

MINUTES
Town Council
Town of East Greenwich
Special Meeting
November 20, 2017 at 7:00 PM
300 Avenger Drive, East Greenwich, RI East Greenwich High School Auditorium

(1) Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Town Council Present (5/5): S. Cienki, S. Todd, A. Deutsch, N. Granatiero, A. Deutsch

Town Staff Present: D. D'Agostino, L. Carney, L. Dykeman, S. Brown, C. Olsen, W. Schmidle, J. Duarte, M. Antunes, C. Bradley

Others: C. Malaga

President Cienki called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Councilor Schwager made some opening remarks supporting his request and subsequent motion to amend the agenda to include Public Comment. Councilor Deutsch seconded the motion. All Councilors voted in favor and the item was added to the end of the agenda.

(2) New Business (Discussion/Action)

- (a) Vote on appointment of Gayle A. Corrigan as Town Manager effective retroactively to June 19, 2017, in furtherance of all powers and duties as set forth in Art. XIII of the East Greenwich Town Charter.

Motion to approve the appointment of Gayle A. Corrigan as Town Manager effective retroactively to June 19, 2017, in furtherance of all powers and duties as set forth in Article XIII of the East Greenwich Town Charter. made by Sean Todd, seconded by Nino Granatiero.

Solicitor D'Agostino explained that following the Court's decision on November 8, 2017, the Town moved for a stay of enforcement to allow the Town Council to correct open meetings violations. The stay was granted and is in place; allowing the Town to conduct business as posted on the agenda.

Councilor Granatiero commented that the search for a new Town Manager will continue. The Town Manager is an at will employee which is understood by all parties. He felt that not reappointing Ms. Corrigan would require unwinding months of transactions and viewed it as reckless. He defended his position of taking the courts decision seriously.

VP Todd spoke in detail about several fiscal issues facing the Town. He credited Ms. Corrigan with identifying and addressing many of them.

President Cienki explained that Ms. Corrigan was brought in to identify an emerging school deficit and assist in creating a corrective action plan. At the urging of the School Committee, she also looked at the Town's finances and uncovered inaccurate financial impact statements that are unsustainable. With additional comments, she encourage Council to support Ms. Corrigan.

Councilor Schwager spoke at length about the strains placed upon the relationships of the Town and

the community. He addressed the courts decision and questioned the action of putting public comment after votes are taken. Additional comments were given supporting his reasons for not supporting Ms. Corrigan. He suggested appointing a Department Head as an Acting Town Manager and conducting a search for a permanent replacement with the assistance of the Personnel Board.

An emphatic discussion followed regarding an email blast sent by the Town Council President and if additional Council input or legal consultation was obtained prior to sending.

Councilor Deutsch spoke about the benefits he sees from hiring Ms. Corrigan.

A lengthy discussion ensued on several issues already addressed and and Council provided additional observations on how to proceed. It was reiterated by Solicitor D'Agostino that Ms. Corrigan is an at will employee.

Ayes: Cienki, Granatiero, Todd

Nays: Deutsch, Schwager

Motion Carried

- (b) Vote to reaffirm the Town Manager's Term Sheet effective retroactively to July 1, 2017.

Motion to reaffirm the Town Manager's Term Sheet effective retroactively to July 1, 2017. made by Sean Todd, seconded by Nino Granatiero.

Councilor Schwager requested that the invoice received from and paid to Providence Analytics for \$10,000 for Town Manager services from June 19, 2017 to July 1, 2017 be refunded based on the fact that Ms. Corrigan was appointed on June 19th.

Solicitor D'Agostino advised no action should be taken on that matter as it is not on the agenda and suggested adding it to a future agenda for consideration.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Todd

Nays: Schwager

Motion Carried

- (c) Vote by Council to reaffirm and confirm the following actions and recommendations of, by, and from the Town Manager to the Council:

June 26:

- (Vote) Approval of the corrective action plan ("One Town") that was incorporated into the FY2018 Town budget, including the departmental restructuring of existing finance director and elimination of said position; elimination of the position of human resource manager; and, elimination of the position of the executive assistant to the Town Manager. These actions

effective retroactively to June 26, 2017. Approval of the creation of shared finance director position as contemplated by the corrective action plan and the hiring of Linda Dykeman to said position, effective retroactively to July 1, 2017. Approval of the creation of chief of staff position as contemplated by the corrective action plan and the hiring of Michaela Antunes to said position, effective retroactively to July 6, 2017.

- (Vote) Approval of the award of Municipal Audit services contract to Baxter, Dansereau and Associates for three years, effective retroactively to June 26, 2017.

October 23:

- (Vote) Reaffirm award of contract to Tischler Bise, Inc. for \$40,000, for an impact fee study, effective retroactively to October 23, 2017.
- (Vote) Reaffirm the appointment of Anthony Davey as Tax Assessor, effective retroactively to October 23, 2017.
- (Vote) Reaffirm award of contract to Municipal Resources, Inc., professional services agreement for candidate search for interim and permanent fire chief recruitment, effective retroactively to October 23, 2017.

