

Town Council Meeting
February 10, 2014

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING – 7:00 PM

Present: President Gary Cote, Karen Carlson, Gregory Laboissonniere, Ted Jendzejec, Town Manager Thomas Hoover, Town Solicitor Frederick Tobin

Absent: Vice-President McGee

Pledge of Allegiance led by Town Sergeant
Moment of Silence
Review of Emergency Evacuation Plan

President's Comments

President Cote remarked that a presentation of the audit for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2013 is on the agenda this evening. We are getting into the budget cycle soon, have adopted a schedule of meetings and will add public hearings if necessary. I would like to have many of the questions and concerns answered before the FTM.

Approval of Town Council minutes January 27, 2014

A motion was made by Councilman Jendzejec seconded by Councilwoman Carlson to approve minutes. All voted aye. Councilman Laboissonniere did not vote because he was absent from the meeting on January 27.

Presentation, discussion and resulting action receiving and accepting the Fiscal Year 2012/2013 Independent Audit

Mr. Paul Dansereau of Baxter Dansereau & Associates presented the town's annual financial report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2013. He explained that financial and federal compliance audits were performed on both the town and school sides. The audit went very smoothly and the reports were unmodified, meaning there were no compliance issues. It was a clean, unqualified report.

Mr. Dansereau gave an overview of the report beginning on Page 14 with net position in regard to governmental and business-type activities which includes a culmination of all funds. He went on to page 16 where he explained the general fund balance sheets, overall fund balance, the town and school's statement of revenues and expenditures appearing on Page 71 and page 76, with specific school funds and grants on page 79. A compliance audit appears at the back of the report and the full report is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office.

President Cote asked if this is part of what the bonding agencies will use for our bond rating. Mr. Dansereau replied that it is and in addition is also submitted to the auditor general, other various bonding agencies, and has been accepted by the State of RI as unqualified.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Carlson seconded by Councilman Laboissonniere to accept audit report. All voted Aye.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Discussion and resulting action on tax abatements and additions for January 2014
2. Discussion and resulting action on application by New England Farm and Artist, 1112 Main St., for a Class F license to serve wine and cheese for art night

A motion was made by Councilman Laboissonniere seconded by Councilman Jendzejec to approve Consent Agenda. All voted Aye.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Discussion and resulting action on appointments to the Juvenile Hearing Board for James Kuipers, Andrew Perra, and Dennis O'Brien, full three year positions; Jaime Bernard and Robert Mann to one year alternate positions

A motion was made by Councilwoman Carlson seconded by Councilman Laboissonniere to approve appointments. All voted Aye. President Cote administered oath of office.

2. Discussion and resulting action on appointing Douglas Finegan to the Sewer Assessment Board of Review

Motion was made by Councilwoman Carlson seconded by Councilman Jendzejec to approve appointment. All voted Aye. President Cote administered the oath of office.

3. Discussion and resulting action on authorizing the purchase of a new Stancil system for the Coventry Police Department at a cost of \$8,395

Chief Volpe explained that the current phone line and radio communications recording system is in need of upgrading. We have been very happy with our current vendor, Stancil, and they have offered a new upgraded system that will meet our needs. We have the money in our budget.

A motion was made by Councilman Jendzejec seconded by Councilwoman Carlson to approve resolution. All voted Aye.

4. Discussion and resulting action on supporting the installation of a roundabout at the intersection of State Routes 102 and 117

Manager Hoover advised that the Department of Transportation held a public hearing on February 4 in the Council Chambers to discuss a proposed roundabout at the intersection of Route 117 and 102 and most of what was presented that night has been included in your packets tonight. There has been unanimous support for the project and approval of tonight's resolution will provide full Town Council support, as requested by RIDOT.

Mr. Francis Colavera of DOT was present to answer any questions regarding the

roundabout project. President Cote had concerns about the ability to handle heavy commercial truck traffic, with up to a 53 foot tractor trailer maneuvering around that roundabout. He also asked about the island, grass and granite curbing. Mr. Colavera explained how the truck would maneuver without encroaching on the island or the landscaped area. In addition the granite curbing will be at about a 30 degree slope, it will not be vertical curbing. President Cote was concerned about tire damage on the granite curbing as the granite can cut the side of the tire and those tires are about \$700.00 a piece. Councilwoman Carlson added that the roundabout project will be done at no cost to the town.

President Cote supports the resolution and asked if, in the meantime, there could be signage warning people of the dangerous intersection as they travel down the road.

Mr. Colavera will look into it, but will have to wait for the weather to improve first before signs could be installed. He further advised that with approval of the resolution, we will ask our consultant to move forward with the project design, but you probably won't see a shovel in the ground until the spring of 2015.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Carlson seconded by Councilman Laboissonniere to approve resolution. All voted Aye.

5. Discussion and resulting action on entering into a Sister City Agreement with Selwyn, New Zealand

Norma Smith was present from the historical society and explained that after a previous Friendship Link visit, she was contacted by Selwyn, New Zealand, asking if Coventry would consider becoming a "sister city" with them. However, Selwyn requested a formal, signed resolution. She added that Selwyn is an agricultural community near the ocean with many similarities to Coventry.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Carlson seconded by Councilman Laboissonniere to approve resolution. All voted Aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy Sullivan, White Oak Court, remarked that after the meeting with the state legislators, I would like to encourage the Town Council and the School Committee to take a real sharp pencil into the budgets this year. Also, she believes that a mayoral academy in Coventry is a good thing. Doesn't hurt to have an additional choice of education for our children.

Alex Arteaga, proprietor of Palagi's Ice Cream, spoke regarding solicitation on town property, such as beaches, as he thinks it would be a good service to bring to the residents. Currently there is an ordinance prohibiting solicitation on town property and Mr. Arteaga is asking how he would be able to obtain permission to do this.

President Cote asked that this be brought up at a later date in order that council can educate themselves as to what the ordinance currently states so that it can be discussed.

Cindy Fagan asked why the town chose a roundabout rather than a red light at the intersection of Routes 117 and 102. President Cote replied that this will slow down and impede the flow of traffic, you won't be able to "run" the red light. Councilman Laboissonniere responded that the Department of Transportation had a presentation where many of those questions were answered, along with showing the benefits of a roundabout vs. a traffic light, all

backed up with statistics, and that meeting was on February 4 in the Council Chambers.

Ken Jackson, Harkney Hill Road remarked that he has seen tension between the Town Council and the School Committee. He does not think the Council should take the vote away from the residents with regard to the \$350,000 sidewalk installation on Reservoir Road and the Charter is clear on that type of expenditure. Lastly he asked if there is a problem getting minutes on the website as the January minutes are not posted yet.

Manager Hoover spoke regarding Mr. Jackson's comment about noticeable "tension", between the Town and School. Manager Hoover advised that town and school administration have a good relationship, which he also sees between the Town Council and School Committee. We have some of the better relationships in the state. President Cote added that there are issues that we may disagree on, but we disagree respectfully. We will always work together to do what is best for the taxpayers of the Town of Coventry.

Ron Gizarelli, 50 Harrington Road, thinks the roundabout is a good idea; believes that the sound system in the Council Chambers needs improvements and will probably cost about \$3,000. He has concerns about the srp pension and who will pay for it, agrees that it should not be the town, as the town and the employees have already put in their portion of the funding.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Carlson seconded by Councilman Laboissonniere to adjourn meeting. All voted Aye.

Town Clerk