

Town of Plymouth
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Plymouth Town Council
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Minutes

December 6, 2016

Call to Order: Mayor David V. Merchant called the scheduled December 6, 2016, Plymouth Town Council Special Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room, Plymouth Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Town Councilman Daniel Gentile, Town Councilwoman Ana LeGassey, Mayor David Merchant, Town Councilwoman Sue Murawski, Town Councilman John Pajeski and Town Councilman Tom Zagurski. Also in attendance were Town Attorney William Hamzy, Tax Collector Joe Kilduff, Housing Authority of Plymouth Chairman Vinnie Klimas, Director of Finance Ann Marie Rheault and Director of Public Work Charles Wiegert.

Adoption of the Agenda

Mayor Merchant stated he would like to change Agenda Item #17 from “discuss and take action on the proposed Amendments to the Veteran’s Tax Exemption Ordinance” to “To discuss and take action to set a Public Hearing date for the proposed amendments to the Veteran’s Tax Exemption Ordinance”.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman LeGassey, to change Agenda Item #17 as follows: “To discuss and take action to set a Public Hearing date for the proposed amendments to the Veteran’s Tax Exemption Ordinance” on the December 6, 2016 Plymouth Town Council Agenda. This motion was approved unanimously.

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.

Invocation

Mayor Merchant stated, “May God Bless America and the Town of Plymouth” for the record.

Acceptance of Minutes

Plymouth Town Council September 6, 2016 Regular Minutes; Plymouth Town Council October 8, 2016 Special Minutes; Public Works Ordinance October 5, 2016 Public Hearing Minutes; Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Ordinance October 5, 2016 Public Hearing Minutes; Communications Commission Ordinance October 5, 2016 Public Hearing Minutes; Plymouth Town Council November 2, 2016 Special Minutes

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman LeGassey, to accept the Plymouth Town Council September 6, 2016 Regular minutes with the following change: Town Councilman Pajeski's first name should be changed from "Jim" to "John". This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Council Murawski, to accept the Plymouth Town Council October 8, 2016 Special Minutes as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to accept the Public Works Ordinance October 5, 2016 Public Hearing Minutes as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to accept the Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Ordinance October 5, 2016 Public Hearing minutes as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to accept the Communications Commission Ordinance October 5, 2016 Public Hearing Minutes as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to accept the Plymouth Town Council November 2, 2016 Special Minutes as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and take action on Plymouth Town Council 2017 Calendar Meeting Dates

After a brief discussion, it was noted that the Plymouth Town Council would meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room except for the month of July when the meeting would be held on the second Tuesday (July 14th) because of the July 4th holiday and the November Plymouth Town Council meeting would be held on Monday, November 13th.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to schedule the 2017 Plymouth Town Council Meetings for the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the Plymouth Community Room with the exception of the July 11th and November 13th Plymouth Town Council meeting dates. This motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, Terryville, stated the Mayor calls the first meeting after the election by Charter. Melanie Church stated she would like to see a 10 percent cut within each Department and briefly elaborated. Melanie Church stated adding sidewalks on North Main Street had been a past issue and briefly elaborated. Melanie Church questioned where the Architectural designs for Main Street School and the non-returning employee payout came from and briefly elaborated.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Joe Kilduff, 31 Prospect Street, Terryville, stated he was speaking on behalf of the Republican Town Committee and wanted to publically thank Dan Murray for his three terms of service on the Board of Finance. He further stated he would be missed. Joe Kilduff stated the Republican Town Committee was hopeful it would have a replacement for Dan Murray at next month's meeting.

Mayor Merchant stated he wanted to echo Joe Kilduff's remarks, noting Dan Murray had done the Town a great service over his years on the board.

Melanie Church requested the Financial Director's Report be done publically in case there were questions.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Merchant reported the Waterbury Republican newspaper editorial article covering the Bertnagel scandal was favorable; and gave a brief update on the Route 6 Streetscape; the Public Works preparation winter work timelines for upcoming Town projects; the 2015 Audit priority over any new projects; grant applications that have been submitted for Brownsfield money/Sidewalk projects; the condition of the white house at 150 Main Street; new companies interested in the Business Park; the budget process being underway; the assessment of Emergency Services Town-wide and the purchase of Town streetlights. Mayor Merchant stated he wanted to thank the Public Works crew for all of their work on upper Bemis Street/Sherman Lane; noting they rose to the occasion and did a wonderful job.

