

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Coventry Town Hall Council Chambers
1670 Flat River Road, Coventry, RI
March 26, 2007 – 6:30 p.m.

Present: Kenneth Cloutier, Anthony Colaluca, Justin Pomfret, Bruce Thompson,
Frank Hyde

Town Manager Richard Kerbel
Town Solicitor Patrick Sullivan

Pledge of Allegiance led by President Pomfret.
Moment of silence held for the recent passing of two local teenagers, Andrew Coit and
Darien Plass.
President Pomfret reviewed evacuation plan.

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded by Frank Hyde to approve Town Council
minutes from March 12, 2007. All voted Aye. So voted.

- PUBLIC COMMENT

Gail Whitaker
One Allison Avenue

Ms. Whitaker is concerned that she may lose her job as a result of the situation
with the schools.

Paul Grimes
United Healthcare Representative
Warwick, RI

Mr. Grimes spoke regarding the school deficit. United Healthcare hired me to
bring solutions to the town and cities in Rhode Island, including the school districts. You
have some very difficult decisions to make, but there are solutions. One would be to
avail yourself of the administrative fees the State of Rhode Island has negotiated for
cities and towns. You are a self-funded entity in terms of your healthcare, but you pay
higher fees than what was negotiated by the governor for the state.

I would be happy to be available to you at a later date. This is cost-saving and
put in place for cities and towns for the specific reason of helping save taxpayers money
and find a better way to provide healthcare services. In your case, United Healthcare
would just administer the claims and could do it more efficiently.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Resolution #35-07-2742 appointing Raymond Byrnes to Board of Canvassers
2. Resolution #36-07-2743 reappointing Francis J. Perry to Board of
Canvassers
3. Resolution #37-07-2744 accepting a portion of Hammet Road and agreement
regarding Tatro v Town of Coventry
4. New Sewer Contractor's license for Robar Excavation LLC
5. Renewal of Private Detective license for Stephen Gonsalves
6. Resolution #38-07-2745 awarding contract to Verizon for fiber optic cable
installation and equipment

Motion made by Frank Hyde seconded by Justin Pomfret to remove Item #2
from Consent Agenda. Frank Hyde – Aye; Justin Pomfret – Aye; Kenneth
Cloutier – No; Anthony Colaluca – No; Bruce Thompson – No; Motion fails.

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to approve Consent Agenda. All voted Aye. So voted.

LICENSES

New Victualling license application by Gloria and Joseph Chapdelaine for Coventry House of Pizza II, 2246 Flat River Road

Present: Gloria Chapdelaine

Ms. Chapdelaine explained that they would be operating in the same manner as their other business in Coventry, just want to be open 5 a.m. to 2 a.m. Nothing is open after 9 p.m. in that area. Also going to sell milk, bread, juice, eggs, possibly lottery tickets.

President Pomfret – Would that be seven days a week?

Ms. Chapdelaine: Yes.

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded by Bruce Thompson to approve license. All voted Aye. So voted.

Renewal of Hawker's license by Brian Warnock, Joe's Produce, 1501 Nooseneck Hill Road (continued from March 12)

Present: Brian Warnock
Hope Valley, RI

Manager Kerbel – Referred to memo from Planning Director and Zoning Enforcement officer along with their recommendation of a conditional license, to be issued after satisfaction of the zoning officer. The attorneys have agreed to a conditional license also. Conditions are that the licensee submit application for development plan review, license is for 90 days only; in the event the licensee desires extension of the renewal of the hawker license, he must return to the Town Council for approval and that the license will not be issued until the applicant complies with #1, #2, and #3 and receives Development Plan approval as required by Planning.

President Pomfret asked Zoning Officer Jacob Peabody if he is in agreement with this.

Mr. Peabody - Yes.

Councilman Cloutier asked for clarification. Solicitor Sullivan stated this will not be issued until cleaned up and development plan review approved. This is a conditional approval delegating authority to the Planning Department.

