

**TOWN OF WEST GREENWICH
TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 11, 2009**

A regular meeting of the West Greenwich Town Council was held on March 11, 2009. Present were Thaylen Waltonen, Robert Butler, Mark Tourgee, Susan Woloohojian and Kelly Stewart. Also present were Town Administrator Kevin Breene and Town Solicitor Michael Ursillo. Waltonen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Butler moved to approve the Consent Agenda as corrected. Tourgee seconded. VOTED: Waltonen – aye, Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

I. MINUTES

1. MINUTES OF MEETING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2009

II. REPORTS

1. TOWN CLERK RECEIPTS –FEBRUARY, 2009
2. PLANNING DEPT. MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY, 2009
3. BUILDING INSPECTORS OFFICE MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY, 2009
4. POLICE DEPT. MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY, 2009
5. TOWN TREASURER MONTHLY REPORT
6. HIGHWAY DEPT. MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY, 2009
7. TAX ASSESSOR’S OFFICE MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY, 2009
8. PAYROLL REPORT
PAY PERIODS FEBRUARY 12 – MARCH 5, 2009

III. CORRESPONDENCE

1. RHODE ISLAND HOUSING
FEBRUARY 19, 2009
RE: LOW AND MODERATE HOUSING ACT
2. DAN NOVAK, CHAIRMAN WEST GREENWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 17, 2009
RE: WGCC ANNUAL EARTH DAY CLEAN UP IN APRIL
3. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
RE: CREDIT RATINGS FOR CITIES AND TOWNS
4. RONALD P. LEPRE, CHIEF OF POLICE

FEBRUARY 5, 2009

RE: PAY STEP INCREASE – PATROLMAN STEPHEN S. MELIDOSSIAN

5. RI DEM
FEBRUARY 12, 2009
RE: EWG REGIONAL TRACK FACILITY – GRANT INCREASE
6. COPY OF PROPOSAL FROM
EWG SPORTS FOR KIDS
TO KEVIN M. FLYNN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM
RE: REQUEST FOR \$997,437 IN ECONOMIC STIMULUS MONEY TO FUND
PHASE II CONSTRUCTION OF A HIGH-QUALITY TRACK AND
FOOTBALL/SOCCER FIELD IN WEST GREENWICH
7. ZONING BOARD DECISION
FEBRUARY 25, 2009
RE: METROPCS MASSACHUSETTS, LLC
8. ZONING BOARD DECISION
FEBRUARY 26, 2009
RE: MICHAEL S. & KAREN M. GOWDEY
JAMES A. & ETHEL L. BERNARDINO
9. CAPTAIN/ A.C. RAYMOND M. CAPPELLI
MARCH 3, 2009
RE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE FOR THE TOWN
10. RI INTERLOCAL RISK MANAGEMENT TRUST
FEBRUARY 24, 2009
RE: TENANT USER LIABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAM (TULIP)
11. FIRE BOARD OF ENGINEERS – MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2009 MEETING
- 12: FIRE BOARD OF ENGINEERS – AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 23, 2009
13. GREGORY C. HITCHCOCK
CERTIFICATION AS ASSISTANT DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL

IV. ABATEMENT, ADDITIONS & REBATES

1. REQUEST OF TAX ASSESSOR – MARCH 3, 2009

January

ACCT #	NAME	AMOUNT	REASON
<u>MV Abatements 2008-2009</u>			
04-0007-10	Dantuono, David V	\$277.88	DMV Mistake
04-0007-15	Dantuono, Jill A	\$160.24	DMV Mistake
<u>MV Additions 2008-2009</u>			
04-0007-10	Dantuono, David V	\$247.64	DMV Mistake
04-0007-15	Dantuono, Jill A	\$132.80	DMV Mistake

V. CHECK SUMMARY REPORT

1. FEBRUARY, 2009

OLD BUSINESS

REQUEST FOR REVERSAL OF ZONE CHANGE and FOR AMENDMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP FOR PROPERTY OWNED BY JEANNETTE LEPRE, PLAT 1 LOT 13, 49 DIVISION ST. AND THOMAS LEPRE, PLAT 1 LOT 15, 53 DIVISION ST.

Tourgee moved to continue this hearing until April 8, 2009. Woloohojian seconded. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

PUBLIC HEARING AMENDMENTS TO ZONING ORDINANCE (continued from January 14, 2009)

Woloohojian moved to continue this hearing until April 8, 2009. Stewart seconded. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

NEW BUSINESS

RECONSIDERATION OF COUNCIL OFFICERS

Waltonen commented on his notification that this matter was added to the agenda.

Woloohojian moved that Robert Butler be Council President and Mark Tourgee be Council Vice President. Tourgee seconded.

Residents Claude Tyler, Michael Grafe, Mario Lewis, James Dunford, Jim Bell and Grace Ellis Rodriguez spoke on the matter.

VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – nay, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – nay.

REAPPOINTMENT OF TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Tourgee moved to reappoint Kevin Breene as Town Administrator for a 5 year term.

Woloohojian seconded. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – nay, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – nay.

RENEWAL PRIVATE DETECTIVE LICENSE – NICHOLAS PELLEGRINO

Tourgee moved to grant the renewal of the Private Detective License of Nicholas Pellegrino. Woloohojian seconded. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

RHODE ISLANDERS FOR FAIR ELECTIONS

Mr. Isaac Jabola-Carolus of the Brown University chapter of Democracy Matters addressed the Council seeking support of legislation which would create a voluntary system for full public financing of all statewide and legislative elections.

He provided the following overview of the proposed legislation:

I. How the Bill Works

1. Exploratory Period: The period of time beginning the day after the previous General Election when a candidate is allowed to collect private donations of "seed money."