Finance Director's Report

Mayor Merchant stated the Council members had received last month's Finance Report (October) in their packets and that the Finance Director would repeat this process as soon as the November month was closed out.

Town Councilman Gentile stated the Board of Finance and the Director of Finance were responsible for the budget and monetary expenses, noting if parts of it were to go over or be over extended; it was their responsibility to freeze, stop or try to prevent it from going over and briefly elaborated.

Discuss and take action, as may be necessary, to refund overpayment of Property Taxes to the following: Nissan Infiniti LT \$70.29; Tracy Gallo \$154.53; Hyundai Lease Titling \$106.99; Lionel Bouchard \$164.83; Nicole Zalaski \$513.21; Honda Lease Trust \$64.44; Robert or Kathleen JohnPierre \$108.06

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to refund overpayment of Property Taxes to the following: Nissan Infiniti LT \$70.29; Tracy Gallo \$154.53; Hyundai Lease Titling \$106.99; Lionel Bouchard \$164.83; Nicole Zalaski \$513.21; Honda Lease Trust \$64.44; and Robert or Kathleen JohnPierre \$108.06. This motion was approved unanimously.

Appointments/Resignations: To reappoint Heidi Caron as a Regular Member to the Human Services Commission with a term ending October 1, 2019; to reappoint Karen Saccu to the Human Services Commission with a term ending date of October 1, 2019; to accept the resignation of Daniel J. Murray III, from the Board of Finance

Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Pajeski, to reappoint Heidi Caron as a Regular Member to the Human Services Commission with a term ending October 1, 2019. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Gentile, to reappoint Karen Saccu to the Human Services Commission with a term ending date of October 1, 2019. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman LeGassey, to accept the resignation of Daniel J. Murray III, from the Board of Finance with regret.

Discussion:

Town Councilman Gentile stated this could be a difficult board to serve on at times and the Town was regrettably losing a strong member with Dan's resignation.

Mayor Merchant stated Dan Murray had served for 15 years, which was a big commitment; noting it was hard to get young people today to serve that long a term. He further stated Dan would be missed.

Vote:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and take action on a Resolution creating a Charter Revision Commission

Mayor Merchant stated once the previous Charter Revision Commission's final report was issued the Commission was dissolved and now the Council needed to approve a new Resolution to create another Charter Revision Commission.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to approve the following Resolution: Be it resolved, that a Charter Revision Commission be established to review the current Town Charter and submit their draft report to the Town Clerk no later than July 31, 2017. The Committee shall consist of seven members. The Commission may consider the items, which will be recommended by the Town Council and may also consider other changes as they see fit. The Connecticut General Statutes regarding Charter Revision shall apply.

Discussion:

Mayor Merchant stated on six members were applying this evening and using the names that were submitted hopefully the seventh name would be submitted at next month's Council meeting.

Town Councilman Gentile, citing November's election, and questioned if the Charter Revision Commission had finished two or three charges completed what would have to be done to get them on the ballot and briefly elaborated.

Town Attorney Hamzy stated by State Statute once the Commission issued a final report their job was complete and the Commission is dissolved. He further stated the deadline was based on the one adopted last year so there would be enough time to get the questions on the ballot for next year and briefly elaborated.

Vote:

This motion was approved unanimously.

To appoint the following to the Charter Revision Commission: Peter Giancesini, Sr., Mark Malley, Cathleen Paskus, Barbara Rockwell, David Sekorski, Elizabeth Wollenberg

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to appoint Peter Giancesini, Sr., to the Charter Revision Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Zagurski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman LeGassey, to appoint Mark Malley to the Charter Revision Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Councilwoman LeGassey made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to appoint Cathleen Paskus to the Charter Revision Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to appoint Barbara Rockwell to the Charter Revision Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilwoman LeGassey made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman Murawski, to appoint David Sekorski to the Charter Revision Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to appoint Elizabeth Wollenberg to the Charter Revision Commission. This motion was approved unanimously.

Old Business

Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated that at the October 5, 2016 Town Council meeting she had requested the duties/job descriptions of all Town Hall employees, noting department heads could also provide breakdown information and briefly elaborated.