November 6:

- (Vote) Reaffirm award of DEM Recreation Grant Application for Fry Brook Outdoor Fitness Equipment effective retroactively to November 6, 2017.
- (Vote) Reaffirm extension of contract to Direct Energy Business to purchase electricity power for two additional years, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017.
- (Vote) Reaffirm extension of contract to Direct Energy Business to purchase natural gas for two additional years effective retroactively to November 6, 2017.
- (Vote) Reaffirm the hiring of Christopher Olsen to the position of Interim Fire Chief, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017.
- (Vote) Reaffirm decision to no longer participate as the “host community” for the Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) program for the multi-community consortium, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017; confirmation that “host community” status shall cease as of January 31, 2018.
- (Vote) Reaffirm approval to extend unpaid leave to Lt. Matola through February 28, 2018, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017.

Motion to approve the corrective action plan ("One Town") that was incorporated into the FY2018 Town budget, including the departmental restructuring of existing Finance Director and elimination of said position; elimination of the position of Human Resource Manager; and, elimination of the position of Executive Assistant to the Town Manager retroactively to June 26, 2017. Approval of the creation of shared Finance Director position as contemplated by the corrective action plan and the hiring of Linda Dykeman to said position, effective retroactively to July 1, 2017. Approval of creation of Chief of Staff position as contemplated by the corrective action plan and the hiring of Michaela Antunes to said position, effective retroactively to July 6, 2017. made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Councilor Schwager received clarification from Solicitor D'Agostino on why these items require reaffirmation. President Cienki added that the School Committee was involved in discussion about consolidation and the MOA for the One Town initiative.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Todd

Nays: Schwager

Motion Carried

Motion to approve the award of Municipal Audit services contract to Baxter, Dansereau and Associates for three years, effective retroactively to June 26, 2017 made by Andrew Deutsch, seconded by Sean Todd.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm award of contract to Tischler Bise, Inc. for \$40,000 for an impact fee study, effective retroactively to October 23, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm the appointment of Anthony Davey as Tax Assessor, effective retroactively to October 23, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm award of contract to Municipal Resources, Inc., professional services agreement for candidate search for interim and permanent fire chief recruitment, effective retroactively to October 23, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Todd

Nays: Schwager

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm award of DEM Recreation Grant Application for Fry Brook Outdoor Fitness Equipment effective retroactively to November 6, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm extension of contract to Direct Energy Business to purchase electricity

power for two additional years, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm extension of contract to Direct Energy Business to purchase natural gas for two additional years effective retroactively to November 6, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm hiring of Christopher Olsen to the position of Interim Fire Chief, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017 made by Andrew Deutsch, seconded by Nino Granatiero.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Todd

Nays: Schwager

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm decision to no longer participate as the "host community" for the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") program for the multi-community consortium, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017; confirming that "host community" status shall cease as of January 31, 2018 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to reaffirm approval to extend unpaid leave to Lt. Matola through February 28, 2018, effective retroactively to November 6, 2017 made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

This includes medical benefits.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

(a) Public Comment

Motion to amend the agenda to add Public Comment made by Mark Schwager, seconded by

Andrew Deutsch.

Jeffrey Gladstone, Highhawk Road, provided his interpretation of Judge McGuirl's decision.

Eric Kaldor, 525 Stone Ridge Drive, commented on the costs and transparency related to consolidation.

Neal McNamara, 18 Prospect Street, cautioned that a term sheet with an expiration date is a contract. He encouraged Council to stop digging and addressed defamatory comments.

Maura Keating, 125 Cresthill Drive, disputed the context of President Cienki's email message.

Tracie Truesdell, 163 Spring Street, stated that she tried to make Council and the Solicitor aware of OMA violations in August during public comment.

Dave Caldwell, 8 Aurora Road, questioned the credibility of the search process for Town Manager. He felt the OMA violations were willful and knowing.

Kim Kinzie, 143 Hemlock Drive, emporred Council to reach out to the community for support.

Anne Musella, 85 Brookside Drive, spoke to the OMA violations and Town Manager Corrigan's term sheet. She asked several questions about signatories on checks and purchase orders and inconsistent APRA responses.

Joy Weisbord, 90 Partridge Run, hoped that the Town Manager search is comprehensive enough to find the right person.

Heather Tibbitts, 29 Hickory Drive, addressed the placement of public comment and was disappointed with responses to her emails from some Council members.

Lisa Sussman, 235 Kenyon Avenue, requested Council hold a Town forum for open dialogue.

Michael Zarrella, 40 Brookside Drive, emphatically asked Council to reconsider the reappointment of the Town Manager claiming it will not end well.

William Perry, 5 Pardon Woods Lane, stated he offered to meet several times with Town administration and felt information being broadcast is unfair. He also suggested having a public forum. Solicitor D'Agostino answered affirmatively to his question about requesting meetings with the Council and Town Manager in the past.

William Higgins, 88 Greenwich Boulevard, questioned how Council could reaffirm the Town Manager's actions based on Judge McGuirl's decision.

Brian Franklin, 56 Cindy Ann Drive, was upset with Council's actions and asked for more transparency.

Matt Stark, 56 Somerset, commented that non-vetted information leads to a credibility problem.

Jerry Holmquist, 79 Wildwood Trail, showed his dismay with the negativity around Town. He stated that Bill Sequino offered to fill in as Town Manager.

Robert Vespia, Shippeetown Road, questioned statistics on growth in the community and how it

affects essential services.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Motion to adjourn at 8:55 pm made by Sean Todd, seconded by Andrew Deutsch.

Ayes: Cienki, Deutsch, Granatiero, Schwager, Todd

Motion Carried

Submitted By:

Leigh A. Carney, CMC
Town Clerk

Approved By Town Council:

(pending)

AUDIO FILE AVAILABLE IN TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE