

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - WEDNESDAY EVENING
FEBRUARY 13, 2019

PRESENT: Calouro, Sweeney (arrived at 6:13 o'clock PM),
Teixeira, Parella, and Ley

ALSO PRESENT: Steven Contente, Town Administrator

The Council met in special session on Wednesday evening,
February 13, 2019, in the Town Hall, Council Chambers,
beginning at 6:03 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Calouro
presiding:

1. Public Service Interviews/Appointments
 - a. Conservation Commission (3-year term expiring
December 2021)
 1. Lee Ann Freitas, 134 Bay View Avenue -
Interest/Appointment

It is hereby noted for the record that the Council agreed, by
consensus, to consider this matter for vote on February 27, 2019

The Council heard from Ms. Freitas who expressed her interest in
becoming a member of the Conservation Commission. She explained
that she has been a resident of the Town of Bristol for twenty
years and that she owned a small farm. She added that she
believes that more can be recycled, saving landfill space and
cost.

Ms. Freitas also stated that composting and other environmental
solutions should be resolved through "community conversation."

Councilman Ley noted that Ms. Freitas was working for the City
of Providence with Ms. Freitas explaining that she was working
on a "sustainability" program part of which deals with invasive
plants. She explained that the city uses goats to eat poison ivy
and that some volunteers walk the goats in parks, etc. She added
that Round-up is no longer used and that the goat problem is
more ecologically sound.

Councilwoman Parella stated that she was familiar with Ms.
Freitas' farm "Indie Growers" and that she was also impressed by
the goat idea.

Ms. Freitas explained that the Rhode Island Foundation may
provide funding for this program.

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Councilwoman Parella suggested that Mount Hope Farm may wish to participate in the goat program.

Ms. Freitas stated that there is a history of farming and community partnerships at Mount Hope Farm.

Councilman Teixeira stated that he is familiar with Ms. Freitas' work with her farm, etc.

Councilman Ley asked to know what Ms. Freitas would support if money was no object with Ms. Freitas responding that she would like to see composting expanded.

Councilman Teixeira stated that he agrees that composting would be valuable since it would reduce the amount of refuse that the Town sends to the Central Landfill and would also save in landfill tipping fees.

Councilman Ley stated that he would like to see an increase in voluntary composting and agreed that this would save money for the Town.

Councilwoman Parella noted that the Conservation Commission is an advocate for the Town's tree-lined streets. She added that she would be happy to support voluntary conservations efforts since she is concerned that some mandatory programs are disruptive to people's lives. She suggested that there might be recycling program to recycle newspaper bags for the collection of canine waste.

Councilman Sweeney arrived at this point in the meeting (6:13 o'clock PM).

Ms. Freitas stated that he agrees with Councilwoman Parella and that there is nothing worse than forcing someone to do something.

Council Chairman Calouro agreed that the Conservation Commission's tree planting program is important and that he agrees that composting is a good thing to pursue. He added that he is in favor of a taking a volunteer approach to composting. He added that the Conservation Commission is a valuable resource in terms of providing education to the public and that it may wish to expand its role in teaching about environmental issues which face the Town.

Councilman Sweeney asked to know if Ms. Freitas' top items are protecting the environment and preservation of open space.

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Ms. Freitas stated that she believes the Town trees to be her top priority since there should be a plan to plant a succession of trees; those which can be grown suitably for the environment.

- b. Board of Tenants' Affairs (2-year terms)
(vacancy expiring January 2020/vacancy expiring January 2021)

- 1. Carol Pouliot, 1014 Hope Street
Interest/Appointment

Ms. Pouliot explained that she managed properties for many years and that her husband is 77 years old. She added that she likes to get input from people and loves working with people and wishes to help.

Ms. Pouliot stated that she understands what it takes to keep tenants happy and knows that funding is often tight.

Council Chairman Calouro asked to know what Ms. Pouliot would change if she could on the Board with Ms. Pouliot explaining that she sees the board as one which may mediate between the tenants and the management and that this mediation will reduce animosity.

Councilman Sweeney asked to know what Ms. Pouliot was hearing from her fellow tenants with Ms. Pouliot responding that there is a lot of happiness but there are doldrums in the wintertime.

- 2. Richard Hunter, 1014 Hope Street
Interest/Appointment

Mr. Hunter was not present for this interview.

- c. Bristol County Water Authority

- 1. Robert Martin, 10 St. Anna Avenue
Interest/Appointment

Mr. Martin appeared before the Council and Council Chairman Calouro thanked him for his interest in pursuing this position.

Mr. Martin explained that he was in the U.S. Navy and has lived in Bristol for 40 years. He added that he joined the Bristol Fire Department in 1981 and rose to the rank of Chief; a position that he held for 11 years.

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Mr. Martin stated that he became familiar with the Bristol County Water Authority during his tenure as Fire Chief and that he considers the municipal water system to be very important and that he wishes to be a part of it. He also stated that he wishes to communicate with the Council while a member of the Water Authority board and keep the Council informed.

Council Chairman Calouro stated that the Council appreciates board members who make themselves available to the Council and that communication works best when there is a two-way conversation.

Council Chairman Calouro asked to know what Mr. Martin would like to improve as a member of the Water Authority with Mr. Martin responding that he is concerned about the rules regarding tie-ins to water lines which are installed by individuals at their own cost. He explained that others are allowed to tie into these lines for free, after a five year moratorium, and that he believes this to be unfair to the person who made the initial investment. He added that he believes that the moratorium period should be expanded to ten years.

Mr. Martin also stated that he is interested in looking at the whole water system to eliminate "dead head" water lines and that he is also interested in the proposed pipeline to the Pawtucket Water System.

Council Chairman Calouro noted that the matter includes the City of East Providence and that this is an area of great concern and that obtaining a secondary water source is an important item.

Council Chairman Calouro added that he does not think it wise to give up the Warren water supply and that he believes that this may also be a good secondary water source.

Councilman Teixeira stated that he agrees with Council Chairman Calouro and that it would be unwise to give up what we own.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if Mr. Martin had an engineering degree with Mr. Martin responding that he has a degree in computer science.

Mr. Martin noted that the Town worked hard with BCWA to have the water tower installed on the RWU Campus. He explained that this installation was positive for the rate payers nearby since it increased water pressure in the area. He expressed concern that the BCWA did not take enough credit for this improvement. He

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added that there is a need to take similar action to improve the water pressure in the northeast and northwest parts of Town.

Councilwoman Parella stated that Mr. Martin would bring strong first-hand fire suppression experience to the board and that the board did not appear to have this experience in the past.

A discussion ensued regarding the Poppasquash water main.

Councilman Sweeney asked to know Mr. Martin's position on rate increases with Mr. Martin responding that he was aware of the plan to raise water rates. He added that it may be possible to negotiate water rates with Providence/Pawtucket once the Pawtucket connection is completed.

2. John McQuilkin, 126 Thames Street
Interest/Appointment

Mr. McQuilkin appeared before the Council and explained that he moved to Bristol two years ago and owns a property on Thames Street. He added that he is a CPA, a tax professor at RWU and has experience in finance strategy. He added that he would like to lend his strategic finance experience to the Board.

Mr. McQuilkin stated that he is impressed with BCWA Executive Director Pamela Marchand and that the BCWA won an award for strategic implementation under her stewardship. He added that he is also impressed by the BCWA CFO, and that he would like to give something back to the community.

Mr. McQuilkin stated that he sees himself as a team player and that he at one time worked for Bethlehem Steel and found over \$1 million in improvements for that company.

Council Chairman Calouro asked to know what Mr. McQuilkin sees as opportunities for improvement for BCWA with Mr. McQuilkin responding that improvement is needed in the maintenance of the BCWA infrastructure and also that the Pawtucket connection is an important goal to realize. He added that both will need finance components and will result in debt to the Authority and that he can help in both instances. He also added that he has experience in the issuance of bonds and that he dealt with these during his years as a company CFO.

Council Chairman Calouro noted that there are 8000 rate payers and that this group of rate payers is diverse. He noted that rate increases are very painful for some of the rate payers and that the Council is concerned about these individuals.

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Mr. McQuilkin stated the average bill is \$500 per year and that the challenge is how to make this work since many people are using less water resulting in lower usage billing rates.

A discussion ensued regarding rates.

3. Harold Sawyer, 6 Glen View Drive
Interest/Appointment

Mr. Sawyer stated that he has been a resident of Bristol since 2005 and that he had a career in the food industry in research and development and quality assurance. He stated that his interest in the Water Authority is in the areas of quality and cost.

Mr. Sawyer explained that he believes that it is important to keep informed about source quality and that he is concerned about the quality and delivery of the Massachusetts-sourced supply.

He added that he is interested in the Pawtucket supply since this appears to be of good quality and that he is also interested in improving the local infrastructure since many of the pipes are inferior.

Mr. Sawyer explained that he worked in food plants around the world in project management, capital planning and budgeting, systems and water systems. He added that he believes in setting objectives.

Mr. Sawyer stated that it is "sketchy" about what is going on with the BCWA and its capital improvement plan and that the Pawtucket connection is taking longer than anticipated in time and money.

Councilwoman Parella noted that there will be challenges to blend water from two different sources if BCWA takes its supply from both Providence and Pawtucket. She also questioned why BCWA needs so much "stuff" since it is just a distribution system with a non-operational treatment plant.

Councilman Sweeney stated that the BCWA needs someone with project management skills and asked to know how Mr. Sawyer would plan to expedite BCWA projects.

Mr. Sawyer questioned why it has taken so much time to complete the connection through East Providence and stated that it has taken a long time to get estimates for that project. He added

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that the project management piece has fallen short and that all steps need timeliness.

Mr. Sawyer asked to know the Council's expectations with Council Chairman Calouro noting that communication was key, and that the Council is interested to learn what is going on. He added that the Council also wants its appointees to try their best to keep rates affordable and that the Bristol directors should never forget that they represent one-half of the BCWA rate payers.

Mr. Sawyer stated that he would not forget that he is a Bristolian on the board.

It was agreed, by consensus, that the Council would consider all of these public service appointments at its meeting to be held on February 27, 2019.

2. Five-Year Capital Plan

Town Treasurer Goucher noted the matrix included in the document provided and explained that the Council considered the matter of the Town Hall and Walley School last year.

Economic Development Coordinator Vitale provided a Powerpoint update which outlines the conversion of the Walley School into a Town Hall. Also present at that time was Nate Ginsberg of the Brewster Thornton Group Architects.

Town Treasurer Goucher noted that the estimated cost of the rehabilitation of the building at \$3.4 million and that there are several anticipated funding sources including the potential sale of 9 and 10 Court Street. She added that there are grant opportunities and also tax revenues which will come from 9 and 10 Court Street if these buildings are sold.

Town Treasurer Goucher explained that the budget considers the cost of the Walley conversion at \$2 million net and added that there will be an additional expense to make certain upgrades to 10 Court Street if the Town chooses to remain there.

Council Chairman Calouro agreed that there is a need to upgrade electrical systems, audio-visual systems, etc., and that these have been on the drawing board for some time.

Mr. Ginsberg noted that a 2016 study revealed that Walley needed all new mechanical and fire suppression systems, and that there will be a need to upgrade some of the beams in the building which have sagged over time. He noted that the Town will have to

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spend over \$1 million on the building to make it rentable as a "white box" and that additional funding will be required from tenants to make the building usable. He noted that there is additional cost to make the building into a suitable Town Hall.

Councilman Sweeney asked to know about the structure in general with Mr. Ginsberg reporting that the building is generally in fine shape and that there is a need to make some masonry repairs. He added that the footings are also in fine condition. He also added that there is need to fix the building's windows.

Council Chairman Calouro noted that 10 Court Street has some proponents but that the building does have some challenges. He noted that the plan for the Walley School would look more "appropriate" as a Town Hall versus the appearance of 10 Court Street.

It was noted that the Town would retain full ownership and usage of the Burnside Memorial Building even if the Town Hall is relocated.

Councilman Ley noted the plan for the second floor Council chambers and asked about the seating capacity. Mr. Ginsberg explained that the seating capacity is equivalent to that of 10 Court Street.

Councilman Sweeney asked to know if the building would be made suitable for live streaming of meetings with Mr. Ginsberg responding affirmatively.

Responding to a question concerning building capacity, Mr. Ginsberg noted that many of the Town Hall's traditional services are being replaced with on-line options and that there is a plan for self-serve kiosks.

Mr. Ginsberg also noted that it will be possible to patch-in video to the conference room areas and hallways and that the design is very preliminary at this point.

Councilman Sweeney stated that he would prefer a curvilinear Council table with Mr. Ginsberg agreeing to include one of these in the plan. He added that the overall configuration for the Council Chambers area is preliminary and subject to modification.

Councilwoman Parella asked to know if there is a plan to upgrade the basement with Mr. Ginsberg answering that the basement will

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be for utilities and that it will be expensive to make it usable for other purposes.

Councilman Teixeira asked to know about the 2016 report with Director of Community Development Williamson stating that her office has a copy. She noted that the report was made in conjunction with the earlier proposal of Arts in Common to rehabilitate the Walley School as an arts center.

Councilman Teixeira expressed concern that the Walley renovation will cost \$2 million when the Town Hall (10 Court Street) renovations were to cost \$6-700,000. He added that he does not see the benefit of the additional cost at this time. He also expressed concern that a Town Hall use may not be compatible for the corner of State and High Streets.

Council Chairman Calouro reminded those present that this presentation was "first blush" and that there will have to be further discussion. He added that the cost spread is not that big and reminded those present that there is a need to fix the Walley School no matter what.

Town Administrator Contente stated that the Council should look for long-range savings including the receipt of property tax for 9 and 10 Court Street for 20 years. He added that the Town now also pays a lease for the lot on the north side of Court Street which it will no longer need if the Town Hall moves to Walley School.

Town Administrator Contente noted that 10 Court Street will be needing some repairs and that the Town may better put its money into something that will be used for 30-40 years from now and that it will recover the \$2 million in the long-run.

A discussion ensued regarding the possible use of Reynolds School instead of Walley School with Town Administrator Contente explaining that the appearance of Walley School is more Town Hall-like and that Reynolds is in use. He noted that 10 Court Street does not suit the Town's image as a picturesque New England town. He also noted that Economic Development Coordinator Vitale is surveying the area for parking and other on-line opportunities and confirmed that e-permitting has diminished the foot traffic at 9 Court Street significantly. He added that traditional Town Hall customers will be doing more and more from home.

Councilwoman Parella suggested that parking on High Street near the Walley School might be changed to diagonal parking with Town

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Administrator Contente stating that a parking study will be needed eventually.

A discussion ensued with Mr. Ginsberg outlining a rough timeline. He noted that construction will take approximately one year and that the building will be occupied about two years from the time of approval of the project.

Town Treasurer Goucher agreed to distribute copies of the PowerPoint presentation and that 2016 study.

Town Treasurer Goucher again referred to the Capital Budget spreadsheet and reviewed the various projects by year and priority.

Items specifically discussed were:

Reynolds Roof

Councilman Sweeney asked to know if Reynolds School roof will support air conditioning unit(s) with Town Administrator Contente explaining that the roof is "wavy" and that the rubber membrane needs repair. He added that there may be an opportunity to add solar panels to the roof but that there is no plan for air conditioning.

Councilman Teixeira asked to know if the skylight will be preserved with Town Administrator Contente responding affirmatively.

Independence Park Seawall

Town Administrator Contente explained that the Town will be rebuilding the "highwalls" seawall since some of the area has been washed-out by wave action and tides. He noted that the repairs are intended to make the wall more permanent and more attractive.

Road Repairs (\$2 million)

Council Chairman Calouro stated that he agrees with this expenditure one hundred percent.

Town Administrator Contente noted that the Town will expend \$2 million on road projects before 4th of July commencing as soon as it is practicable.

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Councilman Sweeney asked to know if there is a list of roads under consideration with Town Administrator Contente explaining that Public Works Director McBride has the list.

Councilman Sweeney suggested that there should be coordination with National Grid regarding utility cuts.

Automation of Trash Collection

Town Treasurer Goucher noted that the expenditure noted will be to automate trash collection and to purchase standardized bins for rubbish and recycling.

Public Works Director McBride note that the Town has two vehicles in the queue and that there is a need to start the trash collection first in order to prevent contamination of the recyclables. The recycling program will begin after the trash program is in process.

Councilwoman Parella noted that the City of Providence has a contamination patrol which examines recyclables for contaminates.

Public Works Director McBride stated that the new trucks have cameras to monitor the quality of the recyclables.

Councilman Ley asked to know why the Town is considering 95 gallon bins and not smaller ones.

Public Works Director McBride stated that this was a collective decision based upon others' experience via conversations with other communities and manufacturers. He added that the larger bins may allow for a less-frequent collection of recyclables.

Golf Course Netting

Town Treasurer Goucher noted that further information regarding this matter will be brought before the Council.

Perry Street and Cottage Street Sidewalks

Town Administrator Contente noted that the lacrosse and baseball teams walk to Guiteras Field from the High School via Perry Street and that there are currently no sidewalks on Perry Street.

Council Chairman Calouro noted that since there are no sidewalks the design will cost \$30,000. Town Administrator Contente added

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that the design will include in-ground utility safety and installation of curbing. Director of Community Development Williamson added that there is a need to survey the area to determine the right-of-way.

Marina Expansion

Council Chairman Calouro noted that Harbormaster Marsili will provide a report for the February 27 meeting concerning the Marina expansion.

Other Matters

A further discussion ensued regarding several projects in future years and those of generally lower priorities.

A discussion also ensued regarding the age of certain vehicles and lease versus purchase options, the high school parking lot, fire department HVAC.

Public Works Director McBride noted that he plans to ask the Council to pre-approve the ordering of new automated recycling trucks prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year due to the long lead time.

Council Chairman Calouro stated that the Council will consider the matter at its meeting of February 27 and asked that Public Works Director McBride might present a proposal for the meeting agenda.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Sweeney, seconded by Councilman Teixeira and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 9:04 o'clock PM.

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC
Council Clerk