

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
APRIL 26, 2010**

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Town of Fairfield was held on Monday, April 26, 2010, at McKinley Elementary School, Fairfield, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 P.M. by Moderator James Walsh.

PRESENT: 48 ABSENT: 2 VACANCY: 0

PRESENT: Becker, Challinor, Richmond, Sundman, Walsh, Ambrose, A. Harrison, Steele, Varian, Bateson, Conley, Ference, McCullough, Santalesa, DeMartino, Hug, Palmer, R. Parker, S. Parker, Gall, Garskof, McAleese, Smey, Stamler, Kupchick, Luciano, Marmion, Vahey, Cullen, Hoffkins, Llewellyn, Lynch, Schwartz, Braun, Hoffmann, Kelly, McCarthy, Takami, Dillon, Felner, McGinty, Millington, Mirabile, Farnen, E. Harrison, Mears, Rubino, Way

ABSENT: Stewart, Brogan

ITEM NO. 1 ON CALL: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Moderator introduced Superintendent of Schools Ann Clark to lead the Body in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Moderator asked those present to keep in their thoughts the memory of Selectman Ralph Bowley who passed away recently.

ITEM NO. 2 ON CALL: TO CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MARCH 22, 2010

Upon motion made, duly seconded and carried unanimously, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed (A. Harrison and S. Parker were not present to vote).

CONSENT CALENDAR

The moderator reported that Item Number 4 was eligible for the Consent Calendar.

VOTE: Item number 4 was approved by unanimous voice vote (A. Harrison and S. Parker were not present to vote).

ITEM NO. 3 ON CALL: REPORT FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN ON THE METRO CENTER PROJECT

First Selectman Ken Flatto distributed a report (attached).

Jeff Steele, District 2, asked if the parking lot would be gravel. Mr. Flatto said that currently, the belief is that the State is committed to a fully paved parking area of approximately 1,400 to 1,500 spaces.

Kathy Braun, District 8, asked if the lot is to be in the same place as was originally designed, to which Mr. Flatto responded yes.

Ms. Braun asked if public funds would be used to cover Blackrock Realty's commitment, to which Mr. Flatto responded to the best of his knowledge.

Liz Hoffmann, District 8, asked about traffic improvements and volume. Mr. Flatto said that it is hard to guarantee traffic control but that rotaries and lights have been incorporated into the plan and we are hoping to see smoother traffic with less congestion.

ITEM NO. 4 ON CALL: APPOINTMENT OF DONALD C. DIMARTINO TO THE STRATFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mr. DiMartino was present. This item was on the Consent Calendar.

ITEM NO. 5 ON CALL: TO HEAR AND DISCUSS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE IV (TAX BILLS), CHAPTER 95 OF THE FAIRFIELD TOWN CODE ENTITLED, "TAXATION," AS SPONSORED BY CHRISTOPHER M. MCALEESE, DISTRICT 5 AND HAL SCHWARTZ, DISTRICT 7.

The Moderator moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**See Committee Reports Attached Hereto and Made a Part Hereof.

As this item is an ordinance, it shall be held over for one meeting.

ITEM NO. 6 ON CALL: TO HEAR AND DISCUSS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE II (SOLAR ENERGY), CHAPTER 95 OF THE FAIRFIELD TOWN CODE ENTITLED, "TAXATION," AS SPONSORED BY JEFF STEELE, DISTRICT 2; CHAD STEWART, DISTRICT 2; JOSHUA GARSKOF, DISTRICT 5; AND DAVID CULLEN, DISTRICT 7.

MOTION: Mr. Steele moved to postpone this item until the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held May 24, 2010, duly seconded and carried unanimously.

ITEM NO. 7 ON CALL: TO CONSIDER AND DISCUSS, INCLUDING RTM COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC, PROPOSED APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$251,734,722 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR OF JULY 1, 2010 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2011, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE, FOR ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. THE TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET AS APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE IS AS FOLLOWS

Gross Budget:	251,734,722
Less Estimated Receipts:	<u>(25,302,034)</u>
Net Budget:	226,432,688
Plus Reserve for Uncollected Taxes:	<u>2,407,778</u>
Amount to be Raised by Taxation:	228,840,466

The Moderator moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**See Committee Reports Attached Hereto and Made a Part Hereof.

First Selectman Ken Flatto, Board of Finance Chairman Tom Flynn, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Clark and Board of Education Chairman Sue Brand each spoke in support of the budget.

Mary McCullough, District 3, asked if more teacher retirements were expected.

Dr. Clark said that ten retirements were built into the budget and so far there are ten teachers retiring.

Jamie Millington, District 9, speaking as Majority Leader, said that the Republicans do not intend to pursue additional cuts to the Education budget at the annual budget meeting. However, they intend to roll back non-contractual spending items to the current budget. It would affect every town department but specific line items have not yet been identified.

Peter Ambrose, District 2, referred to a "side letter" of agreement made between the Fire Department and the First Selectman, which cost the town \$325,000 in overtime for the fire department. Mr. Ambrose requested a legal opinion from Asst. Town Attorney Don Houston and received a response today which left him no time to review it. He is reserving the right to bring up the issue during the annual budget meeting.

William Llewellyn, District 7, referred to the work attendance and the longevity bonuses currently in some town employees' contracts. He urged that those bonuses be reconsidered during contract negotiations.

First Selectman Flatto said he appreciates the concern over such bonuses but that they are related to on-the-job injuries. The bonus is an incentive. The longevity bonus is in place because historically, town salaries have been significantly lower than those in the private sector and there are no merit pay increases in government work.

Cristin Vahey, District 6, said that she is frustrated over the lack of specifics in the cuts proposed by the Republicans.

Speaking in support of the education budget were Steve Krauchick, Candlewood Road; Montez Diaz, Stone Ridge Way; Eric Newman, Eastfield Drive; Elaine Tomis Davis, Farmington Avenue; Peggy Day, University Drive; Maureen Sawyer, Thor Place; Jennifer Cervone, Lynnbrook Road; Barbara Harrington, Old Stratfield Road.

Faith Dillon, District 9, spoke about the vast waste in the budget due to unfunded state mandates, such as transportation, where there are half empty buses because transportation must be provided if a child lives more than a mile from school.

Ann Stamler, District 5, thanked the Board of Finance for their diligence.

Sheila Marmion, District 6, thanked the public for their input.

Hal Schwartz, District 7, said that it is not fair to each department because the proposed cuts to each budget has not been pinpointed.

Bill Llewellyn, District 7, reiterated his request that bonuses be negotiated out of the contracts.

Brenda Kupchick, District 6, spoke in support of the additional police officer included in the budget.

This item will be acted upon at the Annual Budget Meeting to be held May 3, 2010.

ITEM NO. 8 ON CALL: TO CONSIDER AND DISCUSS, INCLUDING RTM COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC, THE SELF-SUPPORTING FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,935,100 FOR THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR OF JULY 1, 2010 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2011

The Moderator moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**See Committee Reports Attached Hereto and Made a Part Hereof.

Ann Stamler, District 5, asked that this item be explained.

Fiscal Officer Paul Hiller said that a change in the water use rate is not anticipated. There has been a drop in the consumption of usage, perhaps because residents are "going green."

This item will be acted upon at the Annual Budget Meeting to be held May 3, 2010.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Moderator announced that the Annual Budget Meeting of the RTM will be held Monday, May 3, 2010 at the Education Center, 501 Kings Highway East.

A presentation regarding the Freedom of Information Act will be offered by the League of Women Voters tomorrow evening at the Fairfield Museum and History Center.

A gala to benefit Operation Hope will be held June 13 at the Trumbull Marriott and will honor State Senator John McKinney.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business and upon motion made, duly seconded and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth P. Browne
Town Clerk

Recorded by: Ann Roche