

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
April 12, 2010

Present: President Raymond Spear, Glen Shibley, Kenneth Cloutier, Frank Hyde

Absent: Laura Flanagan

Town Manager Thomas Hoover
Town Solicitor Patrick Rogers

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation led by President Spear
Review of Emergency Evacuation Plan

President's Comments

- Ethics filings for Town Council and appointed officials are due on April 30
- Applications are being accepted for upcoming vacancies on the Planning Board, Land Trust, Library Board, Friends of Human Services and Housing Authority
- Letters have been received from 50 students at Blackrock School, requesting to display some of their work/projects at the Town Hall later in the month.
- The Western RI Civic Historical Society will hold a panel discussion on April 14, 2010 regarding the Preservation of Coventry History, Past, Present and Future.
- The director of RIDOT is here this evening along with Senator Raptakis to give us a status report on storm damage and repair due to the recent flooding. Since this is a discussion item, Councilman Shibley made motion, seconded by Councilman Hyde, to advance Public Comment on the agenda to follow the approval of minutes. All voted Aye.

Approval of Town Council Minutes for March 8, 2010, March 22, 2010 and March 29, 2010

Councilman Shibley asked for correction on Page 6 of the March 22 minutes, the name of "Leann" Thibeault should be "Vianne".

Motion made by Glen Shibley seconded by Ken Cloutier to approve minutes of March 8, March 22 as corrected and March 29, 2010. All voted aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rhode Island Director of Transportation Michael Lewis spoke about the unprecedented damage throughout the State of Rhode Island due to the flood, commenting that the condition of the Laurel Avenue bridge indicates what the power of water can do. As many as 100 roads had been closed in Rhode Island; ten now remain closed. RIDOT is working with the Emergency Management Administration. Two major sources of funding for infrastructure repair are the Federal Highway Administration and FEMA. RIDOT received confirmation today that \$3 million has been made available for immediate repairs. Mr. Lewis advised that within the next two weeks the Laurel Avenue bridge will be demolished. He urged patience as assessments are being done throughout the state on roadways.

Councilman Hyde asked if the new bridge would be similar in design to the current bridge. Mr. Lewis responded they would probably get the plans and do the same design. Mr.

Shibley remarked that this is a main artery and he appreciates the priority status it has been given.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Resolution regarding the Rhode Island Public Financing of Elections Act
2. Resolution requesting the repealing of state financial mandates pertaining to municipal and school employee pensions, health insurance cost sharing and public school employee health care benefits
3. Approval of March tax abatements
4. Renewal of Peddler's license for Michael Rodrigues, dba Mike's Ice (ice cream vendor) for the 90 day period from April 13 through July 12, 2010 (Ref. #4)

Motion made by Glen Shibley seconded by Ken Cloutier to approve Items #2, 3, and 4. All voted aye.

With regard to the Public Financing of Elections Act, Councilman Hyde asked for clarification regarding whether the proposed resolution means that the public is going to fund campaigns. President Spear read a portion of the resolution stating that, if approved, "the town would voice its support of the proposed legislation before the General Assembly regarding the Rhode Island Public Financing of Elections Act, which would provide a voluntary system for full public financing of elections".

Manager Hoover does not recommend that the Town Council support this resolution.

Councilman Shibley feels that it is an admirable idea and would result in officials more freely voting their own mind without the influence of special interest groups, but the State can't afford it.

Motion made by Frank Hyde seconded by Glen Shibley not to approve resolution. All voted aye.

LICENSES

Application by Anthony Pimental of Flare Restaurant LLC, 577 Tioque Avenue for outdoor entertainment

Rick Pimental, 3 Dodd Street, seeks permission for outside entertainment on Friday and Saturday nights from 8 p.m. to 12 p.m. He has spoken to residents in the cabins behind Flare and they have no objections.

Although Councilman Shibley has concerns about sound (music) travelling across the water, he is confident that Mr. Pimental will do this properly. He suggested that outside entertainment be done on a smaller scale, kept to small groups, maybe a 2-4 person band or a couple of guitars. Mr. Pimental agreed that he would cooperate and do whatever needs to be done if a problem should arise.

Motion made by Glen Shibley seconded by Ken Cloutier to approve outdoor entertainment request. All voted aye.

Resolutions authorizing agreements for construction of cellular communication equipment located at:

1. 40 Reservoir Road (Coventry High School)
2. 1672 Flat River Road (Department of Public Works)
3. 95 Johnson Blvd. (Hopkins Hill School)

Attorney Joseph Deangelis of 1 Citizens Plaza, Providence appeared representing Cox Communications.

Cox representatives suggested an informational open forum with the community before the cell tower issue is placed on another Town Council agenda.

Kevin Hitte of Sugar Maple Drive asked that a forum not be held during school vacation week. He believes more research needs to be done regarding health, long term effects and potential risks. He also asked how these particular sites were arrived at.

Attorney Kola Akindele, representing SBA (further representing Cox), replied that towers were placed in the most suitable location to get the most coverage with the least amount of towers.

With regard to locations, Howard Polnow (representing Cox) stated that the Hopkins Hill tower will be set 130 feet away from the residential border, as will CHS. The tower will be 70 feet away from Hopkins Hill school building and 200 feet away from the high school. Coventry I.T. Director Ed Warzycha said the potential revenue from the towers would be about \$200,000 per year.

Residents Travis Zellner of 121 Wood Cove Drive, Douglas James of 28 King Street and Ron Gizzarelli of 50 Harrington Road have concerns regarding potential health risks.

Nick Cambio, Quaker Lane, West Warwick, believes the cell tower does not belong on school property. Mr. Cambio owns land with a higher elevation which is further away from a residential area if Cox is interested. He further suggested performing a balloon test to see where and how high the tower will be at the proposed locations.

Amy Wolf, 36 Maude Avenue asked why so many towers will be located in the area when there are already towers at Foster Park, Arnold Road behind BJ's, Blackrock School, and the bus company on Wood Street. Mr. Polnow will research and get answer. When asked if towers are inspected on an annual basis, Mr. Polnow replied about every five years and are designed to withstand weather and soil type.

Vanessa Cosmo, Twin Lakes Ave., asked about insurance and liability. She also expressed concern that tower could cause a dangerous situation for children who go sledding at the school in the winter.

Solicitor Rogers advised that the town would have insurance.

Bill Porter, Shippee Plat Road, owns industrial land across from the high school in case Cox is looking for additional land.

After reading articles pertaining to cell phones and radiation, Councilman Shibley believes this is too close to Hopkins Hill School. He has concerns about high tension wires causing cancer, towers emitting radiation, property values being affected, the liability to the town by taking on ownership of the towers, and therefore is against this proposal.

Cox will schedule a public informational meeting.

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

Town Clerk