

Town of Plymouth
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Plymouth Town Council
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Minutes

December 3, 2013

Call to Order: Mayor David V. Merchant called the scheduled December 3, 2013, Plymouth Town Council Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room, Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Town Councilman William Heering, Town Councilwoman Susan Murawski, Town Councilman John Pajeski, Town Councilman Gary Wyszynski, and Town Councilman Tom Zagurski. Also in attendance were Director of Finance David Bertnagel, and Plymouth Police Chief Karen Krasicky.

Fire Exits Notification

Mayor Merchant noted the Fire Exits for the record.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Merchant led the Plymouth Town Council and the Public Audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Rules and Procedures

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Wyszynski, to amend the December 3, 2013, Plymouth Town Council Agenda as follows: Under Agenda Item "Property Tax Refunds", add Carol or Gregory Yarrison \$289.16 and Barbara A. Coderre \$88.46. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Wyszynski, to add "Acceptance of Minutes", (November 18, 2013, Special Meeting Minutes) after Agenda Item "Council Rules and Procedures". This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Wyszynski, to add "Appointments and Resignations", to appoint Joseph Carey as an Alternate Member to the Public Works Advisory Commission, after Agenda Item "Acceptance of Minutes". This motion was approved unanimously.

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Council Rules and Procedures Cont'd.

Mayor Merchant stated that the Council would be following the Council Rules and Procedures that were currently in place. He further stated that when the Council came to each Agenda item Public Comment would be made on that particular Agenda item, noting that once the Public was done with their comments the item would then go to the Council Members for Council discussion.

Acceptance of Minutes (Special Meeting, November 18, 2013)

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Heering, to accept the November 18, 2013, Special Town Council Minutes, as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and Take Action, as may be Necessary, on Appointments/Resignations: To appoint Joseph Carey as an Alternate Member to the Public Works Advisory Commission.

Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Heering, to appoint Joseph Carey as an Alternate Member to the Public Works Advisory Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, Terryville, stated that the Charter allowed Public Comment throughout the Agenda, not just at the beginning of an Agenda item. Melanie Church stated that a manhole cover on Eagle Street had been paved over and could be a problem if there was a broken sewer. Melanie Church stated that Wolcott Sand and Gravel cost the Town money. Melanie Church stated that the W.I. Clark Construction Company had given a bid on a piece of equipment stating it was the list price, that the Town was not getting the bottom line and anything over \$10,000.00, according to the Charter, should go out to bid and it shouldn't be accepted as a Capital. Melanie Church stated that some people got overpaid, extra vacation, extra sick time and extra personal days and that was stealing from the Town/taxpayers and there should be a forensic audit and that Public Works had the most abuse. Melanie Church stated that it was a major concern that local businesses weren't used for projects from the Bonding Package. Melanie Church stated that the Council should read the Public Works Director job description, noting that she thought we had too many bosses now.

Referencing the Town Council Rules and Procedures/Privilege of the Floor section, Mayor Merchant stated that if the Council decided to suspend rules they could grant the Public another opportunity to speak after the Council had addressed an Agenda item.

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Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items Cont'd.

Diane Reed, 5 Chidsey Terrace, Terryville, CT, stated that she had previously forwarded a petition to the Council that concerned 4 Chidsey Terrace regarding the owner's delinquent taxes and foreclosure on the property and questioned what the Mayor's plan was on this property.

Mrs. Reed stated that her petition also addressed Ted Scheidel's employment with the Town of Plymouth, and questioned Mayor Merchant if Ted Scheidel would continue his employment with the Town.

Mayor Merchant stated that Mrs. Reed could stop in his office tomorrow to discuss these issues further with him.

Pattie DeHuff, 20 Lynn Avenue, Terryville, congratulated the Mayor and the Town Council Members on their election. Citing Chapter 3, Section 3, Procedure of the Council, Pattie DeHuff stated that the Public has input throughout the Council Meeting. She further stated that if the Public had copies of all the material that the Council Members had prior to the meeting, the Public would not feel their voice was limited. Pattie DeHuff stated that if the Council would not suspend the rules and allow the Public to speak one additional time it would be going against the Charter. Pattie DeHuff stated that when a vote was taken the Mayor needed to ask for any opposition or abstaining votes, not just favorable votes.

