

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Coventry Town Hall Council Chambers
1670 Flat River Road, Coventry, RI
May 19, 2008 – 6:00 P.M.

WORK SESSION with Senators Blais and Raptakis; Representatives Serpa and Moffitt.

Discussion concerning the State's deficit of approximately \$450 million and the tough times ahead for all cities and towns. Representative Moffitt informed the council that the State is looking at a new education funding formula. If this legislation passes, it would mean more money for Coventry. These funding formulas favor Coventry and eventually there will be a statewide permanent funding formula. If not passed this year, will be next year. Nine communities stand to gain, twenty-three will lose, some will see no change. Senator Blais stated though that Coventry will never get as much as the larger urban communities.

Vice-President Thompson questioned Senator Blais about status of the legislation for the solar farm at the Picillo site. Senator Blais responded that the problem is that the subsidy required for National Grid to pay is about five times higher than the market rate. The state is also looking at the wind farm for Narragansett Bay. Senator Blais encouraged attendance at the Apeiron Institute for Sustainable Living on June 6, 7 and 8 in Coventry as there will be a lot of information regarding sources of energy.

Councilman Hyde questioned Representative Serpa on TIF issues, noting that we still need the tools to build capital funding. Representative Serpa stated that the State is very close to a resolution, Coventry may not be 100% happy. There is a problem with the language, Governor 's office is also very close to buying into the language that Coventry wants. Another issue the State is looking into is giving all the cities and towns relief on some unfunded mandates.

Senator Blais added that the state is reluctant to allow TIF money to be used outside the TIF district.

Mr. Hyde – Requested that legislative grants continue.

Senator Blais – We are going to do everything that we can for the town, so that any cuts are not as bad as they could be. Legislators are here to help you.

President Pomfret thanked the delegation for the hard work.

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

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

Acting Town Manager Paul Sprague
Town Solicitor Patrick Sullivan

Pledge of Allegiance led by Town Sergeant.
Invocation led by Councilman Colaluca.
Review of evacuation plan.

Presentations were made by Council President Pomfret, Police Colonel Ron DaSilva and Fire Chief Fontaine to Linda Bukofser, Bonnie Fogarty and Shamus Horan for their heroic actions on April 22, 2008 regarding the rescue of a woman and child from a partially submerged motor vehicle in a stream adjacent to Fish Hill Road.

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to approve minutes of the April 28, 2008 Town Council meeting. All voted Aye. So voted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wayne Asselin –
3 Lorraine Avenue

Questioned if there would be public hearings when solar farm issue is ready.

Manager Sprague stated that yes, there will be public hearings if it gets that far. We are only in the beginning stages.

Joel Johnson
164 Gough Avenue

Think that the municipal side of the budget is pretty lean. Would like you to take a look at the concept of advanced refunding on bond issues. Warwick tried this and cut rates, had big savings. Suggest looking into advanced refunding on existing bond issues. Also believe that the solar farm issue at Picillo is more suitable to a wind farm project.

Charles Vacca
Fairway Drive

Mr. Vacca – When you consider the budget, can you please explain where the Town Council has made any cuts or additions. On another subject, also feel that with a 50 year contract on a solar farm at Picillo property, the town could be giving up control of what happens to that property for the next 50 years, should reconsider these long term contracts.

Mr. Spear – Thanked Town Council in advance for meeting the needs and requests of the School Committee.

Mr. Hyde believes that Main Street in Coventry should not be closed during sewer construction. He understands the problems that this causes small businessmen and feels that traffic should be able to get through.

Colonel DaSilva said that construction began today, may go on for two weeks, but people can travel through Wood Street to S. Main and come in by S. Main to the businesses.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Resolution amending Resolution #04-04-2306, adding two alternate members to the Coventry Sewer Sub-committee
2. Resolution authorizing Acting Town Manager to enter into agreement with Parmalee, Poirier and Associates for auditing services
3. Resolution appointing Ed Inman, Moderator for the Financial Town Meeting
4. Resolution scheduling Town Council meetings during the months of July and August
5. Resolution awarding bid for Parks and Recreation Summer Bus Transportation
6. Resolution awarding contract for street sweeping services
7. Resolution reappointing Elaine Ortgiesen to Library Board of Trustees

8. Resolution urging residents to utilize and support businesses within the Town of Coventry
9. Resolution urging the State to adopt a fair share funding formula for education
10. Application for new Sewer Contractor's license by Allen Excavation Corp, 490 Hope Furnace Road, Hope

Councilman Colaluca stated that he recently worked on Items 8 and 9. Believes it is good idea to adopt these resolutions, especially since there are many small businesses in town that are owned by town residents. Regarding item 9, we are in need of a funding formula for education, and funding should be redistributed to the towns that are in need.