Mayor Merchant requested Town Councilwoman LeGassey send him an email with the requested information.

Town Councilman Gentile questioned if the Building Inspector could condemn the property at 150 Main Street, noting he asked for a price for condemnation three months ago, and briefly elaborated. He further stated he would like the Mayor to have Clarence Atkinson, Building Inspector, follow through on condemning the building as is, noting just from looking at the pictures he felt it could be done.

Mayor Merchant stated until the basement is cleared of asphalt shingles by Public Works, there was no way of knowing how bad the condition was; a lengthy discussion followed.

Town Councilman Zagurski questioned Town Councilman Gentile as to what the price difference was between condemning the building and the price that was obtained previously.

Charles Wiegert stated he obtained a price to tear down the house and it was within three percent of the \$65,000 and briefly elaborated. He further stated he would check to see if the bid was still valid.

Town Councilman Gentile stated he never saw the price to tear it down as is; a brief conversation followed. He further stated he wanted to see the two bids/quotes; a brief discussion followed.

Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated when you tear a house down for \$30,000 and then the next one for \$65,000, it warrants more detailed information, noting Council hadn't received the information the first time it was presented.

Town Councilman Gentile stated he had attended the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Convention and had brought back streetlight and lighting information for Charles Wiegert to look over, noting it was a very informative conference.

Town Councilman Gentile stated all towns were looking at hard times and he questioned starting an Ad Hoc Committee to start working with other towns for shared services, i.e., communications, insurance, etc., and briefly elaborated.

Mayor Merchant stated he would speak to First Selectman Mone in Thomaston and see if there were some services that might be shared, including communications and briefly elaborated. Mayor Merchant stated he would also speak to the Board of Education Business Manager again.

Town Councilman Gentile stated he would like to have this discussion again next month.

Discuss and take action to set a Public Hearing date for the proposed amendments to the Veteran's Tax Exemption Ordinance

Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman LeGassey, to hold a Public Hearing on the proposed amendments to the Veteran's Tax Exemption Ordinance on January 3, 2017, at 6:30 p.m., prior to the Regular Town Council meeting. This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and take action on the Homeland Security Grant Resolution

Mayor Merchant stated this was the annual grant for equipment, which the Town is the custodian for and briefly elaborated.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to approve the following Resolution: Resolved that the Town of Plymouth Connecticut may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and further resolved, that David V. Merchant, as Mayor of the Town of Plymouth, Connecticut is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Plymouth, Connecticut and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Discussion:

Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated the Resolution should state that the Office of the Mayor has been held since November 8, 2015, not November 2014 as shown; a brief discussion followed.

Town Councilman Zagurski questioned how much money the Town had received last year from this grant and what it was spent on.

Mayor Merchant stated no monies were obtained and he believed it was only equipment that was received and briefly elaborated.

Charles Wiegert cited a brief list of equipment received in the past from this grant, noting the Town did not own any of it, but was the custodian and briefly elaborated.

Mayor Merchant stated he would get an answer on the money question for Town Councilman Zagurski and again stated he did not believe there were any monies received.

Town Councilman Zagurski stated he really just wanted a listing of the equipment received.

Vote:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Discuss and take action on the 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement of Collaboration and Cooperation between the Town of Plymouth and the Housing Authority of the Town of Plymouth

Vinnie Klimas, Chairman Housing Authority of Plymouth, stated Attorney Hamzy had made the typographical error corrections on this document and thanked him for his assistance.

Vinnie Klimas stated his Board was seeking approval from the Town Council for the updated agreements as required by State and Federal regulations. He further stated this was a document of communications, as well as a document of cooperation and collaboration. Vinnie Klimas stated this document was from 1965 and 1973, which was still in effect and highlighted the details with the report at length.

Attorney Hamzy thanked Vinnie Klimas and members of the Board for all of their efforts and time, noting he appreciated the fact they had improved the entire situation at Gosinski Park.

Town Councilwoman LeGassey recommended changing the wording for 3b to “sewer usage charge.”

Tax Collector Joe Kilduff stated the Town only uses the word “fee”, not the word “tax”.

