tax sales net \$400,000 in revenues and the collection rate of 98.6%. This rate is trending high due to the success of bi-annual tax collection.

The committee also discussed various liabilities related to outstanding debt service. The town’s per capita is \$2800 due to school bonding and the state average is \$2200. In relation to debt, the town has plans to address infrastructure needs such as roads and significant capital improvement projects, i.e. library, community center and public works garage. There may be a need to consider potential bond referendum to improve the town infrastructure.

Land Use & Economic Development – Deputy Mayor Gamble gave a brief overview of the last subcommittee held in September. In efforts to increase Economic Development in Bloomfield, the town staff hosted an outstanding workshop for potential companies interested in coming to Bloomfield. Several proposals are currently active for housing developments and manufacturing, to stabilize the tax base and assist with financing needed renovations for town infrastructure.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to add item FY 15/16-19: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas Pipeline Proposed Gas Pipeline Project.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

FY 13/14-12: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding 97 Granby Street

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gamble and schedule a public hearing at the next scheduled Town Council meeting, October 26, 2015.

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

The motion carries. (8-0-1)

NEW BUSINESS

FY 15/16-15: Consider and Take Action Regarding Appointment to the Bloomfield Housing Authority

It was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to appoint to the Bloomfield Housing Authority:

- Mr. Charles Frances Politis, II

It was moved by Councilor Washington, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to amend the original motion to appoint to the Bloomfield Housing Authority:

- Mr. Jonathan Coleman

FY 15/16-16: Consider and Take Action Regarding Appointment to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission

It was moved by Councilor Washington, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to appoint an alternate position to the Town Plan and Zoning:

- Ms. Tara Baldwin

FY 15/16-17: Consider and Take Action Regarding Appointment to the Greater Hartford Transit District

It was moved by Councilor Washington and Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to appoint to the Greater Hartford Transit District:

- Joan Gamble

FY 15/16-18: Consider and Take Action Regarding Pending Tax Appeals

This matter was deferred for discussion under Executive Session.

FY 15/16-19: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas Pipeline Proposed Project

Ms. Marie MacDonald, Chair of Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee (CEEC) and Ms. Valerie Rossetti, member of CEEC gave a brief presentation regarding concerns of the Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas Pipeline. A community presentation meeting was held in West Hartford on October 7, 2015.

It was noted that CNG has plans to access this new gas pipeline to provide services to more residents in town. CEEC not opposed to re-routing the pipeline. There main goal is to fully protect town's water supply.

The potential effects of this pipeline could disrupt natural wildlife, community wells on Juniper and Rundelane and a significant loss of trees and vegetation.

Mayor Schulman clarified information regarding the pipeline proposal, percentage of leakage of gas and frequency of distribution.

Councilor Hypolite mentioned comments about fracking and is interested in the details of the signed contract agreement between CNG and Kinder Morgan.

Councilor DeLorenzo inquired about the role of the town as a whole regarding this project.

Deputy Mayor Gamble is in agreement with fellow colleagues regarding concerns and possible leaks within the community

Councilor Merritt expressed that he has not had an issue with the existing pipeline near his home. He thinks that it should go through existing pipeline area and not entering into water supply. – supportive of pipeline

Mayor Schulman stated that the town will not rush to judgement regarding the pipeline project. He referred this issue to the Land Use and Economic Development subcommittee for further discussion and review.

Moreover, the Council should not pass a resolution at this time due to a lot of unanswered questions, benefits to Bloomfield residents for access, statistics regarding leakage percentage and a letter to extend the comment period for further exploration and review of prospective regulations for the project to proceed be held until questions are answered.

It was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to submit written correspondence to FERC requesting an extension period on the October 16 deadline to accept pre-application comments, questions concerning the pipeline to have yet to be answered and its effect on prospective customers, and state/federal regulatory agencies.

REPORT FROM MAYOR AND TOWN MANAGER

Mayor's Report

- On September 20, 2015, Mayor Schulman attended the Harvest Festival sponsored by Bloomfield United Methodist Church.
- On September 25, 2015, Mayor Schulman attended a meeting of the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials.
- On September 29, 2015, the Annual Senior Expo was held from 9:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Senior Services.
- Also on September 29, 2015, announced the departure of Mr. Desi Nesmith, Principal of Metacomet Elementary School. Mr. Nesmith accepted a new position at the State of Connecticut – Department of Education as the new Turnaround Chief. Students honored Mr. Nesmith for his tireless service to Metacomet Elementary School.
- On September 19, 2015, the Wintonbury Land Trust hosted their “Giant Tag Sale” at 22 Duncaster Road. Proceeds from this event will go towards renovating an old barn on site.
- On September 26, 2015 at 11:00 a.m., the Blue Hills Fire Department sponsored a Lobster Fest at sponsored by J's Crabshack in Hartford.

- On September 21, 2015 at 4:00 p.m., there was be groundbreaking ceremony at Filley Park to begin construction of the new streetscape.
- On October 3, 2015, Mayor Schulman attended the Cricket Hall of Fame induction ceremonies.
- On October 4, 2015, Sacred Heart Church held their Annual Festival.
- On October 7, 2015 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C. (TGP) had a Community Presentation in West Hartford, CT at West Hartford Town Hall, 50 South Main Street.
- On October 14, 2015 at the Oakdale Theatre in Wallingford, CT, the Town of Bloomfield will be honored by Eversource.
- Also on October 14, 2015, Bloomfield High School 21 students were inducted into the National Honor Society.
- On October 15, 2015, a Solar Array ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at Pepperidge Farm.
- On October 17, 2015, Auer Farm held their Annual Fall Festival.
- On October 25, 2015 – November 1, 2015, Rehoboth Church of God will celebrate their 50th Anniversary with a schedule of events for each night.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Philip K. Schenck, Town Manager agreed to pass on his official report due to time constraints.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor Hypolite and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 15, 2015.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor DeLorenzo reminded residents to donate to the Bloomfield Food Bank.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:45 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session A. – Discussion Concerning Pending Tax Appeals with the Town Council, Town Manager, Assistant to the Town Manager and Town Attorney.

At 9:59 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor DeLorenzo and voted unanimously to exit Executive Session A.

At 10:00 p.m., it was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Rivers and voted unanimously to enter into regular session to approve and authorize the Town Attorney to enter into settlements in the tax appeals filed by:

- **Walden Avenue Development**
- **AMCAP (Copaco Center)**
- **Interfaith Homes (Mountain Avenue/Bestor Lane)**

At 10:01 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to exit regular session and return to Executive Session B. – Discussion Concerning Pending Claims and Litigation.

At 10:11 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to exit Executive Session B.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:12 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Gamble, seconded by Councilor DeLorenzo and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.