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to approve license conditionally. All voted Aye. So voted.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution establishing a freeze on financial commitments of the Coventry School Committee (tabled)

Mr. Thompson – After meeting with the School Committee and School Department officials, Town Council, and town administrators, the School Department has come forward with a budget that meets our request from the previous resolution calling for a balanced budget, with approximately \$90,000 of flexibility that the town gives to the school department. Flexibility meaning that if there were an overrun, that the town would absorb the cost with the condition that the school department would pay it back after the first of the year (July).

Feel that the school department has done a good job regarding freezing and spending. May be a little hardship, but I feel the cuts they made are very adequate. I

feel that giving them \$90,000 flexibility for unforeseen expenditures is more than fair. I would like to ask the School Committee to expound upon that. Would recommend to the council that this plan meets the requirements of our resolution and is fair.

Ray Spear – Thanked council for keeping open the lines of communication. Efforts have been made to bring the budget into balance to something short of \$100,000.00. In order to close that \$100,000 gap, we were looking at some things that weren't desirable on our part. I can say to you that we will do the very best we can to bring to a zero balance by June 30.

Mr. Cloutier – Asked that the School Committee be a little more sensitive before going forward regarding specific job layoffs or sports being cut. I know you are trying to do this to make a point. Mr. Spear, will athletic transportation be restored?

Mr. Spear – It will be maintained, it was never cut.

Mr. Colaluca - This \$90,000.00 credit line, this will affect you next year at the end of the year. Is this just a temporary fix?

Mr. Spear – If in the end the books are not balanced, we will have an obligation to the Town Council for this to come out of the next budget.

Mr. Colaluca – In your budget, the final line for surplus and deficits is \$587,516.00, and in the packet I received it's \$387,516.00. Questioned why there is a \$200,000 difference and the budget hasn't been adjusted yet.

Mr. DiPietro – We built that budget in February before we made all the cuts. On April 19 at the public hearing for the school department that will be addressed, all of the cuts we made will be addressed at that time.

Mr. Colaluca – Would like to see updated version.

Mr. DiPietro – Yes, will get you the most recent version with the cuts.

Mr. Hyde – No one is going to lose their jobs this year?

Mr. Spear – Correct.

Mr. Hyde - How about next year?

Mr. Spear – Next year will likely reflect the elimination of positions, the present consideration is reflected more on certified staff partially because of enrollment decline.

Mr. DiPietro – Shortage on the budget will come from some capital, some supplies and some purchase services. Primarily the number will come out of salaries – 1. Elementary (five teachers down); consolidating, same class sizes, less teachers because less children; 2. Currently five middle school teams, will only be four coming in, so will be four less middle school teachers – that's makes it nine counting elementary; approximately two at the high school (that's 11), from there possibility changing the Oak Haven model. Couple of other programs, staff consolidations, depending on funding. Right now 59 layoffs, currently 11-14 positions being reduced. Could be about \$600,000 in staff.

Mr. Hyde – If there is a bond, will you get reimbursed the 40-45%?

Mr. DiPietro – Yes.

Mr. Cloutier – Any safeguards in place to make sure that we don't go into another deficit in the next few months?

Mr. DiPietro – We have a finance director and the School Committee who usually review the budget every month.

Mr. Spear – I think the only thing you can't predict would be some type of catastrophic thing. Some things you can't predict.

Mr. Pomfret – Thanked School Committee for their work, believe this is a good plan. Also confident that there will be more open communication.

Motion made by Frank Hyde seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to withdraw resolution. All voted Aye. So voted.

Public Hearing

Ordinance regarding Site Specific Special Sewer Assessment for Business Park
(continued from January 22, 2007)

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Anthony Colaluca to continue to April 23 Town Council meeting. All voted Aye. So voted.

Motion made by Frank Hyde seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to adjourn meeting. All voted Aye. So voted.

Town Clerk