When questioned by Town Councilman Zagurski, Vinnie Klimas stated a formula is used for the Housing taxes, noting the Housing Authority had never taken advantage of the available abatement clause. He further stated the Housing Authority would always pay a minimum of \$5,000 and briefly elaborated about massive renovation projects they were looking at. Vinnie Klimas stated the overall document shows cooperation, as well as collaboration, which will be brought to the State Housing Department. Vinnie Klimas thanked the Mayor and Town Councilman Liaison John Pajeski, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Police Department, the Public Works Department the Town Council, the Mayor’s Administrative Assistant for their assistance, noting the Housing Authority had come a long way with everyone’s cooperation.

Town Hamzy stated the Housing Authority could ask for the abatement which would free up funds to do other things that would benefit the park such as lower rents, make improvements, and they wouldn't ask for an abatement for the sake of asking; a brief discussion followed.

Vinnie Klimas stated some Housing Authorities pay zero taxes in their towns.

Vinnie Klimas stated the Housing Authority of Plymouth had completely revised their bylaws; they now have a resident/Human Relation Committee, a Finance Committee which reviews finances statements with a microscope, a physical planning committee, and structured effective organized housing authority. Vinnie Klimas stated the better the communications they have the more production, the more wholesome, the more collaborative the relationship will be. He further stated he plans on recommending this document be reviewed every two years and the Housing Authority will bring it forward at that time.

When questioned by Town Councilman Zagurski, Vinnie Klimas stated this document has been and would continue to be kept in the Town Clerk's Office and briefly elaborated. Vinnie Klimas stated he would encourage the Town Council to vote yes.

Town Councilman Gentile stated he went up to Gosinski Park and noted it had turned around 180 degrees. He further thanked Vinnie Klimas and the Board for their work, their time, and noted it was amazing how much had been accomplished.

Mayor Merchant stated he wanted to give the Town's gratitude to Vinnie Klimas and his Board for all of their time and work. He further stated the Housing Authority was a couple of years of being bankrupt (losing \$30,000 per year) and when Vinnie arrived in 2013 and now the residents were happier, the units were 100 percent filled with some renovated units and the Housing Authority was now showing a balanced budget.

Vinnie Klimas thanked everyone for their kind words, as well as his Board members, noting they were a good team.

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Gentile, to approve the 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement of Collaboration and Cooperation between the Town of Plymouth and the Housing Authority of the Town of Plymouth, as presented this evening by Attorney Hamzy.

Discussion:

Town Councilman Zagurski stated this document was really a modification by Vinnie Klimas with Attorney Hamzy's amendments.

Vote:

This motion was approved unanimously.

Town Council Liaison Reports

Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated the Public Works Board had elected Rich Lyga as their Chairman and Joe Carey as their Vice Chairman. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated she understood the concern regarding the sidewalks on North Main Street and the taking of property; hers being one of the properties. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated there were two schools located on North Main Street and she was very concerned about the high speed traffic on the road. She further stated this item needed to be considered because of the potential danger that currently exists. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated OSHA had fined the WPCA for violations and Director of Public Works, Charles Wiegert, was able to get the amount lowered, noting she was all about saving money and very appreciative to Charlie. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated Public Works had finished their work on both ends of Bemis Street. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated Charles Wiegert had begun working on the bond contracts and would be making a spreadsheet so people could see the details. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated the WPCA was interested in piggybacking on the Capital Improvements Committee's bonding program; noting they felt they could save money by utilizing the same contractor for their large valve problem project. Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated the Town's Economic Development Consultant Vance Taylor was very excited about bringing new businesses into Town. She further noted Vance Taylor had stated he wanted to put signs on every property within the Business Park that was for sale, or at the entrance ways into the Park, noting she thought that was a great idea.

Town Councilwoman Murawski stated Marty Sandshaw, Chairman, Communications Commission, had established a subcommittee to investigate options to improve the radio communications throughout Town. Town Councilwoman Murawski stated the Police Department had held a Special meeting and had voted to approve the rifle and storage expenditure from the Extra Duty Fund. Town Councilwoman Murawski stated the Human Services Commission Chairman had found out she could apply for a 501c3 friends-type group on her own. Town Councilwoman Murawski stated Human Services was working on the holiday Small Wonders Program and it would be in full swing next week. Town Councilwoman Murawski stated the Fire Commission had noted they had 37 calls for the month of October.