Limits on Seed Money

- \$500 for a candidate running for representative
- \$1,000 for a candidate running for senator
- \$90,000 for a candidate running for the office of governor
- \$36,000 for a candidate running for general office other than governor

2. Qualifying Period: A 90-day period of time when a candidate must collect a certain amount* of \$5 contributions ("Qualifying Contributions") from constituents to prove that the candidate holds public interest. Once this money is collected, it is put into the Public Financing of Elections Fund to be allocated to participating candidates for each election cycle^.

Amount of requisite Qualifying Contributions

- 50 Qualifying Contributions for a candidate for representative
- 100 Qualifying Contributions for a candidate for senator
- 2,500 Qualifying Contributions for a candidate for governor
- 1,000 Qualifying Contributions for a candidate for general office other than governor

Amount of money given in the *Primary Election* cycle

- \$6,000 for a candidate running for the office of representative
- \$12,000 for a candidate running for the office of senator
- \$1,250,000 for a candidate running for the office of governor
- \$450,000 for a candidate running for general office other than governor

Amount of money given in the *General Election* cycle

- \$9,000 for a candidate running for the office of representative
- \$18,000 for a candidate running for the office of senator
- \$1,875,000 for a candidate running for the office of governor
- \$675,000 for a candidate running for general office other than governor

II. Proof of Success

- 10 of the 11 statewide offices are held by publicly financed candidates in Arizona
- Voter turnout increased 23% between 1998 and 2006 in Arizona. In 2004, turnout in Maine hit a record high of 73.75%, in a year that 77% of candidates were publicly financed.

- Voter turnout increased significantly in every county where minority communities are found, especially in African-American and Latino communities — including the counties that had experienced a decrease in voter turnout for the previous election cycle.
- In Arizona, the number of Latinos running for office has increased by 220%, with nearly 65% choosing to accept public funds.
- More and more women have successfully sought political office under the public financing system in Maine. Out of these women, fully 42% said they wouldn't have run for office if not for the system.

[Note: The following quotes refer to "Clean Elections." This is because that was the name of the campaigns for public financing systems in Maine and Arizona, the systems on which the Rhode Island legislation is based.]

III. From Their Lips

"I would recommend the Clean Elections program to anyone. Without Clean Elections I would not have had the financial means to run for office in my district."

--Arizona Representative Manuel Alvarez

"The number of phone calls that I've received with issues my constituents wanted to discuss has tripled since I was a Clean Elections-elected candidate. I guess they feel more comfortable contacting me since I contacted them in the first place and they know they helped my campaign by giving money."

--Arizona Representative Martha Garcia

"While it did take a lot of time and energy and attention to certain rules and regulations, collecting enough contributions from my district, district 25, [a low-income district] was not a problem. After becoming a Clean Elections candidate, however, I was able to focus on my campaign without worrying about having to raise enough funds."

--Arizona Representative Manuel Alvarez

"I represent a low-income district. Jobs in this area never reach beyond \$12-13 per hour. A median income is in the vicinity of \$8 an hour. I am a Clean Election recipient. I find it the only way I can finance my campaign... Finding 50 people to make a \$5.00 commitment to my campaign is the easiest part of the election process. In fact, folks call and ask why I haven't contacted them for a contribution. They understand that all they can contribute is \$5.00 and for them to do more would be breaking the law. My contributors come away happy and I have completed my obligation to the Clean Election fund.

Contrary to the belief that low-income districts could not support the Clean Election program, I find the program most welcome among my constituents. I am in the process of serving my third term in the Maine House of Representatives and have financed every campaign using the Clean Election program. I wouldn't do it any other way. I would lose too many low-income constituents who want to be a part of my reelection."

--Maine Senator Jim Annis

"At the time that I ran for office under Clean Elections, my district was considered to be 'low-income' with a predominately minority-based constituency, and I had an easy time collecting the \$5 donations. Yeah, you may have to knock on a few more doors than in wealthier neighborhoods, but it can definitely get done. You should be out there anyway. If you can't get the required number of signatures for Clean Elections then your problem is not with the Clean Elections system."

--Arizona Representative Martha Garcia

"Coming from a rural district, my constituents found the \$5.00 contributions towards my campaign much more affordable than being asked for contributions of \$50.00 or more."

--Arizona Representative Manuel Alvarez

"For all that people have said about Clean Elections getting women and minorities on the ticket and into office, it's absolutely true. It has made a huge impact"

--Arizona Representative Martha Garcia

The Council will consider a resolution at a future meeting.

REPORT OF TAX STABILIZATION COMMITTEE

A joint workshop with the Town Council and Tax Stabilization Committee was scheduled for March 23, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

A budget workshop was scheduled for March 17, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

This matter was continued until April 8, 2009.

REQUEST TO PURCHASE POLICE CRUISER

Waltonen moved to grant the request of the Police Dept. to purchase a Police Cruiser. Woloohojian seconded. It was noted that the funding would come from detail monies. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

Discussion was held with Acting Chief of Police Raymond Cappelli about concerns with the construction of the Route 95 bridge over Weaver Hill Road.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Bud Tyler commented on the change in leadership of the Town Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – PURSUANT TO RIGL 42-46-5,A, 1, 2 - PERSONNEL & LITIGATION & COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Tourgee moved to go into Executive Session for matters of Personnel and Litigation and Collective Bargaining pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5,a, 1 & 2 at 8:39 p.m. Woloohojian seconded. .VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

Tourgee moved to come out of Executive Session and seal the minutes at 10:06 p.m. Waltonen seconded. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

Waltonen moved to adjourn at p.m. Woloohojian seconded. VOTED: Butler – aye, Tourgee – aye, Waltonen – aye, Woloohojian – aye, Stewart – aye.

Janet E. Olsson, CMC
Town Clerk