Ernest Pickhardt, 3 Burger Road, Terryville, CT, stated that any manhole cover or sewer issue should be reported to the Water Pollution Control Authority as soon as possible. Ernest Pickhardt stated that in the past, the Council would discuss an Agenda item and then the Public would provide their input and that it was a reasonable approach. He further noted that currently, the Public has three opportunities to speak on every Agenda item.

Mayor Merchant stated that he understood what the Charter said and that the Council had been elected to be the Public's voice, noting that the Public should provide their questions to the Council, as well. He further stated that he did not feel any violation was taking place.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Merchant stated that he attended a Flag Pole re-dedication Ceremony at Quail Hollow in honor of Sergeant Major Phillip Albert, noting that it was one of the most moving things he had ever done. He further stated that Sergeant Major Phillip Albert was a true American hero and that everyone could be proud of this Town Veteran.

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Mayor's Report Cont'd.

Mayor Merchant encouraged everyone to stop by Quail Hollow to see the Flag Pole and read the inscribed plaque in honor of Sergeant Major Phillip Albert.

Mayor Merchant stated that Town's fourth and fifth graders had a poster contest and that he had the opportunity to be a judge for the pictures. He further stated that the Town had a lot of talented youth to be proud of.

Mayor Merchant read a letter from a Town resident complimenting the roadwork done by the Public Works Department crew, noting that the Public Works Department did a lot of good work. Mayor Merchant stated that he had spent a lot of his time in the Public Works Department, as well in the Tax Department, noting that it had a been a busy and challenging time, but that it was good.

Discuss and Take Action to Refund the Following Property Taxes: Jeremiah and Sarah Regimbald \$2,428.50, Carol or Gregory Yarrison \$289.16; Barbara A. Coderre \$88.46

Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to refund Jeremiah and Sarah Regimbald \$2,428.50 in Property Taxes. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to refund the following Carol or Gregory Yarrison \$289.16 in Property Taxes. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to refund Barbara A. Coderre \$88.46 in Property Taxes. This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and Take Action, as may be Necessary, on the Western Area Regional Chiefs of Police Mutual Aid Agreement

Mayor Merchant stated that this item was a document that Police Chiefs sign with their Associations, which would help the Town with an emergency, such as Sandy Hook, where a lot of help was needed. Mayor Merchant stated that the Police Chief could telephone Thomaston, or another Mutual Aid Town and that would enable those officers to assist in Town, noting that it was not binding and that the Town would not have to send or receive help. He further stated that the Chief was looking for Council approval in order to sign the document on behalf of the Town.

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Discuss and Take Action, as may be Necessary, on the Western Area Regional Chiefs of Police Mutual Aid Agreement Cont'd.

Reading the Resolution for the Western Area Regional Chiefs of Police Mutual Aid Agreement, Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to authorize the Mayor and the Chief of Police to sign the document.

Discussion:

When questioned by Pattie DeHuff, Chief Krasicky stated that unless it was a major incident she would not be dispatched to assist in another town and that the responding Town Police Officers would be under the Chief Executive Officer's command where the incident occurred and vice versa.

When questioned by Pattie DeHuff, Chief Krasicky stated that in order to get the Town's Police Officers back to Town all she had to do was call the town they were in and tell them she needed her officers back.

Robert Wilcox, South Main Street, Terryville, questioned the necessity of this agreement, noting that the State Police would assume control of an incident like Sandy Hook.

Chief Krasicky stated that the State Police would not necessarily take control of an incident unless they were asked to and that there were 13 towns involved and that this would benefit a small Town like ours. She further stated that neighboring towns would have a faster response time than the State Police.

When questioned by Mayor Merchant, Chief Krasicky stated that the Town had always received mutual aid, but not with an Agreement, which would provide for liability.

When questioned by Town Councilman Zagurski, Chief Krasicky stated that the following towns were involved: Middlebury, Waterbury, Torrington, Southington, Naugatuck, Thomaston, Cheshire, Ansonia, Wolcott, Winsted, Watertown, New Milford, and Plymouth.

When questioned by Town Councilman Wyszynski, Chief Krasicky stated that she would appoint a person from one of the three Police shifts to report names and who would be assigned to the response efforts. She further stated that the responding Municipality would be responsible for paying salaries and overtime costs for on-duty Police Officers and accept the responsibility of any workmen's compensation claims as they would if they came to our Town. Chief Krasicky stated that this Agreement had been drawn up by the 13 towns involved.

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Discuss and Take Action, as may be Necessary, on the Western Area Regional Chiefs of Police Mutual Aid Agreement Cont'd.

When questioned by Town Councilman Zagurski, Chief Krasicky stated that Bristol was not part of the 13 towns/region.

Town Councilman Zagurski made an amendment to his motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to authorize the Mayor and the Chief of Police to sign the Agreement.

Discussion:

Chris Simo-Kinzer, 52 Old Farms Road, Terryville, questioned what the qualifiers were that would encompass this coordinated effort happening and what would qualify the outside Towns, especially Ansonia instead of Bristol.

Chief Krasicky stated that the Western Area Regional Chiefs of Police was made up of these 13 towns, but did not mean the Town couldn't get help from Bristol for our 25 Police Officers and noted that it would also apply for major fires and natural disasters, etc., not necessarily a Sandy Hook incident. She further stated that depending on the nature of the incident, the decision for assistance would be made by her, the Mayor, the Fire Chief, Emergency Management Director or a combination of some/all of them.

When questioned by Town Councilwoman Murawski, Chief Krasicky stated that the Town could belong to whatever group it wanted to, but this was the region that the Town belonged to.

Vote for the Amendment:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Vote for the Motion as Amended:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and Take Action re. the Contract of Paul Pronovost, Executive Session

Melanie Church stated that a promise had been made that Paul Pronovost's position would not be permanent. She further stated that according to the Charter this position was supposed to be advertised and never was. Melanie Church questioned why this person was needed, noting the employees that were already in place.

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**Discuss and Take Action re. the Contract of Paul Pronovost, Executive Session
Cont'd.**

Melanie Church noted that Town Councilman Zagurski had previously stated that when the money was gone the person would also be gone.

Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Heering, to move into Executive Session at 7:52 p.m., to discuss and take action regarding the Contract of Paul Pronovost. This motion was approved unanimously.

Present for the Executive Session were Director of Finance David Bertnagel, Town Councilman Heering, Mayor David Merchant, Town Councilwoman Murawski, Town Councilman Pajeski, Town Councilman Wyszynski, Town Councilman Zagurski.

Mayor Merchant called the Plymouth Town Council Meeting back into Regular Session at 8:25 p.m.

Take Action, as may be Necessary, From Executive Session

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to renew the Town's Contract with Paul Pronovost until June 30, 2014, the end of the Fiscal Year, with a monetary limit of \$28,000.00. This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and Take Action Authorizing the Mayor to Sign the Emergency Management Performance Grants

David Bertnagel, Director of Finance, stated that this Emergency Management Resolution was an annual Grant which the Town has received since the 1960's and that it used to be the Civil Preparedness Grant. He further stated that the Town gets 50 percent, which is built into the budget as a Revenue Line Item, back and that it covered the Emergency Management Director's salary and any expenses, which occurred in the Emergency Management Budget. David Bertnagel stated that he was asking for the approval and authorization for the Mayor to sign the document for the past four years, noting that they go by a different calendar, and that it was the same Resolution for all the years.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to approve the Resolution as presented and to authorize the Mayor to sign the document on behalf of the Town of Plymouth for the years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. This motion was approved unanimously.

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Discuss and Take Action, as may be Necessary, on the Historic Documents Preservation Program, Town Clerk's Office, Certified Resolution

Mayor Merchant stated that this Grant is applied for annually and that the Plymouth Town Council had approved the former Mayor to sign for the Grant, however since that time the Town Clerk had applied for the Grant and a signature change was required from the Mayor to the Town Clerk.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to approve the Resolution and to authorize Barbara Rockwell, Plymouth Town Clerk, to make application for the State Library Grant for the Preservation Program Grant. This motion was approved unanimously.

Finance Report-David Bertnagel, Director of Finance

David Bertnagel stated that currently there was an expenditure savings of about two to three percent with the budget, noting that was a good sign. He further stated that there were higher than expected revenue collections from various other sources, that the Town was doing very well in the current fiscal year and would have a surplus. David Bertnagel stated that the Water Pollution Control Authority was doing very well and that their collections were above average. David Bertnagel stated that the tax collection rates were approximately half of a percent above last year's collections and hopefully that would continue going forward. David Bertnagel stated that there were funds allocated to support several snow events and that currently the Town was in good shape. David Bertnagel stated that he would provide a report next month on all the line items and expenditures.

When questioned by Town Councilman Zagurski, David Bertnagel stated that he would send him a copy of the Bonding Report, prior to the next Council Meeting.

Town Council Liaison Reports

Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that he nothing to report on for the Historic Property Commission.

Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that Public Works Director Anthony Lorenzetti had met with Staff for several meetings as follows: Code Enforcement, Seymour Road Project, Bemis Street Design Review, Pequabuck River RFP with Bristol and Plainville, Emergency Preparedness, and Safe Routes to School Design. Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that some permits were issued and metal reimbursements totaled \$2,187.40.

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Town Council Liaison Reports Cont'd.

Town Councilman Wyszynski reported that the Highway Superintendent, Jim Schultz, had noted that they were continuing to go through the process of reclaiming at Wolcott Sand and Gravel, they had been hauling sand and salt to the Highway Garage for residential use, they had been prepping equipment for future storms, there had been some traffic control for Subcontractors and that they had been hauling excess material from the Highway Garage to Wolcott Sand and Gravel for processing.

Town Councilwoman Murawski stated that she had nothing to report at this time.

Town Councilman Zagurski stated that the Library Board had held their Election of Officers and that Mary Wollenberg was the new Chairman, Cathy Paskus was the Vice Chairman, Sandy Klimkoski was elected Secretary and Bonnie Leroux was elected as Treasurer. He further stated that the Library Board had been working on having the retaining wall repaired by the front parking lot and that progress was good. Town Councilman Zagurski stated that people had been parking overnight in the upper parking lot, which was against a Town Ordinance and that the Library Director, Lynn White, had been in contact with the Police Department. Town Councilman Zagurski stated that Santa Day would be held at the Library on December 7th and that library usage stats were up by approximately two percent. Town Councilman Zagurski stated that Electricians had come in and changed all of the light bulbs as a result of the Energy Efficient Grant and it was noted that the lighting was brighter now and they were pleased with it.

Town Councilman Zagurski stated that Zoning Board of Appeals had met and had one application.

Town Councilman Pajeski stated that he had nothing to report at this time.

Town Councilman Heering stated that he had attended an Inland/Wetlands Meeting, noting that there was a project currently going on at 95 Curtiss Road, noting that the first time the resident approached inland/Wetlands was November 6th and that everything had been approved by November 20th. He further stated that they did a great job and that the property owners also had all their ducks in a row and he was pleased to see this all went smoothly. Town Councilman Heering stated that approval had been given to harvest 11 acres of timber at 150 Scott Road. Town Councilman Heering stated that Chairman Deutsch done a great job at the Commission Meeting and that he made the Public feel comfortable, noting that he wanted to commend him on the job he does.

Town Councilman Heering stated that he had attended the November 13th Board of Education Meeting, prior to becoming a Councilman.

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Town Council Liaison Reports Cont'd.

Town Councilman Heering noted that it was an interesting meeting whereby housekeeping was done with the new members in attendance. Town Councilman Heering stated that Ray Engle was elected Chairman and Karen Kulesa was elected Vice Chairman.

Town Councilman Heering stated that a discussion had taken place regarding a trip to Harvard for Administrators and that there had been a lot of Public comment regarding Common Core and people's opposition to it.

Council Comments

Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that he had received an anonymous letter about Public Works with questions and that he wanted to address them. He stated that one of the questions had been why weren't bids being put out for electrical work at some of the Town facilities and his understanding was that they had all come in under the \$10,000 threshold and did not require a bid.

Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that there was a question asking why the Town was getting foreign cars instead cars from Terryville Chevrolet, noting that these were the new cars that would be replacing the Crown Vic. He further stated that he didn't know the answer to this question.

Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that if anyone had a Public Works question or concern they could put it through the Civic Plus System, which was located on the Town's Website. He further stated that the Department gets the question/concern immediately and that it was constantly updated. Town Councilman Wyszynski stated that it was a great system that should be utilized more.

Town Councilman Heering stated that he had received a copy of the list of questions from Town Councilman Wyszynski and that during his 3.5 hour tour of the Public Works facilities he had asked a lot of questions from the list and had answers for anyone that wanted to speak to him after this evenings meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Plymouth Town, Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted, Recording Secretary