Town Councilman Zagurski stated the Friends of the Library would be holding a book sale that included a Christmas Basket Raffle and Cookie Sale on December 17th. Town Councilman Zagurski stated work on the library elevator was supposed to start on December 5th. Town Councilman Zagurski stated the Library had been fined by OSHA in the amount of \$504.00 for violations, noting the fines had been paid.

Town Councilman Zagurski stated the library was ready for the fiber optic to be installed and were waiting for the money for the grant from the State of Connecticut.

Town Councilman John Pajeski stated the 1975 and 1979 mandates had come in from the State of Connecticut for the Housing Authority and that they had died in the Housing Authority Office, noting no one knew they existed until Vinnie Klimas straightened it out. He further stated he wanted to thank Vinnie Klimas for his assistance.

Town Councilman Gentile stated he was happy to see everyone working together in the best interest of the Town, noting it was amazing to see how far the Town has grown and noted it was moving in a positive forward direction. Town Councilman Gentile stated the Park and Recreation, the Rotary Club, the Lions Club, the Plymouth Chamber, and the Plymouth Beautification Committee had replaced the sign on Route 6 welcoming people to Town. Town Councilman Gentile stated that Parks and Recreation would putting up banners on the Route 6 Streetscape. Town Councilman Gentile stated Parks and Recreation Basketball and Cheerleading had begun. Town Councilman Gentile stated Chairman Scott Eisenlohr and the Code Enforcement Committee were doing a great job getting blighted properties addressed within the Town. He further stated the Committee appreciated the Town Council approving the new Ordinance, noting it gives them more teeth to get the job done. Town Councilman Gentile stated Chris Perkins would be replacing School to Career Coordinator Lisa Aiudi, who would be retiring later this year. Town Councilman Gentile stated Amy Radke, Terryville High School, would also be retiring this year. Town Councilman Gentile stated Tony Orsini was still recovering from his surgery and the Board of Education missed his input. Town Councilman Gentile stated he had a great time at the Conference of Municipalities, noting there were Mayors and Councils from multiple towns in attendance. He further stated it was a phenomenal learning experience and that all towns in Connecticut experience the same problems as Plymouth and need to work together with shared services, which would make all of us better stewards and briefly elaborated. Town Councilman Gentile stated Chris Perkins had done a phenomenal presentation at the high school, but only 20 people showed up, noting we have substance abuse problems in Town and he had sent out thousands of emails, to promote the presentation and if we want change in our Town that auditorium should have been filled. Town Councilman Gentile stated people needed to get involved if they wanted to see change. Town Councilman Gentile stated he wanted to thank Chris Perkins for his attempt to promote awareness. Town Councilman Gentile stated the Real Estate Committee was doing an excellent job to move Town properties, noting that Horseshoe Falls property would be coming before the Town Council for discussion. He further stated Horseshoe Falls was one of the Town's hidden historic treasures and hopefully, Parks and Recreation could work on it to make it another attraction in Town like they had done with the North Street Reservoir. Town Councilman Gentile wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Town Council Comment

Town Councilman Gentile stated he had no Council comments at this time.

Town Councilman Pajeski stated the Town of Oxford was very efficient in helping businesses and projects get started in their town and briefly elaborated.

Town Councilman Pajeski stated he wanted to apologize for his comment about the Police Department and the way they were handling the purchasing of equipment, noting the remark was off the collar and was also uncalled for.

Town Councilman Zagurski stated he had no Council comments at this time.

Town Councilwoman Murawski stated she had no Council comments at this time.

Town Councilwoman LeGassey stated the WPCA had missed Jim Deutsch at their last meeting, noting Peter had taken over for him. Town Councilwoman LeGassey wished everyone Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Executive Session to discuss Personnel

Town Councilwoman LeGassey made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Gentile, to move into Executive Session at 8:31 p.m., to discuss Personnel. This motion was approved unanimously.

Present for the Executive Session were Town Councilman Gentile, Town Councilwoman LeGassey, Mayor Merchant, Town Councilwoman Murawski, Town Councilman Pajeski and Town Councilman Zagurski.

Mayor Merchant called the Plymouth Town Council back into regular session at 8:55 p.m.

Discuss and take action, as may be necessary, from Executive Session

It was noted for the record there was no action to be taken from Executive Session.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Plymouth Town Council, Town Councilman Gentile made a motion, seconded by Town Councilwoman LeGassey, to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.