Motion made by Frank Hyde seconded by Bruce Thompson to approve Consent Agenda. All voted Aye. So voted.

LICENSES

1. Exhibitions and Performances license by The Apeiron Institute for Sustainable Living on June 6, 7 and 8, 2008

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded by Frank Hyde to approve license. All voted Aye. So voted.

2. Renewal of pool table licenses

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded by Frank Hyde to renew pool table licenses. All voted Aye. So voted.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution adopting Municipal Budget for FY 2008-09

President Pomfret indicated that he intended to cut another \$200,000 from the school budget. I know that you eliminated a clerk and two administrative positions, so I'm not going to ask for more.

Mr. Thompson – More cuts would impact more programs and children. I'm also satisfied with Superintendent DiPietro and the School Committee requests.

Councilmen Cloutier and Colaluca also in agreement. Councilman Hyde believes the School Committee and superintendent have done a lot of work on this budget. I am a little disappointed about losing a music teacher, but will not let that hold up the process and will accept the request of 1.9 million from the schools.

President Pomfret – Regarding the municipal budget, Town Council suggests the following:

Summarized Total Reductions:

#210 Town Manager	\$42,405
#225 Information Technology	500
#320 Board of Canvassers	49,507

#710	Police	\$279,468
#830	Roads & Bridges	26,500
#840	Snow Removal	10,000
#850	Building Maintenance	83,730
#880	Vehicle Maintenance	8,000
#910	Parks and Recreation	94,069
#925	Human Services	28,915
#930	Library	4,100
#940	Planning & Development	64,873
#950	Town General	137,222
#960	Contributions	14,150

Additions:

#510	Probate Court	\$5,383
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President Pomfret announced that before tonight's meeting increases were expected to be about 3.4%, now after the cuts expect about 2.4%.

Councilman Hyde commended Manager Sprague for a job well done. This is the most easily understood budget I've ever seen, also thanks to Finance Director Warren West.

Mr. West - This is not final, but project about a 5% reduction in our tax rate this year. Total cuts are at \$838,057,000.

Motion made by Frank Hyde seconded by Bruce Thompson to adopt budget as amended. All voted Aye. So voted.

Totals –	Operating - Municipal	\$22,043,073.
	Operating - School	\$62,765,278.
	Capital – Municipal	\$ 347,919
	Capital – School	\$ 150,000
	Debt Service	\$ 3,151,848

Total	\$ 88,458,118,
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with estimated tax increase at this time of 2.4%.

Resolution recognizing Israel's 60th anniversary as a free state

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Frank Hyde to adopt resolution. All voted Aye. So voted.

Resolution in support of General Assembly bill mandating installation of granite curbing on State highway projects

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to adopt resolution. All voted Aye. So voted.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ENSUING ACTION

1. Renewal of Second Hand licenses

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Anthony Colaluca to open public hearing. All voted Aye. So voted.

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to close public hearing. All voted Aye. So voted.

Motion made by Anthony Colaluca seconded to Bruce Thompson to approve renewal of second hand licenses. All voted Aye. So voted.

2. Renewal of Auto Salvage licenses

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Anthony Colaluca to open public hearing. All voted Aye. So voted.

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Kenneth Cloutier to close public hearing. All voted ay. So voted.

Motion made by Kenneth Cloutier seconded by Bruce Thompson to approve renewal of auto salvage licenses. All voted Aye. So voted.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

1. Ordinance amending Coventry Zoning Map Assessor's Plat 24, Lot 125 to new designation of R-20 Planned Development
2. Boats and Waterways Ordinance

Town Council instructed clerk to advertise for public hearing on June 23, 2008.

PUBLIC FORUM

President Pomfret invited anyone who would like to address the Town Council on any issues to come forward at this time.

Motion made by Bruce Thompson seconded by Anthony Colaluca to adjourn meeting. All voted Aye. So voted.

Town Clerk